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was the academic year 1959-60, when in effect marks the establishment of a separate department with a second full-time appointment and the creation of the chair of Political Science. The instigation of a faculty structure in 1969 confirmed the department's identification with the social sciences, when it was located in the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies (ESS). History was now an "external" client, with an interest almost exclusively in political philosophy. By 1979 the department had achieved its present full-time teaching complement of six, a plateau of modest elevation and in the present economic climate of apparently boundless horizons. The bulk of the student body, some eighty, with a mix ranging between two hundred; although the structure of more specialised and optional classes in the subsequent three years allows for small group teaching in the fourth year, the overall staff-student ratio is regrettably high (in the order of 1 to 25).

For a small department, quite a broad range of fields within the discipline is covered in both teaching and research. Irish politics, political philosophy and an element of comparative politics (political parties) are supplemented by more exotic specialisations - by Irish standards - in the form of public policy making, Soviet and communist studies and international relations. The teaching structure, following a broad comparative introductory course in the first year, expands into the more specialised areas, with two courses offered in the second year, four in the third year and six in the fourth year. It is possible to take a single honours degree in Political Science, or joint honours in combination with Economics, Sociology or Business Studies. Most of the staff are also involved in service teaching outside the ESS Faculty. The four-year honours degree pattern has the effect of stretching the department's limited resources, and is one reason for the lack of a taught masters' degree. The department does provide the teaching on political integration in the 1970/70/1970 joint master's course in European Studies and participate in two Business Studies graduate courses, but its other involvement in graduate work is confined to the supervision of individual research degrees. Likewise the research activities of the staff, given the range of interests covered and the absence of funding, tend to be highly personal.

If overall economic constraints seem to rule out any major expansion in the specialised teaching of the department, there is nevertheless considerable experimentation with existing staff resources. In the last two years considerable work has been put on with joint teaching in the politics and sociology departments, and a new multi-disciplinary undergraduate degree in European Studies, which will commence in October 1987, also involves two, and eventually more, staff members. The possibility of a joint honours degree with History - an "obvious" combination curiously neglected in Trinity - is currently under consideration. Developments in graduate teaching look more elusive, short of radical external intervention (the general trend towards three-year first degrees, if applied in Trinity, might release the joint master's course in European Studies and participate in two Business Studies graduate courses, but its other involvement in graduate work is confined to the supervision of individual research degrees. Likewise the research activities of the staff, given the range of interests covered and the absence of funding, tend to be highly personal.

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