MA in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism (CEESA)

- learning from each other’s struggles -

Handbook 2013 - 2014

http://ceesa-ma.blogspot.com

To be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing. – Welsh activist thinker Raymond Williams
Welcome

We want to welcome you warmly to the MA Programme in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism (CEESA). The staff of the Department of Sociology and the Department of Adult and Community Education hope to make this an engaging and challenging year for you – one that you will feel is worthwhile for you personally and supports movements for positive social change more generally. This handbook is designed to give you as much information as possible at this stage to help you plan your learning for the year. In addition, it contains valuable information on your thesis. Please take the time to read it!

We will support you in every way we can to ensure that your learning experience here is exciting and worthwhile. This course comes out of many encounters we have had where activists have expressed needs and desires for a space for learning, reflection and development, where we have seen students look for tools to understand and engage with community education and social movements and to put equality into practice even in the face of powerful opposition, and where academic research increasingly seeks a dialogue with practitioners. It is the core of a broader process of engagement coming from movement activists as much as academics, and from those of us who are both.

This course is grounded in the concept of a learning community, or community of praxis. What we mean by that is a fundamental dialogue between our different situations: the different movements and struggles that many of us, staff as well as students, are involved with; the legitimacy of taking time out to reflect on those struggles, or for those new to them to reflect before engagement. The single most important learning from this year will be the encounter with each other, and the experiences and practices that each of us embodies in our different ways. The course also aims to promote the critical and reflective engagement with ideas, concepts and theories that will enhance the development of you as group participant as well as your practice as an activist and a public intellectual, and tries to foster a debate on key issues in civil society in order to enhance your role in questioning those issues. We hope your time with us will be part of a continuum of learning, activism and critical reflection.

The information in this handbook is as accurate as it can be at the start of term. The course will naturally change as the year progresses, with staff taking account of what is happening in class and with individuals and with students making their needs known. This handbook should nevertheless give you a fair sense of what to expect overall.

Bríd Connolly, Laurence Cox, Fergal Finnegan, Bernie Grummell, Michael Murray, Theresa O’Keefe
Course Team

Brid Connolly  
tel: 01 708 3306  
email: brid.connolly@nuim.ie  
http://adulteducation.nuim.ie/department_staff/BridConnollysWebpage.shtml

Laurence Cox  
tel: 01 708 3985  
email: laurence.cox@nuim.ie  
http://sociology.nuim.ie/people/dr-laurence-cox

Fergal Finnegan  
tel: 01 708 6059  
email: fergal.finnegan@nuim.ie

Bernie Grummell  
tel: 01 708 3761  
email: bernie.grummell@nuim.ie

Michael Murray  
tel: 01 708 3591  
email: michael.j.murray@nuim.ie  
http://adulteducation.nuim.ie/department_staff/MichaelMurraywebpage.shtml

Theresa O'Keefe  
tel: 01 7086573  
email: theresa.okeefe@nuim.ie  
http://sociology.nuim.ie/people/dr-theresa-okeefe
About the MA in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism:

How can we bring about social justice and environmental survival in Ireland and beyond? This course enables students to think about how to build real alternatives to challenge existing structures of oppression and injustice. It is about developing ordinary people’s capacity to change the world through community education, grassroots community activism and social movement campaigning. In the face of powerful voices telling us that “there is no alternative” but to trust in their expertise and solutions, this course starts from the view that “another world is already under construction”.

The main force behind positive social change in Ireland and globally has always been "people power": those who were not "on the inside", without property, status or power coming together to push for change where it was needed. Community activism, the women's movement, global justice campaigners, self-organising by travellers and new Irish communities, trade unions, GLBTQ campaigning, environmentalism, international solidarity, anti-racism, anti-war activism, survivors of institutional abuse, human rights work, the deaf movement and many other such movements have reshaped our society and put human need on the agenda beside profit and power. This process has not ended. Movement participants have developed important bodies of knowledge about how to do this, which are fundamental starting-points for trying to make a better world possible.

This course is designed to be suitable both for recent graduates who are interested in social change and emancipation and for mature students with experience in community action and social movements of various kinds. The course is based around sharing knowledge and experience around the common goal of moving towards equality.

We hope that you will leave the course with a deeper understanding of how the politics of equality and inequality works in a range of substantive areas. You should have developed or extended your skills in practicing "politics from below": active citizenship, civil society, community education and development, social movements and other forms of popular agency. You should also have gained skill as a reflexive researcher, developed their writing and presentation skills and completed a practice-based research project. Perhaps most fundamentally, we hope that you will have broadened and deepened your engagement with each other, with us and with other fellow activists in different movements and communities, in ways that feed back into your own work for social change.
Participation
As much of this course is designed to be practical, participation is an integral part of this programme. In order to develop a genuine community of learners/practitioners within the class, it is expected that students will engage in class and group discussions, make presentations, engage in the group supervision sessions and participate practical exercises.

**In order to participate fully in the course and to engage with the content, a minimum attendance rate of 80% is required.** Course assignments etc. are typically structured around this. If there are issues arising in your life which may make this difficult in a particular week, please let staff know as soon as possible.

Rooms and resources
The basic space for the course is ACE2 in Rowan House, which is ours for Mondays and Tuesdays throughout, including during holidays and in the summer. Feel free to add a reasonable amount of colour!

In the Sociology Department (Auxilia Building), you have access to a postgrad kitchen and computer room. These are shared with other groups – PhD students and Sociology MAs – so please be good citizens! What was worked out last year for the kitchen is: bring your own supplies, clean up after yourself and if there are more than 3 of you (ie it is getting chatty) please close the door as people are working in the offices opposite. For the computer room, there are shelves for storage or you could store materials in a box under a desk (ie don’t leave a mess). If the printer needs more paper, please collect this from the photocopy room in the basement; if it jams please report this to the Sociology office.

In Education House (shared by Adult & Community Education and the Education Department) there is a student coffee room in the basement. Tea and coffee (but not milk!) are provided.

Education House also has the Education Resource Centre, for which we will arrange your registration. This has a wide range of resources including a small library, electronic equipment for loan (laptops, digital video cameras and voice recorders etc.), a photocopier and other services: see [http://www.resources-maynooth.ie/](http://www.resources-maynooth.ie/) for details.

There is also increased space for students in the newly-extended Library, including rooms you can book for group use, communal spaces, white boards, large screens etc.

Participating
Apart from the obvious (come to class, join in discussions, use the room and coffee rooms etc., go along to events) there are a number of other ways to make connections. One of these is Moodle – an online teaching tool with forums which often give rise to interesting conversations. There is also a facebook page
There is also a developing “CEESA community”, of people who have worked with us and/or share our basic perspectives. When you join the course we add you to the “movement-praxis” list, which includes all staff and students, past and present, from CEESA (about 60 people). Feel free to use this appropriately!

