

International Peace Studies

Student Testimonials

Jean Baptiste Niypngabo (2016-2017)



The MPhil in International Peace Studies, Trinity College Dublin has been for me a mind-opener for deeper understanding of the interaction between theory and practice. Before I took the course I worked as passionate peacebuilder and human rights activist but my work often lacked an in-depth analysis grounded on academic theories and the real life experience.

The course has empowered me with knowledge and skills of conflict analysis, disentanglement of forms under which violence affects people and our societies, and as well the capacity of suggesting how to build sustainable peace. Moreover, the course has also enabled me to develop critical and analytical thinking skills that are fundamental to understanding the shifts that characterize the world's political, economic and social systems. After completing the course, my focus today is to build the capacities of Action for Peace and Development, local NGO I cofounded in 2012 as our aim is to turn it into a research and study centre in the fields of peace, conflict, human rights and development.

Nathalie De Hertog (2016-2017)



Through the International Peace Studies course I had the opportunity to opt for the internship module, whereby I applied for an internship at the United Nations (UN Information Service. The Information Service is part of the UN Secretariat and acts as the voice of the entire UN Office at Geneva. Through the International Peace Studies course I had already developed a great extent of background knowledge regarding sustainable peace, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2030, which I could apply to the internship and facilitated my learning time at the UN.

Additionally, another aspect of the internship which I find interesting is the daily contact we have through our department with people from different UN agencies. It is our responsibility to set-up information programmes, whereby the main goal is to inform universities on the general activities of the UN Offices in Geneva. Hence, we get the opportunity to contact different speakers from diverging UN agencies or programmes based in Geneva. Another responsibility is the contribution to and coordination of several communication activities for different events our department organises, such as the Ciné-ONU.

Amy Keegan (2014-15)**Policy Officer for Monitoring and Accountability, WaterAid UK**

I studied the MPhil in International Peace Studies from 2014-2015. During my masters I completed a peace building internship with the early childhood development team in the division of policy and practice at UNICEF's headquarters in New York as part of the ISE internship program. Throughout the internship I was given a lot of responsibility, getting the chance to travel, attend conferences, and take point on a variety of fascinating projects. This opportunity helped me develop my skills, explore a new area of study and build on my academic understanding of international issues gained at ISE.

After finishing my Masters I moved to Madagascar for a year where I worked for regional NGO Azafady as a Project Development Officer in WASH and Sustainable Livelihoods. Having just returned, I've recently taken up a new post working for WaterAid UK as a Policy Officer for Monitoring and Accountability. The strong academic grounding I received in international affairs and peace building at ISE has greatly benefited my career since.

James Rowan (2013-2014)

I chose the MPhil in International Peace Studies, as its approach to studying peace, and associated perspectives of international relations, made it stand out from other Masters. I also liked the course's focus on developing research and analytical skills, which have been particularly beneficial to me in subsequent jobs. Overall I felt that the teaching elements of the course were insightful and beneficial while the research element allowed me the freedom to build my skills and develop my own thoughts on a range of issues. The flexibility and complementarity of the different modules in particular allowed for anyone undertaking the Masters to find something that suited them.

Soon after completing the M.Phil. I began working in the Department of the Taoiseach. My work there was primarily around policy analysis and I worked on climate change and economic issues. The skills I had developed during the M.Phil proved invaluable and in no small part aided my work. I subsequently joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and I have continued to utilise the skills and knowledge developed from my time in ISE. I have found all the modules that I took relevant and, given the Department that I work in, I have found that what I learned during the M.Phil is not only applicable in the work place but also reflective of contemporary thought and best practice.

Heidi Riley (2013)

Undertaking the MPhil in International Peace Studies at ISE opened the door to the opportunity of continuing in academia to PhD level. Through the knowledge and experience I gained during my MPhil I was granted the fantastic opportunity of a scholarship which has enabled me embark on the path towards a Doctorate degree in area of gender and international relations.

In addition, I thoroughly enjoyed my internship at Front Line Defenders, arranged by International Peace Studies, during my MPhil. Front Line is a fantastic organization that does vital work for the security and protection of Human Rights Defenders. Apart from this it is a very welcoming office with brilliant staff. I have particularly enjoyed it because I was not treated just as an intern but as a member of staff. All the projects I have worked on while being there have been very interesting and I was never expected to carry out menial tasks often associated with internships.

