



TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF DUBLIN



SCHOOL OF
SOCIAL SCIENCES
AND PHILOSOPHY

Newsletter Winter 2012



Why a School of Social Sciences and Philosophy?

Most of the School's alumni probably have no idea that they belong to us at all. The School was only founded in 2005 when Schools became the basic units of the College. Schools are meant to be big enough to take financial and administrative decisions, and small enough to be real academic units.

While most individual academics remain focused on their individual disciplines, all our undergraduate students study some combination of the different subjects. They are quite right to do so. One way to see this is to think of the current European crisis. It is obviously a financial crisis and can hardly be understood without economics. As the crisis deepens, it is increasingly obvious that it is a crisis of a political system and a crisis of social cohesion. Hence the relevance of political science and sociology. And finally it cannot be ignored that it is also a moral crisis - just one aspect of the relevance of philosophy. Connections like these show the intellectual rationale for a School that combines economics, philosophy, political science and sociology!

Message from Head of School

Dear Graduate,

Since becoming Head of School over the summer I have been struck the important role School students, staff and alumni play in enhancing public debate and understanding of economic, political and social issues. Social sciences and philosophy have never been more relevant and indeed the School is a potential resource for the country in our current crisis.

The School's alumni community is made up of over 9,000 people around the world from Tipperary to Thailand! We want to ensure that graduates of economics, philosophy, political science and sociology can stay connected not only with Trinity but also with their fellow graduates. I am therefore pleased to welcome you to the first edition of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy's annual newsletter.

A commitment to excellence in both research and teaching and engaging with society are core elements of Trinity's mission. I do hope that this newsletter will give you a flavour of the range of activities being undertaken by the School in these areas.

I would encourage you to get in touch with any questions, comments or ideas.



Prof Peter Simons

*Head of School of
Social Sciences and Philosophy*



Prof James Wickham

*Dean of the Faculty of Arts,
Humanities and Social Sciences*

The School at a Glance

Trinity's School of Social Sciences and Philosophy is at the forefront of research and teaching in Ireland across the disciplines of economics, philosophy, political science and sociology. All four departments are rated highly in international research evaluations and our academic staff include some of the leading scholars in Ireland.

The School is home to just under 50 staff and to over 1,300 undergraduate students. We have a relatively diverse student body with increasing numbers of international students. We also encourage and support the admission

of students from under-represented socio economic groups, mature students and students with disabilities.

The School offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses and many of our students have the opportunity to spend time studying abroad. At undergraduate level by far the largest group of students are those studying Business, Economic and Social Studies (BESS).

The School is also home to the unique undergraduate degree in Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology (PPES) and contributes to

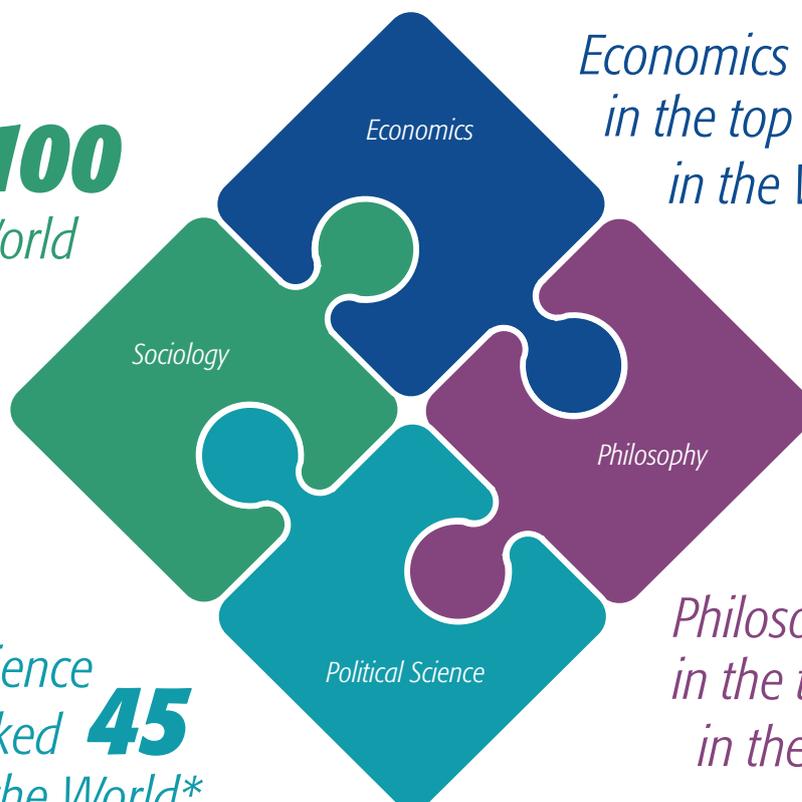
Two Subject Moderatorship (TSM) programmes in Economics, Philosophy and Sociology. In 2012 points increased for a number of degrees, including BESS, PPES and Law and Political Science, reflecting the first preference popularity of School courses and the growth in the number of CAO applicants.

