



# MPhil Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Course Overview 2021-22

The MPhil in Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation, Trinity College Dublin at Belfast, is an interdisciplinary course examining conflict and peacebuilding in Ireland and around the world. This document provides an overview of the modules on offer in the academic year 2021-22.

At Trinity, course elements are weighted with credits according to the European Credit Transfer Scheme – ECTS. The required ECTS for the MPhil is 90. All Master's students **must complete** the Research Skills module (10 ECTS), plus a further 50 ECTS worth of taught modules and a dissertation (30 ECTS). Module registration takes place **in advance of** the beginning of the programme and students **must complete and return a module registration form**.

It should be noted that students may also take for credit or audit modules from **two Dublin MPhil programmes**, International Peace Studies and Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies. This will require Belfast-based students to travel for classes held in Dublin and those who wish to do so should make sure that timetabling clashes can be avoided and their visa allows them to travel to the Republic of Ireland. The Dublin timetable will be provided. **However, at the time of writing it is unclear if travel to Dublin will be possible due to the pandemic.**

It is recommended that you balance your modules over the two terms. Please note you may not take more than four modules in one term. You may also audit one module per term if you are taking three modules for credit during that term (i.e. take the class but not for credit). Community Learning is an exception to this rule as it is available over two terms.

*Information provided below is done so in good faith and is correct as of June 2021. **Modules may be amended depending on staff availability. In addition, module availability depends on numbers of interested students.***



## Research Skills EM7301

**Co-ordinator:** Dr David Mitchell (damitche@tcd.ie)

**Time:** Michaelmas/Autumn Semester

**Format:** Weekly lectures

**Assessment:** Dissertation proposal and proposal presentation

### Overview

This module provides an insight into some of the core skills needed to develop as a graduate student here at Trinity College Dublin. The module will reflect on a number of core themes including: reading and writing; theories of knowledge production; qualitative research methods; ethical considerations in research; and data analysis. It has been designed in such a way as to support the successful completion of written assignments in the taught modules and serves as early preparation for the MPhil dissertation. In addition, the sessions will provide an orientation to some of the resources available for studies during the programme and an analysis of academic skills involved in graduate work.

### Learning Outcomes

- Understand the different theoretical arguments surrounding the production of knowledge.
- Grasp issues pertaining to qualitative and quantitative enquiry.
- Submit academic work in an appropriate structure and format, with a full bibliography and consistent referencing.
- Distinguish between proper academic use of research material of others and inappropriate plagiarism.
- Develop a coherent plan for the dissertation.

### Select Reading

- Bryman, Alan (2015). *Social Research Methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Blaxter, Lorraine, Christina Hughes and Malcolm Tight (2010) *How To Research*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Wisker, Gina (2001) *The Postgraduate Research Handbook*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Denscombe, Martyn (2007) *The Good Research Guide: For Small Scale Social Research Projects*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.



## Conflict and Peace in Northern Ireland EM7469

**Co-ordinator:** Dr Brendan Ciarán Browne (brbrowne@tcd.ie)

**Time:** Michaelmas/Autumn Semester

**Format:** Weekly lectures

**Assessment:** Two essays

### Overview

This course analyses the origins and dynamics of the conflict across the region with a view to assessing the prospects for peace and reconciliation. Core topics include, *inter alia*: explanations of the conflict (colonial, economic, religious, ethno-nationalist); Irish republican/nationalist, and Ulster unionist/loyalist perspectives of the conflict; the peace process and Good Friday Agreement; civil society peacebuilding. Students will be invited to form their own views on the current, complex condition of Northern Ireland and to examine the multi-faceted nature of Northern Ireland's transition.

### Learning Outcomes

- Identify and analyse the causes of the conflict in the north of Ireland including the merits of different perspectives on the nature of the conflict in Northern Ireland.
- Give a detailed account of processes of change leading up to the 1998 Good Friday/Belfast Agreement and thereafter.
- Analyse the continuing tendencies for conflict in 'transitional'/post-conflict' Northern Ireland and assess the prospects for real and meaningful reconciliation.

