

Notes for MEELC Dual Degree Students

Academic year 2022/2023

The first two years

You spend the first two years of the Dual Degree at Trinity, and your syllabus during this time is the same as that as any other MEELC student. For policies which apply during this period, refer to the SLLCS Handbook and MEELC Handbook.

Foundation Scholarship

As a registered Trinity student, in your second year you are eligible to apply for the Trinity Foundation scholarship like any other Trinity second year.

Information about the Foundation Scholarship can be found online, and is also circulated by email. NB the information about Dual Degree students on the Foundation Scholarship FAQs.

Years three and four

You spend years three and four at Columbia. Which Columbia modules you study is between you and Columbia: Trinity does not need to approve your Columbia modules (though you must of course follow Columbia's own rules).

Study abroad

Trinity-only MEELC students spend their third year abroad (in Europe, possibly also in the Middle East). As a Dual Degree student, you do *not* do this. You can therefore ignore the communications about arrangements for study abroad circulated to second year MEELC students.

Trinity requirements while you are at Columbia

During your time at Columbia, you not only have to fulfil the requirements of Columbia itself: you are also required by Trinity to submit work to Trinity, which Trinity assesses, to a total of 30 ECTS. These count towards your Trinity degree.

20 ECTS are a capstone project which you write in your fourth year. See information below.

10 ECTS are a report on an internship which you are advised to do in third year. See information below.

The Internship

After completing your second year at Trinity you should undertake an internship which gives you practical experience of work as encountered by specialists, in an area broadly relevant to MEELC. It should last a minimum of 3-4 weeks, and involve you working on a project under

the direction of a relevant professional. It is recommended that you do this during your Third Year (first year at Columbia), or the summer before or after it.

You are expected to take the initiative in organising the placement, but you will have the advice of your Dual Degree advisor in Trinity. The Trinity Dual Degree advisor needs to approve the placement and project in order for it to 'count'.

You should arrange for an email with a short report from the relevant institution or organisation to reach the Trinity Academic Advisor, to ensure satisfactory completion of the internship.

The internship is assessed by a reflective essay (see below). For the essay to be marked, it will normally be necessary for the short report from the organisation or institution to have been received.

The reflective essay on the Internship

The reflective essay on the Internship should be 1500 words long. It contributes 10 ECTS to your degree.

The aim of the essay is to offer intelligent reflections on the experience of the internship, and to outline how the internship furthered or enhanced your academic (and personal) development. In other words, the essay should relate your personal experience as an intern to your course of study and to your academic (and personal) development.

In general, the essay should demonstrate your ability to reflect on your performance as an intern and to assess the significance of the experience in your academic career. Throughout, it should be supported with specific examples. Like any essay, it should be structured with an introduction, a main body of text and a conclusion.

The introduction should outline the overall context and structure of the internship, explaining your role as an intern, introducing the organisation where the internship was completed, and giving the reasons for choosing the internship in question.

The main text should outline the goals set at the beginning of the internship and the tasks completed with the aim of achieving those goals. It should further reflect on the extent to which said goals were achieved, and why; how the efforts made towards achieving them contributed to your personal, professional and academic development (e.g. what new skills were learned); and how the internship contributed to the work of the organisation.

The conclusion should provide a brief summary.

The reflective essay should normally be submitted within 3-4 weeks after the completion of the internship. The essay should be emailed to your Trinity Academic Advisor.

The mark (of which you will be informed within a reasonable time of submitting the work) will only appear on SITS (the Trinity online grading system) in your fourth year, when Trinity will enrol you on the module EUU3401Y *European Studies (Columbia dual degree programme) internship*, which MEELC shares with European Studies and which is worth ten ECTS. The grade for the reflective essay will be the grade for this module.

Planning the Fourth-year capstone at the end of Third Year

It will be advantageous if you can make a start on your capstone work over the summer between the third and fourth year. To this end, it would be useful to start approaching potential supervisors towards the end of your third year.

The Fourth-Year Capstone

The Trinity capstone project can be on any aspect of your studies, or on any academic topic of interest to you which is germane to your Columbia Major and/or MEELC studies.

You write the Trinity capstone under the supervision of a Trinity academic. You can either approach one directly, or ask your Trinity Academic Advisor for suggestions. In the latter case, you should explain the general idea you are interested in. Once you have a supervisor, s/he can help you narrow the topic down.

As noted above, it would be a good idea to approach supervisors at the end of Third Year, with a view to getting started over the summer. This will reduce your workload in fourth year.

For those of you writing a Senior Thesis at Columbia, the Trinity capstone should be distinct from the Senior Thesis (there should, for example, be no verbatim overlap between the two), but it may be related to it: it may be a parallel/complementary project, and/or one which grows out of your Columbia Thesis. If you have any questions about how these rules apply to your case, you should discuss them with your Trinity supervisor.

The Capstone project, and its assessment, are divided as follows:

- 1.** 20% – a written research proposal of 1000 words (including footnotes but not bibliography or any appendices).
- 2.** 50% – an analytical essay of 5000 words (including footnotes but not bibliography or any appendices).
- 3.** 30% – a *viva voce* examination or interview about your project, conducted online, with a small panel of academics from TCD.

The research proposal

The project proposal should offer a concise and clearly structured outline of your initial ideas about your research project, written for a lay academic audience.

The proposal should include the following components:

- (1) Title and short description of research project.
- (2) A brief discussion of the aims and the scope of the project, and a short presentation of the research questions and the proposed hypotheses. Any essential background information should also be provided.

- (3) A short description of the sources and theoretical framework (if any) to be used in the project.
- (4) Notice should be given of any difficulties of method which you envisage arising.
- (5) There should be a brief (and not necessarily comprehensive) survey of previous work on the topic.
- (6) A short bibliography of 5 to 10 titles should be appended (without being included in the word count).

It is essential to consult a potential supervisor and to do preliminary research in advance of submitting the proposal.

The proposal and the main text of the capstone are assessed separately, as a self-standing piece of work. If, owing to legitimate reasons arising from further research, the main text of the capstone ends up differing from that the proposal said it would do, this will not be held against you.

The analytical essay of 5000 words

This should analyse evidence in order to answer a clearly formulated research question. Due attention should be given to problems of method, and there should be appropriate engagement with relevant scholarship.

There should be no significant verbatim overlap with the research proposal.

The viva

The *viva voce* examination will normally last c. 20 minutes. The examiners will have read your dissertation beforehand.

You should be prepared to defend your project (approach, write-up, methods, conclusions), to explain its relevance and importance, to be probed on your general knowledge of the topic and scholarly literature attaching to it, and to answer questions arising from the discussion.

You are encouraged to practice the viva beforehand (e.g. it would be a good idea to give each other mocks), and (if not on the examination panel) your supervisor may be available for this.

The viva will be recorded.

Capstone Timeline

The following timeline pertains to the fourth year of your degree (your second year at Columbia):

September (at the latest; end of third year would be preferable): contact your Trinity Academic Advisor, explaining what topic(s) you are interested in pursuing. If you are doing a Columbia

Senior Thesis, you should mention this, and explain the relation between the two projects (so that the Advisor can determine whether they are sufficiently distinct).

The Academic Advisor will help you to find a Trinity supervisor.

Last day of Trinity Semester One: deadline for submission of formal research proposals for assessment.

Semester Two: students to work on the 5000-word written component, under the supervision of their Trinity supervisor.

Last day of Trinity Semester Two: deadline for submission of the 5000-word written component for assessment.

May: Oral assessment to take place online.