Taught postgraduate courses are offered by the departments of Economics, Political Science and Sociology and we now have over 100 graduate students conducting research across the School's four disciplines.

School of Social Sciences and Philosophy 2012 QS World University Rankings

Sociology
in the top **100**
in the World

Economics
in the top **100**
in the World



Political Science
ranked **45**
in the World*

Philosophy
in the top **100**
in the World

*Politics and International Studies

Excellence in Teaching

Renewing University Teaching

We live in an era where more and more young people are going to college and everywhere class sizes are growing. In the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy we are committed to achieving excellence in teaching and learning – even when class sizes are large.

We recognise that routine quality controls are needed; teaching must be professionalised, so that lecturers are trained to teach and innovation has to be institutionalised, so that lecturers continually improve their teaching.

Regular student evaluations are the starting point. Evaluations ensure that when there are issues action can be taken immediately. While evaluations are essential to prevent poor quality teaching, they are also crucial for good teaching. Feedback helps the lecturer know what is working and what is not. So in the School, we now have twice yearly online student evaluations of all our courses.

Interestingly, while there has been pressure from students for student evaluations, pressure has also come from a number of members of staff who know that a great lecturer needs feedback from their students.

Asst Prof Eleanor Denny

Director of Undergraduate Teaching

Staff Teaching Award Winners

The Provost's Teaching Awards are the College's main means of celebrating those academic staff that have made an outstanding contribution in the pursuit of teaching excellence and who promote teaching as a scholarly activity.

The School is proud to have such a successful track record in these awards. Former winners include **Jacqueline Hayden** from the Political Science Department and **Eleanor Denny** and **John O'Hagan** from the Economics Department.

This year there were two award winners in the Sociology Department: - **Daniel Faas** received an Early Career Award and **James Wickham** was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Daniel Faas - "His professionalism, good humour and courteousness have had significant impact on the way I carry out my current job. Over two years after I graduated, I still consider him an inspiring mentor, and am proud to support his nomination".

Student Nomination



James Wickham has a passion for his subject which he passes on in his lectures on European Societies. He encourages and provokes debate in relation to the subject and his clarity and teaching style is excellent... He commands authority of the class in an informal manner which leads to respect among students".

Student Nomination



Jacqueline Hayden, Assistant Professor in Political Science, has been awarded **The Political Studies Association of Ireland (PSAI) Teaching and Learning Award 2012**. This annual prize aims to recognise political scientists whose disciplinary teaching incites intellectual curiosity in students, inspires departmental colleagues and integrates research and learning.



The School is delighted that **Eleanor Denny**, Assistant Professor in Economics, is the inaugural winner of **The European Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities**. The Central European University (CEU) in Budapest established this award to encourage excellence in teaching across the European higher education area; the honour is the first and only pan-European award for excellence in teaching.

Inaugural Teaching Awards Recognise PhD Students

In May 2012, the inaugural Dermot McAleese Teaching Awards were presented by Provost Dr Patrick Prendergast to teaching assistants in the School in recognition of their outstanding commitment to teaching and learning. This is the first time such an award has been presented in Trinity.

The winners were selected through a nomination process which assessed criteria such as their creativity in delivering tutorials; the role of their tutorials in stimulating critical thinking

amongst the students and their responsiveness and engagement with students.