Finally, last year students tried to set up an “Activism, community, education” society. It usually takes two years to get a new society accepted – if anyone would like to have a second go talk to Laurence, who has the form from last year.

An ethical approach to research

Research in the fields of Community, Equality and Social Activism, because it involves research with human participants, is always ethically active. As researchers you will be expected to demonstrate a knowledge of the values that underpin your research, the risks that the research poses to participants and the issues of researcher integrity that are raised in your particular approach and focus.

Unlike research in the natural sciences, where ethical clearance is generally seen as a key part of the initial design process only, research in the social sciences is seen as ethically active throughout. You will need to demonstrate in your course work and thesis that you have given consideration to the ways in which your particular research approach raises ethical issues and how you have maintained vigilance for those issues at all stages of the research.

One such issue is informed consent. You must get the consent of those you wish to include in your research. You must also respect confidentiality. Informed consent is a fundamental prerequisite for conducting research. Towards the end of this handbook, you will find guidelines set out by the National University of Ireland Maynooth Ethics Committee on drafting a consent form for use in your research.

All proposed research for the MA programme is assessed by the course team on the basis of ethical considerations. The team will recommend the withdrawal of any research proposal that is deemed to be unethical in its approach.
Modules 2013 - 2014

For university purposes, CEESA students take 90 credits worth of modules, and you register centrally for these during the initial registration process.

We do encourage you to take the chance of sitting in on modules which you are not formally registered for (with or without completing the assessment by agreement with the lecturer - in any case this won’t count towards final grades). There are also various elements and assessments which are not graded. We think this gives you and us greater freedom to focus on the content - we hope you agree with us!

Your modules work like this:

Core modules (everyone takes them):

Practice and project:
AD617 - Community of praxis (10 credits). This runs through both semesters and is designed to facilitate peer learning and help the group members reflect deeply on their practice.

AD618 - Researching and completing your thesis (30 credits). This also runs through both semesters and is a structured programme to help you design and carry out your own thesis project as an original contribution to practice. All staff participate on this module at various times and in different ways.

The key aspects of CEESA:
SO / AD614 – Radical education and critical pedagogy (10 credits). This module focuses on the theory and practice of critical education from the point of view of activists for democracy, equality and social justice.

SO / AD616 - Power and politics (10 credits). This module is focussed on the politics of social movements, particularly the strategic choices faced by popular movements in the past and present, and what we can learn from their experiences.

SO / AD615 - Equality and social justice (10 credits). This module is geared to social analysis with the aim of helping you not only understand the nature of structures of inequality but also how to tackle them.

SO / AD622 – Feminist theory and practice. (10 credits). This module interrogates the core concepts, ideologies, and epistemologies which constitute feminist theory(ies), including theories on masculinities. It also considers an array of feminist praxis and its utility for achieving radical social change.
Elective modules

You take one module per semester for credit (ie you complete the assessment) but in practice most students “sit in on” most of the electives (without assessment). This is up to you!

First semester

SO / AD619A - The politics of environmental justice (5 credits).
SO / AD620 - Critical media and cultural pedagogy for communities (5 credits).

Second semester

SO / AD621A - The market, the state and social movements (5 credits).
SO / AD629A - Participatory action research in social movement practice (5 credits)
SO629A – Nature and society (TEN credits – if you register for this you won’t be able to register for a first-semester elective).

Other elements

The sustainable organising module is optional and not formally assessed: it includes meditation teaching as well as experiential discussion.

Outside items

Along with the on-campus course we are also involved in a range of events throughout the year, with a greater or lesser CEESA component (some are dedicated course events, some are joint projects with movement and community education groups, and some are items which we encourage participation in).

You don’t have to register for any of these. Some happen outside the usual Monday and Tuesday space, and we recognise that not everyone will be able to take part in these, although we hope that you will be able to take part in these very occasional events! We tend to develop this programme through the year, but here are some starting-points:

Thurs 26 September  “Forgotten but not gone: Ireland’s Buddhist heritage in colonial Asia”. Public talk by Prof. Brian Bocking (UCC), hosted by TCD MPhil Race, Ethnicity, Conflict; launching the book Buddhism and Ireland

Tues 8 October  “Marxism and social movements”. Public talk by Colin Barker, launching the book Marxism and social movements

Fri 8 November?  Public talk by Owens Wiwa, launching the book Silence would be treason: last letters and writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa
Fri 6 December   One-day conference “International solidarity: practices, problems, possibilities” (keynote speaker: Peter Waterman). TCD, MPhil Race, Ethnicity, Conflict

Date TBA   Workshop on producing digital media resources

Around Easter   Field trip to Manchester “Alternative Futures and Popular Protest” conference
Please note that all sessions take place in Adult Education Room 2, ground floor, Rowan House, north campus unless otherwise stated. Timings for semester 2 are still to be finalised so we are leaving this space to be filled in later!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SEMESTER 1</th>
<th>SEMESTER 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:20</td>
<td>Radical education and critical pedagogy</td>
<td>Power and politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:35-1:00</td>
<td>Critical media and cultural pedagogy for communities (elective)</td>
<td>Sustainable organising (optional, no credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:00</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-3:20</td>
<td>The politics of environmental justice (elective)</td>
<td>Joint Supervision / Individual Supervision / Critical Writing and Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:35-5:00</td>
<td>Community of praxis</td>
<td>Researching and completing your thesis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sociology Dept elective “Nature and Society” (Dr Eamonn Slater) takes place in semester 2, from 10 – 12 on Thursdays in the NIRSA conference room (2nd floor of the IONTAS building, north campus). NB that if you take this it is 10 credits so you will not be able to register for a first-semester elective (though you can sit in on one or both!)
Information on modules

Some preliminary readings are available for most modules on the website. More details on specific reading lists and assessments will be made available during the course.

Core modules

Community of Praxis
AD617, semesters 1 and 2, 10 credits
Fergal Finnegan, Laurence Cox

This module is the central space for students on the course to build a strong sense of a shared group identity. In particular, it encourages students to become conscious of the skills and experience they bring to the course and how they can develop these, by engaging with staff and other students in extended critical dialogue. A core part of the module will be student presentations about your own practice. It is important to note that the module will be run in an inclusive and egalitarian manner and each participant’s contribution will be valued. The diversity of the group – in background, levels of experience in activism and education etc. - is invaluable to making to what can be learnt together. Over the two semesters we hope students to take a leading role in shaping the form and content of our community of praxis. The aim is to build up a rich knowledge of each other’s experiences, interests and aspirations and to enhance our capacity critical and reflexive practice. It is likely – following consultation with the students - that visiting speakers from activist circles and relevant fields in academia will be invited to add a further layer to our discussions.

