



MPhil Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Course Overview 2020-21

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 2020-21.

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. The Dublin timetable will be provided.

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. As part of orientation there will be a course information session where you can find out more about how best to structure your study for the year ahead.

Information provided below is done so in good faith and is correct as of July 2020. Modules may be amended depending on staff availability. In addition, module availability depends on numbers of interested students.



Conflict and Peace in Northern Ireland

Co-ordinator: Dr Brendan Ciarán Browne

Time: Michaelmas/Autumn Semester

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; the impact of conflict on children and young people; sport, conflict and reconciliation; and Brexit. 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 (2013) *Northern Ireland: The Reluctant 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.



Research Skills EM7301

Co-ordinator: Dr David Mitchell

Time: Michaelmas/Autumn Semester

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.
- Identify and access hard-copy and electronic resources in library collections associated with the programme.
- 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* (5th 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.



Foundations of Conflict Resolution Research EM7450

Co-ordinator: Dr David Mitchell

Time: Hilary/Autumn Semester

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

- Woodhouse, Tom, Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham, and Christopher Mitchell (2015) *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*. 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.



Community Learning and Reflective Practice EM7454

Co-ordinator: Megan Greeley

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

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 2020 and April 2021, 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. Students will be assessed by way of written assignment, a supervisor's report and maintained timesheet. Please note, this module will be awarded a **pass/fail** grade.

Note on Covid-19: This module is dependent on providers offering placements; as of summer 2020, this is uncertain.

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



Mediation and Peacebuilding Skills EM7449

Co-ordinator: Dr. Dong Jin Kim

Time: Hilary/Spring Semester

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.



Conflict Transformation EM7443

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

Time: Hilary/Spring Semester

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. This course addresses the above challenge in two complementary ways. Firstly, 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.

Secondly, this course provides an opportunity for students to fully experience and afterwards critically reflect on a particularly promising process of interpersonal, small group conflict transformation, namely the inclusive sharing of life experiences (“storytelling”).

Note on Covid-19: this module will be held entirely in Trinity in Belfast, without a residential in Corrymeela.

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.



Contemporary Conflict and Peacemaking: Global Perspectives EM7448

Co-ordinator: Dr David Mitchell

Time: Hilary/Spring Semester

Overview

This module examines the nature of contemporary conflict and peacemaking through a series of significant and diverse country/regional case studies, including Israel-Palestine, the former Yugoslavia, Sudan, Sri Lanka, and the Korean peninsula. In each instance a series of questions are posed: what are the causes of inter-group tension and violence?; in what forms has the conflict manifested itself over time?; what role have regional and transnational factors played?; how have political leaders, civil society and third parties sought to resolve the conflict, and how successful have those efforts been?; and what are the prospects for, and the contextual constraints on, reconciliation? By taking a global approach, this module highlights successes, dilemmas, challenges, and cross-national learning, in contemporary conflict resolution.

Learning Outcomes

- Appraise the context of global conflict resolution today, including the distinct features of contemporary violent identity conflict.
- Compare and contrast a number of cases of violent inter-group conflict, identifying similarities and differences.
- Evaluate the variety of strategies which have been used in these cases to manage and transform conflict.

Select Reading

- Özerdem, Alpaslan, and Roger Mac Ginty (2019) *Comparing Peace Processes*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Tonge, Jonathan (2014) *Comparative Peace Processes*. Cambridge: Polity
- Darby, John and Roger Mac Ginty (2008) *Contemporary Peacemaking*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Lederach, John Paul (1997) *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace.
- Paffenholz, Thania (2010) *Civil Society & Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment*. London: Lynne Rienner.



Transitional Justice EM7447

Co-ordinator: To be confirmed

Time: Hilary/Spring Semester

Overview

The aim of this course is to provide students with an introduction to the fundamental questions and concerns of transitional justice, and examples of transitional justice mechanisms in operation in conflicted/post-conflict societies across the world. The module will examine issues relating to how best to counter impunity, recognise and meet victims' needs, and to ensure mass human rights violations are not repeated in the future. The core areas of transitional justice, including theories of transitional justice, domestic/international tribunals, truth recovery, reparations, and reconciliation initiatives, will be covered. In so doing, students are provided with the framework to better interrogate the issues associated with dealing with the past in conflict. The interdisciplinary nature of the module is one of the great attractions of studying transitional justice and permits students to engage with sociological, anthropological, legal and political material whilst also examining legal proceedings of the many international legal institutions in place to manage transitional justice issues. Students will be invited to practically apply knowledge of transitional justice mechanisms in a global context.

Learning Outcomes

- Comprehend the theoretical and historical underpinnings of the field of transitional justice.
- Assess the legal, political and sociological concepts relevant to the field of transitional justice and critically reflect on the role of transitional justice in aiding reconciliation and dealing with the past.
- Utilise practical case-study examples in order to bring the field of transitional justice to light and to highlight its applicability in a local context.

Select Reading

- Teitel, R. G. (2000) *Transitional justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hayner, P. B. (2002) *Unspeakable truths: Facing the challenge of truth commissions*. New York: Routledge,
- McEvoy, K., & McGregor, L. (Eds.) (2008) *Transitional justice from below: Grassroots activism and the struggle for change*. Hart Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Roht-Arriaza, N., and J. Mariezcurrena, eds. (2006) *Transitional justice in the twenty-first century: beyond truth versus justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kritz, N. J. (1995) *Transitional justice: how emerging democracies reckon with former regimes*. Vol(s). 1- 3, US Institute of Peace Press.
- Lawther, C., Moffatt, L., & Jacobs, D (Eds.) (2017) *The International Handbook on Transitional Justice*, Elgar.



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 2021