This is to be an annual award which has been made possible thanks to the generosity of School alumni who donated to Trinity's Alumni Appeal.

The School also wanted to take this opportunity to recognise Dermot McAleese, former Whately Professor of Political Economy and a much loved teacher within the School.

Dermot McAleese Teaching Awards Winners

"PhD students play an invaluable role in delivering high quality and engaging teaching in the School. Their commitment and creativity truly helps to enrich the learning opportunities of our students."

Prof James Wickham
Former Head of School and
current Dean of the Faculty of Arts,
Humanities and Social Sciences



Awards winners from left, Justin Leinaweaver (Political Science), Emma Howard (Economics), Lorraine Mancey (Sociology) and Richard Hamilton (Philosophy), with TCD Provost, Dr Patrick Prendergast

Academic Leaders for Ireland's Future

The Grattan Scholars

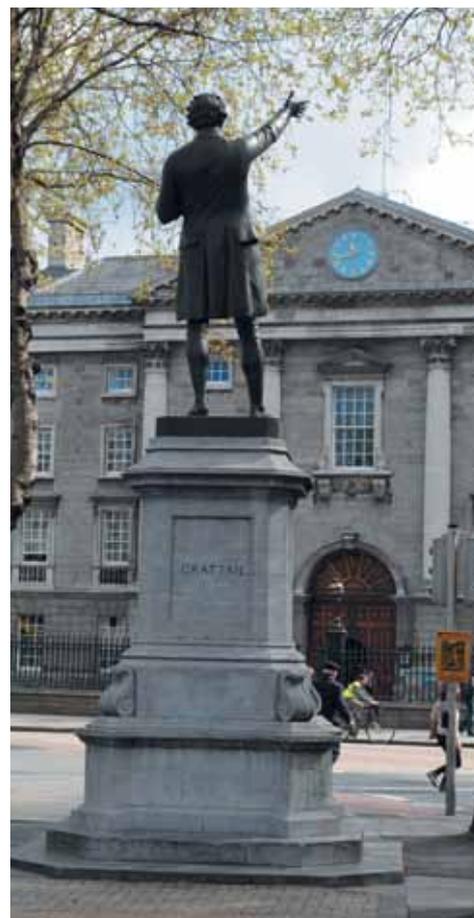
The School has developed a new Scholarship Programme - *The Grattan Scholars* - with the aim of advancing cutting-edge social science research and teaching. In a rapidly changing global environment such knowledge is central to our economic and social wellbeing, growth and development.

The Grattan Scholars are a cohort of exceptional PhD students whose work will have a real impact on Trinity and in helping to understand the evolving challenges facing society. Teaching is also an important part of the Scholars remit, contributing to the academic life of the School while enriching the students' learning opportunities.

We are delighted to confirm that the first two PhD students commenced in autumn 2012.

Development is a key research strength of the School, especially in economics. **Christina Kinghan** is undertaking research on *"The Foundations of Micro-Enterprise Growth and Expansion: A Development Perspective"* under the supervision of Professor Carol Newman in the Economics Department.

Sara Mitchell is researching a thesis on *"Synergies from Geographic Clustering of Creative Workers"* under the supervision of John O'Hagan, Professor of Economics. Cultural economics has assumed increasing significance in Ireland in recent years where culture and creativity are seen as possible keys to sustained economic recovery.



Grattan Scholars: Christina Kinghan (centre left) and Sara Mitchell (centre right) with their supervisors Professors Carol Newman and John O'Hagan

Thank You

The School would like to thank the UK Trust for TCD, John Pearson and Rupert Pennant-Rea for their generosity in funding these two scholarships.

Find Out More

If you are interested in finding out more about [The Grattan Scholars](#), or if you would like information on how to get involved as a supporter please contact Eileen Punch at +353 1 896 1714 or epunch@tcd.ie

The School is one of the leading social science research centres in Ireland. Particular areas of expertise include migration, international macroeconomics and post euro crisis issues. In this newsletter we talk to four of the School's academics to get their views and to find out more about their current research work.

What is the Role of Philosophy in Modern Life?