Assessment:

There is a single grade for this course which is given for student participation and engagement. Assessment will be discussed in the first two weeks. Typically this has been based on two written reflective pieces and one in-class presentation but also on group interaction more generally.

Teaching Methods:

Group discussion, small group work, reflective writing, practica, films, guest speakers.
Researching and completing your thesis
AD618, semesters 1 and 2, 30 credits

All CEESA staff

This module will offer students the opportunity to develop, engage in and present their own research in community, equality and praxis. It will give space for students to develop and research from their life experiences, community engagement, activist practice and educational encounters (including praxis developed within this course). We will support and encourage innovative research that embodies the praxis of community education, equality and praxis. This work is supported by the accompanying research methods module and is complemented by the work of supervisors.

Assessment:
Assessment is based on participation in the research process, completion of the research project and a presentation of the research. The research project may take the form of a traditional thesis, but other modes for presenting the research project will also be considered. All pieces of research must be an original piece of work, must engage actively with those working on the ground or affected by the issue studied; be permanent in form (which can be archived), be deemed to have adequately engaged with an appropriate literature and demonstrate a competent level of critical analysis.

This module is made up of three separate components:

(1) Methods and Methodology

Semester: 1 and 2

Teaching Methods: Lectures, Workshops and seminars

Aim:
To introduce students to research theories and methods and to explore the most appropriate approach for their own research

Learning Outcomes
The students will have:
- an understanding of the background to and influences on research in the Social Sciences;
- explored the roles of different types of research in this field;
- explored the relationship between theory and practice;
been provided with the knowledge and support to enable them to identify, research and write a research project/thesis.

**Syllabus**

This module will introduce students to the history of research in the social sciences. It will explore the links with research in education, feminism, psychology, sociology, and other related fields. It will look at different models of research. It will look at the various methods in these models and explore the roles of these in different settings and for different purposes. It will look at the issues in the creation of knowledge, in particular, critical research and action research.

This module will also support students when it comes to identifying the topic they wish to study. It will provide them with the practical skills involved in writing each stage of their reports, and will complement the work of supervisors with workshops on thesis writing.

**Reading list**


(2) Group Supervision and Reflexive Research

**Semester:** 1 and 2

**Module objectives:** To provide the students the opportunity to develop their research methodologies and practice and to explore various aspects of research and writing with staff and colleagues in an open and discursive environment.

**Module content:** This module involves exploring critical theoretical and practical issues of research design and implementation. Group seminar sessions will encompass a diversity of topics. A significant component of the seminars will involve student input through presentations and group facilitation.

**Teaching Methods:** Small and Large Group work

(3) Thesis and Research Completion

**Semester:** 1 and 2

**Module objectives:** On completion of this module, students will have completed their research thesis. To this end, they will have completed:(a) Literature review; (b) Statement of the issue(s) to be addressed in the MA thesis or equivalent work; (c) reflected seriously on the costs and value of their work to participating individuals and groups; (d) identified the sources of data used in the research; (e) identified their research approach; (f) completed an analysis and findings from their research; (g) identified future development, if appropriate.

**Module content:** Reading skills; researching skills, presentation skills; writing skills

**Teaching Methods:** Research and contact hours with supervisor
On one way of thinking about things, power consists both of the big structural arrangements and institutions which stand in the way of progressive social change - as well as the forms of popular power which constitute both what needs to be organised in order to overcome these barriers and, often, the largest definition of what positive social change might consist of. Politics is the process through which both the structures and institutions are constructed and imposed and the processes through which alternative possibilities are organised for, as well as what happens when these two encounter each other. Praxis, "action informed by theory", is the combination of an understanding of how power and politics work with a way of acting that aims to meet not just immediate problems but also longer-term goals.

This module is designed to help us - students and staff alike - relate our long-term struggles and practice to the wider conversations between social movements, political and theoretical traditions and engaged intellectuals about power, politics and praxis. In particular, it is organised around the conversations over strategy which have been central to activist practice over the past two hundred years: conversations about what we should do, how what we do now affects the direction our action and movements are going in, around what works and around how we understand the barriers to making progress and how we overcome them.

Along with an introductory section - in which we reflect together on the different strategic problems we see ourselves as facing - and a concluding section - in which we explore how our understanding has changed through the discussion, this module has three sections, each of them looking at a key set of strategic debates that still shape the way in which movements for change are organised.

The first of these can be described as popular gains which have turned out to be less effective than they were supposed to be. Democracy, the nation-state and the welfare state were all intended - by those popular movements which supported them - to lead to an increase in popular political power and well-being vis-a-vis monarchies, empires and private wealth in particular. It is hard to argue either that they had no effect or that their effects were those intended by their popular supporters. Here strategic debate often revolves around the question of faith in institutional arrangements and in the concessions made by elites to social movements.

The second section of the course looks at processes of popular self-organisation, from the Paris Commune via resistance to fascism to the movements of 1968. Here the emphasis is on how what at the time often looked like defeat in the longer-term led to new kinds of organising and new strength for popular movements. The question of whether these in turn have led to positive social change is very much an open one, and hotly debated in many cases.

The third section looks at contemporary struggles which have sometimes been held to show a "new way" past both institutional and organisation-led approaches:
movements organised around identity, "values", bodies and emotions; issues of power and hence process within movements themselves as things which can't be separated from outcomes; the importance of local knowledge, and the link between local struggles and broader, more global movements. Strategic debate here focuses on whether these are useful pathways for change or blind alleys; and how we can know. We finish with a discussion about the possibilities for movements today.

Through this course we will take part in these long-running debates over how power works, the politics of progressive social change and our own praxis as activists and discuss together what kinds of strategic thinking can help us create a better society. The purpose of the course is not to give a single "right" answer but rather to engage more fully with this process of movement strategising.

Assessment:
1 written assignment

Teaching methods:
Lecture input, discussions, large and small group work
Radical Education and Critical Pedagogy
AD614, semester 1, 10 credits

Brid Connolly, Fergal Finnegan

Education is a key terrain of struggle and political contestation. Formal educational institutions have historically played a central role in maintaining inequality and privilege and have promoted a deeply individualistic and competitive idea of learning. On the other hand radical social movements have often put enormous effort into developing educational practices, institutions and values which are truly emancipatory. This module will introduce some of the key ideas produced by these struggles (especially Freirean and feminist pedagogy and Boal’s forum theatre) and develop through dialogue a critical understanding of the role of education in society and its place in the struggle for social justice. It will explore the relationships between teaching and learning, agency and structure, consciousness raising, critical reflection and praxis through discussion, close reading of key texts, small group work and creative activities. It will endeavour to facilitate students to develop their own practice and philosophies, as educators and social activists. As such students are invited to critically reflect on their own experience in education – in formal institutions and social movements – in relation to in the wider social context and actively participate in discussions over the form, content and assessment of the module.

