ABOUT THE PROGRAM
The Aquinas College Ireland Program is located in Tully Cross—a small rural village in the Connemara region of County Galway which is located on the western coast of Ireland.

The program focuses on the goal of in-depth experience of Irish culture, a culture as rich and varied as its countryside. To achieve the cultural immersion objective, we have designed the academics, excursions, housing, and community engagement opportunities to interrelate and intensify the immersion experience.

Since the program was established in 1972, hundreds of students have taken advantage of this unique program, and many feel it has been the highlight of their college experience.

The program coincides roughly with the dates of the Aquinas College Spring Semester.

IRELAND COMMUNITY AIDES INTERNSHIP ELECTIVE COURSE
This course offers participants an internship experience within the local community of Tully Cross. The course is coordinated by Aquinas faculty in partnership with Connemara West, a community owned and managed rural development non-profit organization that manages the cottages which serve as our Aquinas Ireland Study Center in Tully Cross. The organization is connected to myriad programs in the Tully Cross area including conservation efforts; community radio; theatre; social care programs; child care center; Connemara National Park; community development programs; medical science; and educational and recreation programs. Connemara West has been a key partner in our Ireland Program since 1973.

ACADEMICS
The curriculum is centered on several aspects of Irish studies. Three core courses of four semester hours each are required of all participants. Core courses include Irish History, Experiencing Irish Culture, and Irish Literary Heritage. Elective classes include the Teachers’ Aides in National Schools course, the Ireland Community Aides Internship course, and a Hiking course.

Students may also choose up to 18 semester hours, including electives. A maximum of 15 semester hours is recommended, however, to allow for travel, community living experiences, and cultural assimilation. Under certain conditions, students with specific needs in their majors may arrange Independent Study Contracts.
HOUSING
Each year approximately 20 students and two Aquinas faculty members live in thatched-roof cottages that serve as our Ireland Program Study Center in Tully Cross, Ireland.

“\text{Ireland has become more than a country to me; it’s personal. Ireland is the friendships that I made with the locals. It is the challenges that revealed life beyond my comfort zone. It is the hills, the sheep, the sea, the big excursions and the little moments that made me realize that I was doing something extraordinary. I’ll live with Ireland for the rest of my life. I remember once wondering if I’d ever die without ever leaving the country... but now I can say that I’ve lived in another country; another country that has changed my life forever.”}

–Rebecca Ryan
Ireland Alumnus 2013

TEACHERS’ AIDES IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS ELECTIVE COURSE
This course affords a unique opportunity for future teachers to work weekly in Irish schools in cooperation with Irish teachers and the Aquinas faculty. Due to new restrictions, it is required for the students to be part of the Aquinas College Education Program in order to participate in this elective.

There are four National Schools (preschool through elementary) within a three-mile radius of the Aquinas College Study Center in Tully Cross. These are two-room schools with one room for the upper levels (grades 4-6), and one for the lower (grades K-3). Past Aquinas students have found the experience as an excellent way to obtain international classroom experience and a great avenue to get to know people – teachers, students, and their families – in the community.

MORE INFORMATION:
To watch videos about Aquinas College International Programs or for more information about this program, visit our website: www.aquinas.edu/intprograms

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ELIGIBILITY
Participants must be full-time students of at least sophomore status who are willing to share in community living and be open to the cross-cultural experience. Participants must be in good academic and disciplinary standing. Guest students should submit a complete application including a transcript and letter of recommendation from their home institution’s Dean of Students Office.

COST
Aquinas College semester tuition + Estimated Program Fee of $6100 (includes housing, airfare, International Student ID Card, and group excursions.) Program fees will be confirmed on acceptance letters.

OTHER COSTS
Passport (approximately $135), food, money for gifts, personal travel during breaks, etc.