### Select Reading

- Cochrane, Feargal (2021) *Northern Ireland: The Fragile Peace*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Cox, Michael, Adrian Guelke and Fiona Stephen (eds) (2006) *A Farewell to Arms? Beyond the Good Friday Agreement*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Liechty, Joseph and Cecelia Clegg (2001) *Moving Beyond Sectarianism. Religion, Conflict and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland*. Dublin: Columba Press.
- Mitchell, David (2015) *Politics and Peace in Northern Ireland: Political Parties and the Implementation of the 1998 Agreement*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Coulter, Colin and Michael Murray (eds) (2008) *Northern Ireland After the Troubles: A Society in Transition*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.



## Foundations of Conflict Resolution Research EM7450

**Co-ordinator:** Dr David Mitchell (damitche@tcd.ie)

**Time:** Michaelmas/Autumn Semester

**Format:** Weekly lectures

**Assessment:** Essay and presentation

### Overview

This course examines some of the key concepts and debates in the field of peace and conflict research. It discusses the emergence of peace/conflict/conflict resolution as a subject of academic scrutiny. It explores influential ideas which have driven the pursuit of peace and justice such as liberalism, Marxism, feminism, religious faith, as well as the non-violence and Just War traditions. Furthermore, the module provides students with a theoretical understanding of the causes and dynamics of ethnic conflicts and approaches to their resolution.

### Learning Outcomes

- Identify the contributions made to peace theory and practice of different traditions of thought.
- Grasp the nature of ethnic nationalism and the causes and dynamics of ethnic conflicts.
- Assess the different kinds of intervention strategies that are used by third parties to manage, resolve and transform destructive conflict.
- Further demonstrate the transferable skills of independent study and research, critical analysis and clear presentation of complex ideas.

### Select Reading

- Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall (2016) *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Fourth Edition. Cambridge: Polity.
- Cordell, Karl and Stefan Wolff (2009) *Ethnic Conflict: Causes, Consequences and Responses*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Ryan, Stephen (2007) *The Transformation of Violent Intercommunal Conflict*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Barash, David and Charles Webel (2016) *Peace and Conflict Studies*. London: Sage.



## Mediation and Peacebuilding Skills EM7487

**Co-ordinator:** Dr. Dong Jin Kim (kimdj@tcd.ie)

**Time:** Michaelmas/Autumn Semester

**Format:** One week intensive

**Assessment:** Essay

### Overview

The Mediation and Conflict Analysis Skills Module is taught as a one week intensive in February 2021. The aim of the module is to provide a theoretical and practical introduction to mediation and dialogue facilitation skills in the context of intractable conflict. In addition, the module offers an insight into political negotiations and conflict management practices, and outlines how to prepare for, and conduct dialogue in challenging environments.

### Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of mediation, dialogue and conflict analysis models.
- Grasp various dialogue methods and facilitation techniques as well as planning, conducting and monitoring a dialogue process.
- Begin the cognitive and emotive process of operationalizing how to translate different conflict resolution/transformation theories of change into facilitation and dialogue theories of practice.

### Select Readings

- Dugan, M. A. (1996). *A Nested Theory of Conflict. Women and Leadership: Sharing the Vision* 1(1), 9–19.
- Lederach, J.P. (2005). *The Moral Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Meadows, D. (2010). Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System, *The Solutions Journal*, Volume 1, Issue 1, pp. 41-49
- Anderson, M. & Olson, L. (2003). *Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*. Cambridge, MA: Collaborative for Development Action.



## Community Learning and Reflective Practice EM7454

**Co-ordinator:** To be confirmed

**Time:** Michaelmas/Autumn Semester **&/or** Hilary/Spring Semester

**Format:** Placement

**Assessment:** Reflective essay and supervisor evaluation

### Overview

This module – an internship with an identified partner organisation - allows students to gain real-world experience of community work in Northern Ireland and connect this experience with what is being learned in the classroom. If you already work for a non-governmental organisation, we hope that the community-based learning component of the course will help you to reflect on what you do, share those experiences with others, and enhance your work. Those who do not are encouraged to seek out a placement opportunity in line with their interests and abilities or consult with the Module Co-ordinator to identify an appropriate organisation. In this module, students are expected to work a minimum of 96 hours with the organisation between October 2021 and April 2022, and spend at least 24 hours in personal study/reading and reflection. Students will be asked to keep a reflective journal and make use of this journal when writing their coursework reflective essay. Students enrolled in this class must also take the ‘Conflict and Peace in Northern Ireland’ module to ensure that their experiences in the community are grounded in a sound understanding of the socio-political context. Please note, this module will be awarded a **pass/fail** grade.