Assessment
End of term project and participation 100%

Teaching Methods
Inputs
Critical reading
Dialogue
Discussion
Small and large groupwork
Film/TV
Music

Reading for Radical Education and Critical Pedagogy
Electronic Resources

http://freireproject.org/
http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-freir.htm
http://pers-www.wlv.ac.uk/~le1810/fempted.htm
http://www.chss.montclair.edu/english/classes/stuehler/engl105/hooks.html
http://www.jstor.org/stable/4003432
http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Feminist%2fpedagogy%3A+identifying+basic+principles.+The+scholarship+of...-a085916959
http://mingo.info-science.uiowa.edu/~stevens/critped/page1.htm
http://www.21stcenturyschools.com/Critical_Pedagogy.htm
http://www.perfectfit.org/CT/giroux2.html
http://radicalpedagogy.icaap.org/content/issue5_1/03_keesing-styles.html
http://carbon.ucdenver.edu/~mryder/itc/crit_ped.html
http://gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/pages/mclaren/

Books and Journal Articles


Feminist Theory and Practice
AD622, semester 2, 10 credits

Theresa O’Keefe, Brid Connolly

Module Objective:
This module will provide a deep understanding of the core concepts, ideologies and epistemologies which constitute feminist theory(ies). It will discuss the usefulness of feminism for providing an analysis of the unequal nature of social structures and institutions, and whether feminism in practice can be a transformative ideology. Through this module, students will develop their own critical theoretical abilities and be able to situate themselves in current debates on gender and feminism including questions about the redefinition of sexuality and gender, and how differences among women can both exacerbate and challenge gender inequality.

This module also offers a critical exploration of theoretical works on constructions of masculinities with a view to developing a vision for equality and social transformations.

Assessment:
Discussion Facilitation and Participation 50%
Written Reflection 50%

Teaching Methods:
Inputs
Discussion
Groupwork
Video
Music

Recommended reading:
Equality and Social Justice
AD615, semester 2, 10 credits

Bernie Grummell, Theresa O’Keefe

This module will explore the structures and processes that reinforce inequality and equality in society to enhance students’ understanding and participation in a sustainable and socially just world. We will explore themes such as class, gender, age, ability, sexuality, diversity and inclusion, human rights, development, environmental sustainability, education and disadvantage. This exploration will be guided by theoretical insights from equality studies, social justice and sustainable development approaches. The module will develop critical thinking and knowledge amongst students to enhance a community of praxis and the building of an ethically responsible and sustainable future.

Assessment:
1 presentation, 1 project

Teaching Methods:
Lectures, discussions and presentations, small and large group work
(reading and resource list determined in consultation with the group)
Elective modules

Politics of Environmental Justice
AD619A, semester 1, 5 credits

Michael Murray

The concept of ‘environmental justice’ is primarily concerned with recognition of the importance of class, gender, race and inequality in framing environmental discourses, policy decisions and associated governance processes. At the same time, environmental justice acts as a key critic of the current ‘environmental movement’ particularly with respect to issues of power, elitism and cooption. One key argument offered is that environmental issues cannot be thought of as separate from wider issues of politics and power.

This course will look critically at a number of key tensions that frame environmental issues, both in Ireland and around the world, including issues of individualisation, gender, class, race, and ethnicity, as well as the relationship between the local and global. A central theme of environmental justice is on the necessity of building sustainable alliances between different communities and social movements and this will be a key point of focus for this module.

Assessment:
1 assignment

Teaching Methods:
Lectures
Discussions and presentations,
Small and large group work
Critical media and cultural pedagogy in communities
AD620; semester 1; 5 credits

Bernie Grummell and visiting lecturers

Module Objective:
To develop students’ critical reflection and capacities in media and cultural pedagogy

Module Content:
This module explores the role of media and culture in community education and activism. It adopts a cultural pedagogy approach to examine how and why cultural forms impact on community education, action and communication. The module will explore the role of contemporary media and cultural forms in representing public interests and facilitating democratic participation, addressing the tensions that lie with their role as profit-making enterprises and as expressions of socio-cultural and political values. The module will seek to enhance students’ knowledge of and capacity in cultural pedagogy, media literacy and advocacy and will explore ways in which these mediums can enhance a communicative capacity for community-based activism. It adopts a practice-based approach with sessions led by practitioners working in the areas of community theatre, digital media and arts, and media activism.

Assessment:
Assessment by reflective cultural portfolio – 70%
Group work and presentation – 30%
Participatory action research in social movement practice
AD629A, semester 2 (5 credits)
Laurence Cox, Jean Bridgeman, Hilary Darcy, Terry Dunne, Cristina Flesher Fominaya, Catherine Friedrich, Asia Rutkowska, Anna Szolucha

The practice of social movement activism and organising is a highly skilled one, although we are not always aware of it as such. Our activist practice is thus one of our greatest resources - and reflecting on and developing our collective practice is one of the least costly actions we can take in trying to increase our effectiveness in the world. Research on movement practice is thus about exploring what it is we already do as activists, and what we know about how well or badly it works when we do it. Action research is research which is carried out in order to improve a particular aspect of practice - i.e. which is intended not simply to analyse a particular injustice or elaborate resistance, but to help that resistance become more creative, fertile, powerful and, ultimately, to win. Participatory action research is research carried out by people who are also movement participants, together with other people in the movement, and answerable to participants rather than to academic criteria alone.

PAR in movement practice is becoming an increasingly well-known form of research, with a well-established PhD programme in NUIM Sociology and an international journal, Interface, which focuses on this and similar kinds of "movement-relevant" research carried out by movement practitioners and engaged academics. The Action Research Ireland blog, coming out of the PhD programme, gives an idea of the kinds of research this can mean: http://actionresearchireland.blogspot.com.

The PAR module is based on a democratic skill-sharing model in which staff, PhD researchers, MA students, practitioners and visiting speakers present and discuss their work. The course is assessed by an in-class presentation.
The market, the state and social movements
AD621A, semester 2, 5 credits

Fergal Finnegan

The module will give a historical and sociological account of the market, the state and social movements drawing on a wide range of disciplines (sociology, economics, labour history, geography and critical theory). It is an invitation to trace the roots of the present moment through history.

The content can be roughly divided into three subsections. The first part will look at some of the economic, political and cultural changes that have taken place in Ireland over the past three decades. These shifts will then be linked to the emergence of the 'neoliberal era' globally.

After this we will look at historical accounts of capitalism and resistance to capitalism which predate neoliberalism and that allow us to think through how the market, the state and social movements have developed in relation to each other. The purpose of this is to begin to analyse some of the key characteristics and dynamics of capitalism and how activists can, and have, acted effectively in the struggle for social justice in the past. The material relevant to the historical formation of capitalism is vast so a key aim of the module is to present a wide range of material so that activists can identify and the intellectual resources and ideas that are relevant to them. Last year the course drew on David Harvey, Michel Foucault, E. P. Thompson, Karl Polanyi, Nancy Fraser, Michael Mann, Charles Tilly, Axel Honneth, Silvia Federici, Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker.