What is the role of philosophy in modern life? According to Antti Kauppinen, it is to philosophy we turn when things go wrong, and nothing else helps. Economic turbulence and its social fallout provide rich material for the philosopher: research in this field can provide a conceptual foundation for the social and economic policymaking which impacts directly on people's lived experience.

Antti's research into the philosophy of happiness and well-being coincides with an increased interest in the subject at government level in many countries. There is recognition that a nation's well-being is not all about economic metrics. Policymakers in the UK are collecting data to identify

how specific policies influence how people feel about their lives. Philosophy is necessary for interpreting this raw information and using it in ways that might genuinely make people's lives better.

Antti and his colleagues are also investigating ethical issues highlighted by the economic crisis. Could it be that moral vice is one of the causes of the economic collapse? Unlike defenders of naked capitalism, philosophers have long distinguished between greed and responsible pursuit of self-interest that is likely to lead to mutually beneficial outcomes. Perhaps this transitional phase of Irish public life provides an opportunity to examine how institutions and culture could be changed so that

they encourage the latter. The traditional questions of moral philosophy – What is the good life? What do we owe to each other? – are far from abstract or academic, Antti believes. Indeed, it's hard to see how we could make progress with the concrete problems we face unless we take them seriously.



Asst Prof Antti Kauppinen
Department of Philosophy

The Gender Gap in Irish Politics

The gender gap in Irish political life is greater than that of many other industrialized nations, even ones with electoral systems that are less favourable to the election of women. Old clichés about sexist electorates don't stand up to critical inquiry, so Gail McElroy and her colleagues are trying to throw light on the stubbornly low numbers of female candidates in Irish elections.

The Irish Candidate Survey has revealed that while male candidates don't view confidence as an issue for female candidates, female respondents do. In spite of significant social change and increased educational attainment many women still don't feel the confidence to put themselves

forward as candidates for election. Gail and her team are now surveying people in careers from which candidates traditionally emerge, such as the legal and teaching professions. These professionals, both male and female, will be profiled from a range of angles: personality types, educational levels and risk aversion, for example. Their responses to the idea of running for office will be investigated. Why, for example, might a person rule himself/herself out of the process? How accurate are the respondents' impressions of political life?

The insights resulting from this work could serve to underpin, in Ireland, the kinds of initiatives that

have been introduced in the US. 'Ready to Run'™, for example, offers workshops to potential candidates to help them address practical or perceptual obstacles. This survey will reveal more than we currently know about the continued underrepresentation of women in Irish politics, and feed into a strategy for change.



Prof Gail McElroy
Department of Political Science



Can Economists Save The Euro?

Can economists save the euro? It's a challenge when the economics of the crisis is confounded by the political debate over the future of Europe and the conflicts over the distribution of the costs of resolving the crisis.

There is a huge level of public interest in economics, particularly among the political classes. Policy makers are trying to get to grips with the workings of the economy in order to heal it and avoid further mistakes – many are turning to economists to help make sense of the problem and identify potential solutions. The current crisis is a defining episode in the field.

Philip Lane is one of Ireland's leading economic thinkers and he is working alongside others to help provide those at the political helm with a SatNav for finance and banking strategy in the modern era. The current focus of economic research is to establish what policies are required to improve macroeconomic stability in the Europe of today: monetary union is a unique experiment for which no previous mode

of economic thought can fully legislate. In the Irish context, the challenge for economists is to identify policies that can help policymakers resolve the crisis. Convincing insecure parliamentarians and a slow-moving electorate to vote for these measures is a different challenge. Economic research also performs the critical task of objectively documenting what went wrong so that the policy makers can reflect on the mistakes made and introduce safeguards against future shocks.



Prof Philip Lane

*Whately Professor of Political Economy
and Head of Economics Department*

Migration: The Experience of Polish Nationals in Ireland

Migration has emerged as a priority field at Trinity College. The university has appointed Antje Roeder to the position of Ussher Assistant Professor in Migration. Since her appointment, and together with several colleagues in the Department of Sociology, Antje has examined the social, economic and cultural experiences of those who leave their own country to settle somewhere else.

Currently, Antje is focusing on the experience of Polish nationals in Ireland. The last census revealed that Poles are now the single largest non-Irish nationality living here, outstripping UK nationals for the first time.