**Note on Covid-19:** This module is dependent on providers offering placements. Placements may be online.

### Learning Outcomes

- Engage in ‘reflective practice’.
- Connect ‘theory’ from the classroom with ‘practice’ in various organisations.
- Identify skills gained through community-based work.

### Select Reading

- Carol Bergman, ed. (2003) *Another Day in Paradise: International Humanitarian Workers Tell Their Stories*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis.
- Brendan Browne (2013) ‘Recording the personal: the benefits in maintaining research diaries for documenting the emotional and practical challenges of fieldwork in unfamiliar settings’, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Vol.12, pp. 403- 419



## Conflict Transformation EM7443

**Co-ordinators:** Dr. Wilhelm Verwoerd and Mr. Alistair Little

**Time:** Hilary/Spring Semester

**Format:** Online

**Assessment:** Essay

### Overview

At the heart of conflict transformation lies the challenge of transforming relations after violent political conflict, in particular between former enemies who have been directly involved in and/or affected by the violence. It combines academic material with the practical wisdom of former combatants who have become peace practitioners (within the conflict in and about Northern Ireland, in South Africa and in Israel/Palestine). Sub-themes include:

- A central source of resistance to conflict transformation, namely the dynamics and dilemmas of betrayals when former enemies engage;
- The complexity of *processes* of ‘apology’/‘acknowledgement’, ‘forgiveness’ and ‘responsibility’, especially where politicized (former) combatants are involved;
- The transformative potential of compassion, empathy, and care across the barriers political conflict puts between groups and individuals.

### Learning Outcomes

- Critically analyse key features and challenges of conflict transformation at the interpersonal level, especially between politicised former combatants, including Transforming the dynamics of betrayals
- Dynamics of “reconciliation”/ “humanisation” (acknowledgement, forgiveness, responsibility, compassion)
- Critically analyse the promise and pitfalls of ‘storytelling’ within conflict transformation

### Select Reading

- Bloomfield, David. Teresa Barnes and Luc Huyse (2003) *Reconciliation After Violent Conflict: A Handbook*. Stockholm: [IDEA](#).
- Gawerc, Michelle (2006) “Peace-building: Theoretical and Concrete Perspectives”, *Peace & Change*, 31 (4), pp. 435-478.
- Little, Alistair & Verwoerd, Wilhelm (2013) *Journey Through Conflict Trail Guide*, Trafford Publishing.



## Dynamics of Reconciliation EM7451

**Co-ordinator:** Dr David Mitchell (damitche@tcd.ie)

**Time:** Hilary/Spring Semester

**Format:** Weekly lectures

**Assessment:** Essay and presentation

### Overview

This module interrogates the concept of reconciliation from a range of disciplinary perspectives and within various domains. What is reconciliation? Is it possible and why does it attract criticism, scepticism and even hostility? Does reconciliation mean abandoning justice and ‘forgiving and forgetting’? What are the personal and social psychological dimensions of reconciliation? Is it an inherently religious idea – and how and why has it so often been promoted from a faith-based perspective? How can sport and the arts and symbolism contribute to reconciliation? What is political reconciliation? What roles do apology and forgiveness play? Can we measure reconciliation, and can we find it?

### Learning Outcomes

- Understand reconciliation as a concept, an outcome and process.
- Critically appraise the relationship between reconciliation and justice.
- Grasp how reconciliation has been pursued in various domains such as politics, sport, and the arts.
- Understand how reconciliation has been understood in different traditions, such as faith traditions and liberal human rights tradition.

### Select Reading

- Bar-Simon-Tov, Taacov (ed.) (2004) *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*, edited by Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov, (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Philpott D (2012) *Just and Unjust Peace: An Ethic of Political Reconciliation*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lederach, John Paul (1997) *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.



## Dissertation

**Co-ordinators:** Dr David Mitchell/Dr Brendan Ciarán Browne

**Assessment:** 15,000-20,000 words to be supervised by an appropriate member of staff. Supervisors will be allocated following the submission of formal dissertation proposals at the beginning of March.

**Submission Date:** August 2022