The module relies strongly on set readings and will follow a seminar rather than a lecture format. It will be facilitated in an egalitarian and democratic way with the aim of fostering and sustaining critical discussion between class members. Students will be asked to co-facilitate and class members can, of course, suggest other readings and activities.

The third section of the module will be taken up with student presentations and discussions based on the students’ own activism and intellectual interests. A key question for all participants will be what sort of historical and conceptual resources are fundamental for an anti-capitalist analysis.

Relevant texts include


**Assessment**

This will be discussed and decided with the students. Last year assessment was based on class participation and a presentation (60%).

**Input**

Brief overview of key topics

Co-facilitated close reading of key texts

Video and animations

Group discussion
Nature and Society (Dr. Eamonn Slater)
SO629A, semester 2, 10 credits
Dr Eamonn Slater

Nature and Society: From the Great Irish Famine to the Celtic Tiger. Humans depend on nature to sustain themselves and their actions impact on nature. This course examines this metabolic relationship between human society and nature in Ireland. Using the Marxist framework of the socio-ecological metabolism and the metabolic rift we examine in detail how this relationship between nature and society has changed over time in the Irish context. We will be concentrating on two periods, the nineteenth century and Marx’s analysis of it and the Celtic Tiger where we will apply Marx’s concepts which we will have explicated from his analysis of the earlier period.
Sustainable activism

No course code, semester 1, not for credit

Dr Laurence Cox

How do we keep going and act for social justice under difficult circumstances – personal crises, poverty, repression, conflicts within the group, stress and other challenges? This optional element draws on group discussions and research on “activist sustainability” – how people stay involved in social movements and radical education – to explore the challenges not only of individual sustainability but of how groups survive and in the broadest picture how movements last or fail.

This element alternates with basic meditation teaching as an introduction to one potentially useful tool for activists. The teaching offered (mindfulness and friendliness practices) derives from the Buddhist tradition but can be used by anyone, whatever their beliefs or lack of them. Dr Cox has taught meditation for many years to a wide range of groups.

The “sustainable activism” component of the MA is not obligatory but we ask that you choose after the first class either to come to all sessions or not to take part.
Thinking about the thesis

A thesis is really a process as much as it is a product, but it is easier in some ways to talk about it as a product, and some of the technical parameters have to be put in that form. This section includes some of what we think a good thesis is, how to work with your supervisor, how to get the consent of other research participants, how it should be presented and how it is assessed.

Introduction

A major part of the MA in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism is your thesis project. This involves you exploring a particular subject which is close to your heart - often something which is important to your movement, group or organisation although it need not be. Because the course is a practitioner one, theses are typically (though not always) focussed on practice: the practice of critical pedagogy, the politics of bringing about greater equality, the process of social movements, for example.

Theses can be produced in traditional academic formats, but we actively encourage students to think of producing at least part of the thesis in a form that will be genuinely useful to practitioners (e.g. as a website, a DVD, an action pack, a pamphlet etc.)

The most important thing from our point of view is for theses to be real contributions to movement practice - ie not simply something that will moulder on a shelf but something that might actually be used by activists / community organisers / adult educators.

It is still necessary to think theoretically, reflect on method, consider relevant literature etc. - and all of this is a key part of practice in many social movement contexts – but this need not necessarily be done in e.g. a dedicated methodology chapter. Equally the best way to present the substance of the thesis need not be in the form of a bound book structured in chapters, or part of the thesis may take that form while part takes another and more practice-oriented form.

A typical thesis might have a wordcount of 20,000 but obviously its format will influence this massively, and there are no hard and fast rules except that if you make it too large and try to cover too much probably nobody will read it, which would rather miss the point.

Because the thesis is quite challenging, there is a natural temptation to put off thinking about the thesis for as long as possible. Experience shows, though, that it is important to start thinking about the project in concrete terms at an early point - even if the result is to decide to do something else entirely!
Past thesis topics

Theses over the first three years have covered a very wide range of topics including (rough summaries only):

- participatory action research among environmental justice campaigners to share what they have learnt with other campaigners;
- systematising the principles developed in a working-class women’s centre;
- tensions and alliances between NGOs and grassroots environmental organisations;
- the politics of independent living for people with disabilities;
- an oral history project among republican community activists in an inner-city area;
- life histories of activists influenced by alternative spirituality;
- developing a civil rights curriculum for secondary school students in the Mississippi Delta;
- the strategic choices involved in food politics;
- a toolkit for community organisers trying to make “the system” work for them;
- poetry, politics and migration;
- a mature student studying the college experience and life choices of other mature students;
- the history of anti-drugs organising in working-class Dublin;
- the problem of politicising secondary school students and adults;
- a toolkit for workers in women’s refuges doing artwork with children;
- the politics of deaf education in Irish schools;
- the struggles of adult survivors of sibling incest;
- the role of social media in the Arab Spring;
- a history of working-class struggles in an Irish city;
- the politics of interfaith work in Ireland;
- understanding the choices traveller children make in leaving or staying in education;
- the practice of Theatre of the Oppressed;
- the experiences of drug addicts in oppressive residential institutions;
- the politics and economics of art;
- activists in the Egyptian revolution;
- mapping rural homelessness;
- supporting sustainable activism.

In all of these students have done their best to go beyond simply stating a problem or highlighting an issue, to engage with the lived experiences of those affected, discuss with practitioners, and where possible develop tools of various kinds that make a real contribution to practice and will not simply sit on the shelf.
Guidelines For Working With Your Supervisor

Each student is allocated a supervisor who will be available to:

- discuss the outline of the proposed research.
- advise regarding the appropriateness of the topic and the research methodology.
- comment on written work.

The team will try to match your topic with the expertise of the supervisor. If you wish to change supervisor during the year you should notify one of the course co-ordinators (Bríd Connolly, Laurence Cox, Michael Murray or Theresa O’Keefe), and your supervisor.

The relationship between the supervisor and the student is very important, where the supervisor will enable the student to reach his/her potential for this course of study. There are allocated times both for group and individual supervision in the programme. It is strongly recommended that students meet individually with their supervisor at least twice in the first semester and three times in the second semester.

Supervision meetings should last approximately 30 minutes. Generally, you can expect feedback on written work within two weeks.
Guidelines for drafting the consent form for your thesis research

Informed consent is a key principle of research. You must get the consent of those you wish to include in your research. You must also respect confidentiality. Some key issues that should be considered:

- When will consent be obtained? Prior to or at the time of the investigation.
- Will consent be verbal or written? (If not written, please justify)
- Will consent be personal or third party on behalf of the participant?
- Will personally identifiable information be made available beyond the research project? If so, to whom and how will consent be obtained.
- How will you protect the data collected in your research, if participants are vulnerable to it being used against them?