Despite the recession, many thousands of Polish families have chosen to stay in Ireland and Antje is hoping to discover more about their experiences. The team, under Principal Investigator Peter Muhlau, is conducting a longitudinal study of recent Polish immigrants to Ireland. The work runs parallel to similar studies in three other EU countries.

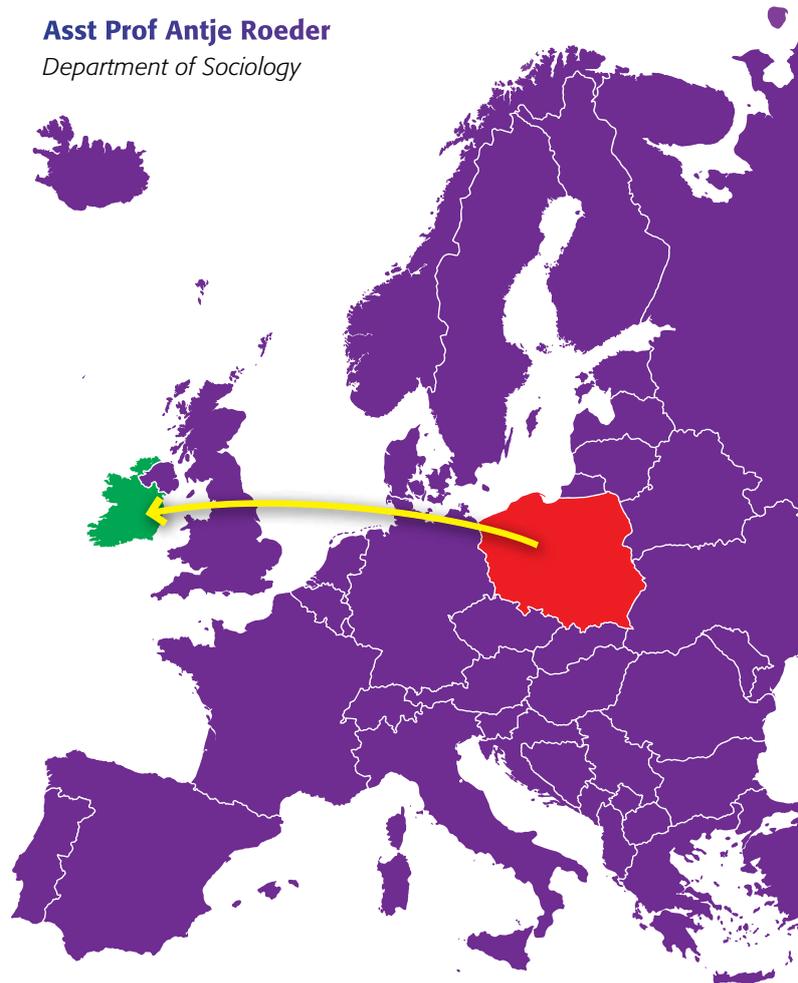
The survey is hoped to provide insights into the dynamic between social, cultural and economic integration. It looks at the networks, resources, language, religion and attitudes of Polish respondents on arrival in Ireland and at periods thereafter. This large data set also

covers the education and work experience of migrants before arriving in Ireland.

The work should show in detail, for the first time in Ireland, a picture of integration that may reveal for us opportunity gaps and potential challenges for migrant communities in Ireland, not least for the growing community of Irish-born children of Polish nationals here.



Asst Prof Antje Roeder
Department of Sociology



Alumni in the News

School alumni have gone onto careers in fields as diverse as business, entertainment, education, journalism and public service. The following are just a few of our graduates who were in the news this year:

Lenny Abrahamson – B.A. (1990) Philosophy

What Richard Did, the new film from Garage and Adam & Paul director Lenny Abrahamson, received its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival in September. While at university he directed short videos with the Trinity Video Society, which he co-founded with the film producer Ed Guiney.

Mary Cloake – B.A. (1984) TSM Philosophy and Economics

Mary Cloake was appointed as Chief Executive of the Bluecoat, Liverpool's creative hub which showcases talent across visual art, music, dance, live art and literature. Mary was previously Director of Arts Council Ireland.