Augustine Edan Ekeno (2012)

The MPhil program in International Peace Studies offered me the opportunity to understand, examine and reflect deeply on issues behind the lack of order in the world. The broad expertise of ISE lecturers, the excellent academic program coupled with the diverse experiences brought in by students from all over the world molds global citizens charged with a desire to set the world on a fire-of-peace. It is such fire that has guided me through in my current work of peace-building in Kenya, particularly now that the country is marching towards the March 2012 general election. Using the wisdom brewed in ISE, I hope to join other peacemakers to prevent a repeat of the post-election violence that rocked Kenya in 2007/2008 that claimed over 1300 lives and left hundreds of thousands displaced in various parts of the country.

Paul Musiol (2011)

Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Middle East Unit

I took the M.Phil in International Peace Studies in 2010-2011, looking to better understand the issues and factors involved in peace and conflict and in international and inter-communal relations. The classes are balanced and really reinforce each other, with a good mix of the conceptual and the practical, supplemented by excellent guest speakers and field trips. What I particularly liked was that the course gave me a significant amount of freedom to determine what I wanted to focus on and what methods to use. Lectures and seminars were stimulating, friendly and informal and would send me away eager to discover more, whether that was in the library or by having a chat with the other students. The coursework was engaging and challenging and the mix of backgrounds and perspectives among the students was invigorating. We learned how to approach and understand complex issues such as conflict dynamics, international institutions, and the links between peace, development and human rights.

With the help of the ISE, I undertook an internship in a non-governmental organisation working in multilateral disarmament in Geneva while I was writing my dissertation. This was an almost immeasurably worthwhile experience, and one which I wouldn't have had a chance to do were it not for this course. That internship led me on to more NGO work in Geneva and eventually to my current role, in the Middle East Unit of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. In all my professional roles so far, the grounding I gained from this course has been a huge help, and I'd strongly recommend it for anyone who wants to better understand and engage with some of the most critical issues in the world today.

Prerna Humpal (2009)
Amnesty International

Having completed an internship with Amnesty International Ireland, I will soon start work on an Amnesty International campaign to end female genital mutilation in Europe. The course has given me a strong foundation in international politics, human rights and development framed within the discourse of peace studies. Having written a paper on culture of human rights, I now try to implement it by applying a human rights based approach in my work. Furthermore, the mediation summer school provided me with a basic practical guide to coping with conflict which I use in my personal and professional life.

Timothy Roschke (2008)
Private Security Contracting

I have been working for a private security contracting company supported by the US State Department. I have spent two years now in Liberia, recruiting, vetting the new Armed Forces of Liberia. My department tests the applicants' credibility, criminal history, professional history and background with respect to human rights violations. I have also been teaching the civics portion of the training curriculum - which includes human rights, laws of armed conflict, Liberian civics, rule of law, peace-building and mediation ... my own personal fascination with peace-building, peacekeeping and laws of armed conflict - which was nurtured in MPhil in International Peace Studies has made an insightful contribution.

Eimear Friel (2007)
Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland

I did the M. Phil in International Peace Studies in 2006-2007. I chose it because I had been working as a practitioner in the area of conflict resolution skills development for young people and I wanted to study the more theoretical aspects. I liked that the focus of the course was on peace rather than war or conflict and I felt that the course had a more constructive and positive approach than perhaps other courses would have. The course provided a good mixture of structure and flexibility and the choice of modules within meant that there was a lot of opportunity to explore new areas and to deepen understanding of issues.



On completing the M. Phil., I took up employment with the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs as a diplomat. I've had several different positions in my time with the Department, including two outside of Ireland. In each position I have found that there has been something from the M.Phil. that was relevant to what I was doing, even on the most unexpected occasions. I can also see that, from having done the M. Phil., I have a particular approach and view on issues which I might not have otherwise had and I think this is something very positive. The course definitely gave me a solid foundation for my work, both in terms of analytical and productive skills and in understanding the dynamics of issues related to peace theory and international relations.

Arely Miranda Gonzalez (2007)

Department of Peace-Keeping Operations, UN New York

I am working as a consultant in the Department of Peace-Keeping Operations in the United Nations in New York. I'm in a section called Integrated Training Service which is in charge of redeployment, induction and civilian training of civilians going to peace-keeping missions. It's really interesting, particularly because of the interaction between the military, civilian and peace staff in the team. My MPhil in Peace Studies definitely helped me explore my academic interests and now allows me to follow the professional path I want.