In line with the guidelines set out by the National University of Ireland Maynooth Ethics Committee (http://research.nuim.ie/support-services/research-ethics), a consent form should contain the following:

- The title of the study
- Researcher(s): name, address and contact number (work details only, no personal details or phone numbers should be supplied)
- Supervisor(s): name, address and contact number (if applicable)
- Purpose of the study and what will be required of the participant.
- Confidentiality of data – who will have access to the data?
- Please state that data will be kept secure at all times
- Please state that data is available to the subjects at their discretion (i.e. tapes or transcripts/notes can be accessed at any time)
- What will happen to the study results?
- Withdrawal – Please state that candidates may withdraw from the study at any time or they may withdraw their data up until the work is published.
- Please state that the interviews do not constitute any kind of counselling.
- Please give the name(s) and contact details of a person/councillor/doctor/organisation that the subject may contact should they experience any kind of discomfort/stress as a result of the study.
- Please state the following on your consent form:

“If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process please contact the Secretary of the National University of Ireland Maynooth Ethics Committee at research.ethics@nuim.ie. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.”
If you are doing research with activists or social movement organisations, or with disadvantaged or vulnerable people, there are also much larger ethical questions which have to do with whether and how the research is of real value to the people or groups who are engaging with it. The purpose of this course, and of research generally, should be considered seriously in this light, and with an eye to the question "who will use this research and how?"
What do we look for in a thesis?

CEESA staff have discussed extensively what it is we are looking for, and what we really like when we see it. This is often a lot closer to what motivates people to do the course, and what people really hope for from their work - but fear of assessment can often stop people from focussing on the real substance. So here is our list of what we really, really want - the things which we care about most:

- Some contribution to movement understanding
- An ability to connect to practice
- A serious explanation of an issue that matters
- Critical analysis
- You learn something reading it
- A dialogue with the research material and with ideas
- Putting theory to work
- The questions in the handbook! (see later)
- Coherent, structured, focussed
- A clear focus on what you’re looking at and why
- Presentation is appropriate to the people who you want to read it

This might sound pretty daunting, but if you ask yourself which of these matters most to you and really work on that you will probably find that many of the others fall into place - they are really all of a piece.

If you look at work that you really respect or that has really inspired you, you will usually find that most or all of these are there. They are parts of good research, thinking and writing which we aren’t born with but which everyone has to develop just the same way you will do it - through the whole painful and powerful writing process.
Thesis Assessment Procedures

The thesis is assessed by at least two Internal Examiners. One of these will be your supervisor. The External Examiner also reads each thesis. The following issues should be considered:

- Does the thesis show an adequate knowledge of the literature in the relevant field?
- Does the thesis have a clear research question?
- Does the thesis have clearly defined objectives, and a clear focus on community education, equality and social activism?
- Is the thesis clearly structured and organised?
- Is the way it is presented appropriate to its audience (either academic or practitioner?)
- Are the methods used appropriate?
- Are the arguments presented in the thesis generally sound?
- Is the information presented technically correct?
- Is the thesis satisfactory in its literary presentation: is it well written, proof-read, with the references correct?
- Is the thesis a genuine contribution to developing practice in its field / movement / organisation?
**Thesis General Guidelines**

A thesis at its simplest is an **argument** (this is what the word literally means). A purely academic thesis simply tries to convince the reader (the supervisor and other researchers) that something is the case: for example, to explain a particular phenomenon.

Many critical theses try both to do this *and* to appeal to the state, the media or the wider public (for example, in order to raise awareness, generate outrage and motivate or justify particular action). This makes sense when the situation is problematic and there are good grounds for believing that if your intended audience knew about the situation they would act (and when you are in a position to reach them).

Practitioner theses, however, are primarily about convincing your fellow practitioners to make particular choices or to work in particular ways. They typically start from the recognition of a problematic situation in the world *and* from the realisation that what is preventing change is the interests and choices of powerful groups, so that the most useful contribution is one which helps those already working on the issue to do so more effectively.

In any case, you will find that other people have already thought about the issue before you, and engaging with their practice or literature is a necessary starting point if you do not want to reinvent the wheel. Typically, a thesis builds on existing knowledge in an appropriate field: in adult and community education or in sociology in general, but more specifically in fields such as equality, movement strategy and critical educational practice or other areas covered in the course.

Acknowledging the work already done by others in the field is the direct opposite of plagiarism - using their work without attribution - which will result in disciplinary action (it is in effect “cheating”). See the Examinations Office webpages for more on this.
The elements of a thesis

- What do you want to find out and why?
- Why does this research matter to you?
- What is your role in relation to the issue you wish to research? (e.g. it is part of your work environment, it is a political issue that engages you, etc.)
- What do you hope to learn yourself from conducting this research? What would you like to bring back to your respective organisation, group, community, etc.?
- What is already known about this area and published within the literature or shared as part of good practice?
- How do you hope to find out something that you and other participants do not already know?
- What experiences will you draw on that will inform the inquiry?
- What sources of knowledge (literature, reports, other research, people, etc.) will you access?
- What methods can you use to conduct the research?
- Where will you conduct the research? With whom?
- What ethical issues will you need to consider?
- How will you seek to present your research findings and arguments?
- Who is the potential audience for your research findings and conclusions?
- How do you hope that your research will contribute to developing better practice in your group, organisation, community, movement etc.?

Structure of a thesis

Just as in other practitioner degrees, where the final project may include (for example) a performance or an architectural design, so too in CEESA we strongly encourage theses which contribute to practice not just “in theory” but also in their form, so that all or part of the thesis is in a form which other participants in the movement in question (or across movements) may recognise and use.

One possible model for this is the “sandwich” thesis, where the centrepiece might be (e.g.) a DVD, a website, a pamphlet, a “how-to” toolkit, or a training event (filmed), and other elements such as literature review, research methods and bibliography are presented before and after this. We are also open both to more radical and to more conventional thesis formats; the key point is that whatever structure you use should cover all the key elements.

The conventional structure below can be used as a good checklist for this, even if you adopt a more innovative or imaginative structure.
Chapter 1 Introduction
What is this thesis about? What research question does it set out to answer?
How does it aim to contribute to practice?
Any necessary background information relating to the study.
A ‘conceptual framework’ for the research including a description of the main assumptions made by the researcher and definition of how you are using particular terms.
Why does this issue matter, for practice, intellectually, for you personally?
What limitations does this study have, the areas it will not study and why?
Present the structure of the thesis – mention the chapters, their titles and a sentence about the content of each.