Paddy Cosgrave – B.A. (2006) Political Science

As founder and organizer of The Dublin Web Summit entrepreneur Paddy Cosgrave helped to attract over 200 international speakers and 3,000 plus attendees from 50+ countries to Europe's fastest growing technology event. While he was at Trinity Paddy was President of the Phil.

Margaret Doyle – B.A. (1990) Economic and Social Studies

Margaret Doyle has been appointed as Head of Financial Services Insight for Deloitte UK. Margaret has been a writer on *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Economist* and still frequently comments on financial and current affairs on broadcast media, especially on the BBC and Sky News.

John Fingleton – B.A. (1987) Economic and Social Studies

John Fingleton was appointed senior advisor to the UK government Cabinet Office and the Treasury earlier this year. Prior to this he was chief executive of the UK's Office of Fair Trading. John was a founding member of Trinity's Student Economic Review one of the oldest undergraduate economic journals in the world.

Alex White – B.A. (1981) Economic and Social Studies

Alex White was appointed Minister of State for Primary Care in the Department of Health in September. Minister White was elected to South Dublin County Council in June 2004 and was Deputy Mayor in 2006/2007. During his time at Trinity Minister White was President of the Students Union.

Stay Connected

We are delighted that so many of the School's graduates have been back in College for alumni events and to visit old friends this year. In particular, there was a fantastic turn out from the Economics and Social Studies classes of 1972 and 1992 at the Alumni Weekend in August! We are looking forward to welcoming Political Science graduates back to campus next summer for an event to mark the 50th anniversary of the first graduates from Political Science. The Philosophy Department is planning a high profile international conference on renowned philosopher George Berkeley to mark the tercentenary of the publication of *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*. We will share additional details about these events over the upcoming months.

In addition alumni have made an invaluable contribution, as speakers, chairs and judges, to events such as the "Henry Grattan Public Lecture Series", the student Trinity

Economic Forum and recent Trinity vs Oxford student debate that *"This House Believes that Ireland Owes A Large Debt to Britain"*. If you are interested in getting involved in School activities please do get in touch.



Graduates at the Alumni Weekend (August 2012)

Engagement with Society

Public Lectures

The School's public events programme, organised by **The Policy Institute**, plays a key role in enabling the public to engage with the School and its work, and in ensuring that leading academics and policy makers from around the world are publicly accessible.

There were over 600 attendees at public events during the 2011/2012 academic year. The highlight in the

programme was the *Henry Grattan Public Lecture on The End of the European Project?* Speakers at this lively and informative talk included Joschka Fischer, former German Vice-Chancellor. A number of the School's academics also tackled topical and contentious issues, such as *Greed and the Crisis and Referendums: Past and Present*, in public lectures during the year.



Henry Grattan Public Lecture



Joschka Fischer (centre), former German Vice-Chancellor, with School alumni David O'Sullivan (left), Chief Operating Officer of the European External Action Service and Paul Gillespie (right), columnist at The Irish Times.

Upcoming School Events: We are planning an interesting programme of activities for the coming year. The following confirmed events will all take place in the Arts Building:

Philosophy Department Colloquia

'Requiem for the Ego: Inter-war Philosophers on Freud'

Prof. Alfred Tauber,
Boston University

December 3, 2012 at 5.00pm,
Room 5012

Sociology Department Evening Course

'Theories of Race and Ethnicity: An Introduction'

€175 for 10 week course

Starts January 15, 2013,
Room 3071

TCD-UCD Sociology Public Lecture

'Live Sociology: The Value of Sociological Attentiveness in an Age of Information Overload'

Prof. Les Back, Goldsmiths,
University of London

February 13, 2013 at 7.00pm,
JM Synge Theatre

For event details and podcasts of previous public events please see
www.tcd.ie/policy-institute

www.tcd.ie/ssp

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Find Out More

We are looking forward to engaging with our graduates, friends and supporters over the coming year and updating you on news and activities in the School.

We have a lively and varied programme of events planned so please do keep in touch to see what's coming up. In addition to providing stimulating perspectives on issues of current interest, events are a great way to keep in touch with developments in the University, as well as an opportunity to connect with fellow graduates.