Chapter 2 Literature review / theory
A review of existing knowledge and practice (and its shortcomings).
Alternatively, drawing on particular strands of existing knowledge to construct a theory of your own which is suitable to your topic.
This can draw knowledge from many disciplines and from activist writing and practice.
Sets the scene for reporting on your own research in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 Methods / methodology
Methods are the ways in which you went about collecting your data (e.g. interview, participant observation, collection of documents etc.) and the basic data (who, how many, when etc.)
Methodology is your discussion of the politics of the research situation: how you related to the other participants, what kind of knowledge you think you have produced in this way, etc.

Chapter 4 Research findings and analysis
The findings are not a total collection of all your transcripts or documents, but an attempt to organise them in a useful and meaningful way.
This then raises a wide range of questions for analysis, some of which you may be able to answer from your material.
In participatory research processes this analysis will not be yours alone but will be produced in dialogue with other participants.

Chapter 5 Implications
This chapter states what the implications of your findings are for your field of practice or the area you set out to study.
How does your work confirm existing knowledge and practice?
How does it depart from existing knowledge and practice?
What does it enable you do say now to other participants?
What might come next?

It is important to remember, particularly in a practitioner course but not only, that the written thesis is only a part of your engagement with the topic. It needs to be quite focussed, both so that you can manage to carry it out and complete it with the time and resources available to you, and so that you can present it in a way that will be genuinely useful to other researchers and practitioners. Your own engagement with the topic - and sometimes the research process itself - may continue long beyond the submission of the formal thesis. This may help to allow you to treat the thesis in a manageable way.
Thesis presentation

The University Examinations Office sets a series of requirements as to the physical form and presentation of the thesis which we have no control over. Note however that even though you must submit your thesis in this form, this does not mean that when you distribute it to your fellow activists, research participants etc. or put it online that it needs to be in this format.

Cover
The thesis should be bound within board; the pages firmly secured and the entire document capable of standing on a shelf.

The cover of the board will bear the title of the thesis in 24 point type; the name of the student/author; the qualification for which the work is submitted; the year of submission – all centred.

The spine of the document will bear the name of the student/author, including initial; the qualification for which it is submitted and the year. This is normally printed on the spine so that it can be read when the thesis is lying flat with the front cover on top.

Paper
The thesis will be typed on A4 paper of good quality. Margins at the binding edge will be 40mm and other margins of 20mm.

All pages of the thesis will be numbered consecutively, including appendices and bibliography. Numbers will be either centred or on the right hand foot of each page approx. 10mm above the edge of the page.

Title Page and Introduction
The title page will include the title of the thesis and subtitle, if any, in bold capitals. The title will accurately describe the content of the thesis. Following this the name of the student/author as it appears on the student records (in bold capitals); then (in bold title script) the name of the degree for which it is submitted; the Departments of Sociology and of Adult and Community Education; the year of submission; and the name of the supervisor. All these will be centred. See example below:
ANTONIO GRAMSCI:
THE IMPLICATIONS FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM

JOAN MURPHY

Submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the MA in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism

Departments of Adult and Community Education and Sociology
National University of Ireland Maynooth

2011

Supervisor: Luther Blissett
Acknowledgments follow the title page and may mention people who contributed through support, interest or by allowing access to information, etc.

The Abstract (about 300 words) will follow; this is a synopsis of the thesis.

The Table of Contents will immediately follow the abstract and should include chapter titles and sub-headings exactly word for word as in the thesis text. Each heading in the Table of Contents should have the corresponding page number justified to right margin.

Appendices may be inserted at the end of the thesis after the Bibliography.

Submission of Copies

You submit your thesis in TWO ways. One hardbound copy must be handed in to the Examinations Office, Humanity House, South Campus, and one PDF copy must be submitted by email to <Michael.J.Murray@nuim.ie>.

The electronic version will be included in an online archive of CEESA theses and other material on social movements in Ireland, so that it is available to help other people develop their practice. If you have concerns over confidentiality please speak to a member of the team – but remember that under normal circumstances even a hardbound thesis is publicly available.

Remember too that you will not be allowed to graduate (by the university) if there are outstanding fees or charges (like library fines!) so it is important to keep an eye on this to avoid unpleasant surprises. For more on theses see http://examinations.nuim.ie/documents/MINORTHESISV2_001.pdf

Thesis problems

Everyone finds writing a thesis challenging! It makes a huge difference though if you talk to a member of staff who is used to such problems or keep it to yourself. Please get in touch with your supervisor or another member of staff if you are struggling and don’t suffer in silence!
Issues of writing style can be a real barrier to making the written word serve your needs. If you are producing written texts, though, it is well worth the discipline of learning how to fit into a particular way of writing. Once you’ve cracked this trick, you will be able to fit into the different requirements of e.g. writing a newspaper commentary, writing a chapter for a book, writing a report, writing a blogpost etc. – they all have their conventions and rules, however detailed (as here) or loose. The most important thing is to become a conscious writer and learn how to edit your own work – otherwise someone else will have to do it for you.

Spelling etc.
Use British rather than American spellings; these can be set on your computer by selecting English (UK). Most word processors let you run spell checkers, so there is no reason not to use them. You can use figures in the text except when a figure is at the beginning of a sentence: e.g. Twenty per cent of viewers thought 5 per cent of the content was….

Do not use punctuation in words such as MA, UK, NAMA. Always write 1960s and not 1960’s. Pay attention to the difference between it’s and its. Spell in words the numbers from one to ten; use numerals for numbers over 11 and if the number is at the beginning of a sentence always spell it. Please don’t use commas to separate main clauses (“Many movement organisations use open-source software tools, these are produced by activist programmers”). And see if you can get the difference between i.e. (“that is”) and e.g. (“for example”)!

Many practical questions like this are covered in the Guardian style guide at http://www.guardian.co.uk/styleguide.

Text
Double or one-and-a-half line spacing is essential with 12-point typing on only one side of each A4 page. The exception will be indented quotations and footnotes where single line spacing will be used. Both left and right margins should be justified.

Headings
Chapter headings or titles, subtitles and subheadings should be carefully selected. This document uses three levels of heading to illustrate this. Chapter headings in the thesis should be exactly as they appear in the Table of Contents. There should be no more than three levels of headings, as illustrated here:
Quotations
Do not use italics for quotations. Use single quotations marks for quotes, except when indented in a block (then use no quotation marks). Long quotes of more than two lines (or approx. thirty words) of type should be single spaced and indented 5 letter spaces from the left margin of text but without any quotation marks.

Notes
Footnotes / endnotes should be use only if necessary, and placed at the end of the appropriate page or at the end of the chapter.

Referencing
There are many referencing systems and the course does not require the use of any specific manual of style. The requirement is that whichever recognised style is used be applied consistently throughout the thesis. Common referencing systems include the Harvard System (http://www.cse.dmu.ac.uk/~bstahl/HarvardStyle.htm), MHRA Style Book and Chicago Manual of Style, etc. The style used in this document is that of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Fifth Edition).

There are two aspects to referencing.

The text of the thesis or essay will mention other authors and their work.

The bibliography will contain the full details of all the references mentioned in the thesis or essay. Only authors referred to in text should be included in bibliography.

In the text of the thesis or essay the work of another author must be acknowledged and referenced. All quotations and references to other authors in the text should include, in brackets, the author, the year of publication and if a quote is included the appropriate the page number(s). Do not use ibid., op. cit., etc. These examples below may help.

Examples of referencing in the text:

Murphy (1999) has clearly outlined....

Others (McGill, 1998, p. 234) have also studied the...
Joyce (1989) goes on to say that ‘Irish drama is more inspired by place than issues’ (p. 256).

Many have noted (Jones, 1988; Culliton, 1999) that...

The example below has no quotation marks as it is sufficient to ‘mark it’ once as a quotation by single line spacing and indenting:

One of the recurring themes . . . has been the importance of getting people to think that HE is for them. For a large number of people higher education is simply not on their agenda. This is even before they start to worry about student loans or coping with writing essays. If they [universities] want to widen participation, then working to change attitudes to higher education is a critical area. (Baxter & Hunt, 1999, p. 36)

The bibliography must contain the full reference to all sources quoted in the body of the essay or thesis. Other material not referred to in the body of the text should not be included. All authors are listed alphabetically in the bibliography at the end of the thesis or essay. If there is more than one work by an author then list them chronologically by year of publication. List all authors.

Use lower case letters for book titles, article titles and subtitles except the first word of each title or subtitle. Give complete data for all material in the bibliography.

Do not use abbreviations for journal titles or books. Examples are given below and for other cases reference should be made to the appropriate manual of style that you are following.

In the bibliography, use single line space for each reference and double line space between each reference; indent the second (and third) line of each reference. Note the various ways in which books by one author, by multiple authors, articles in journals by one or more author are referenced in the examples below. Note style for internet sources. Pay particular attention to the punctuation and where italics are used (only for book titles and journal titles). Newspapers are given their full title in italics: *The Irish Times*. [Note the use of punctuation and italics].

**Examples**


It is your responsibility to submit a final copy, proofread and without mistakes, especially spelling, punctuation and referencing. If you need guidance or assistance please consult your supervisor.
### Marking scheme (all modules + thesis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Conceptual equivalents</th>
<th>Guide marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| First / A | Outstanding answer in every respect and in addition casting the question / issue in a new light ; ‘originality, flair and a critical imagination’  

Outstandingly informed; excellently constructed argument displaying a sure command of concepts and some originality of thought ; ‘originality, flair and a critical imagination’ | 100  
90  
80  
75  
70 |
| II.1 / B | Very well informed; coherent, well-constructed argument displaying good grasp of concepts; good coverage of the material, ability to compare material and bounce writers against each other in debates | 68  
65  
60 |
| II.2 / C | Information good and question/issue addressed; a fairly good grasp of concepts displayed; solid, can bring out pertinent points, some lack of intellectual content | 58  
55  
50 |
| III / D | Information adequate and question addressed; displays basic grasp of concepts; limited intellectual content | 48  
45 |
| Pass | Adverts to question/issue, but not free of irrelevance; information very limited or inadequately utilised or expressed in derivative language; some relevance but largely common sense | 40 |
| Fail | Little relevant information and/or question not addressed; mainly common sense understandings with little or no evidence of intellectual content | 38  
35  
30 |
|        | Little sense of what is required and/or no more than scraps of relevant information | 20  
10  
0 |
# University Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUIM Fees</td>
<td><a href="http://fees.nuim.ie/">http://fees.nuim.ie/</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 3875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services - Academic</td>
<td><a href="http://studentservices.nuim.ie/academic-advisory">http://studentservices.nuim.ie/academic-advisory</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 3368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services - Creche</td>
<td><a href="http://studentservices.nuim.ie/creche">http://studentservices.nuim.ie/creche</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 4729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services - Counselling</td>
<td><a href="http://studentservices.nuim.ie/counselling">http://studentservices.nuim.ie/counselling</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 3554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moodle</td>
<td><a href="https://moodle.nuim.ie/2011/">https://moodle.nuim.ie/2011/</a></td>
<td><code>moodlesupport@nuim.ie</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUIM Library</td>
<td><a href="http://library.nuim.ie/">http://library.nuim.ie/</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 3884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Studies</td>
<td><a href="http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/">http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 6018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services - Medical Centre</td>
<td><a href="http://studentservices.nuim.ie/medical-centre">http://studentservices.nuim.ie/medical-centre</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 3878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Resource Centre</td>
<td><a href="http://www.resources-maynooth.ie/">http://www.resources-maynooth.ie/</a></td>
<td>01 – 708 3473</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Education Resource Centre

www.resources-maynooth.ie

Registration in the centre and on the site is open to the staff and students of the Education Department and the Department of Adult and Community Education NUIM.

Opening times for this year will be posted on the ERC website shortly.
How to Use Moodle: A Guide for Students

What is Moodle?
Moodle is NUI Maynooth’s virtual learning environment. It may look like a normal website, but once you have logged in, it will provide you with course information, lecture notes and other resources. It is available anywhere you can access a computer with an Internet connection, on or off campus.

Where is Moodle?
Moodle is available by clicking the link under **Quick Links** on the university’s homepage, as shown below.

![The link to Moodle, shown under Quick Links at http://www.nuim.ie](http://www.nuim.ie)

How do I login to Moodle?
In order to login to Moodle, you will need to use your NUI Maynooth username and password. This is the username and password issued to you by the Computer Centre, and also used to login to the computers on campus.
As you are logging in, you might see some security questions from your browser, similar to those shown when you checking your email, or making a purchase online. Read these messages but agree to go on – click on ‘Continue’ or ‘OK’ or ‘Yes’ as required.

After login you will see the homepage once again, but your name will be shown in the top right hand corner, and a list of your courses will appear on the left hand side of the screen, as shown below. If you click on the name of a course, you will be brought to the Moodle space for that course. **Not all lecturers use these spaces**, but if your lecturers are using Moodle, you will find notes and resources, activities and announcements there.
I have logged in successfully, but cannot see ‘My Courses’ – what can I do?

If you cannot find your courses or see them listed, there could be a few reasons why:
If you have just registered, you may need to wait until later in the day for the system to update itself and reflect the new information.

Have you changed your course? If you changed your mind and moved to another module or course, please let Registration know. Once they have updated their records, Moodle will also update automatically, and you will then see your list of courses.

If you are still experiencing problems, but you know that all your details are correct and up to date, contact us for help at moodlesupport@nuim.ie.

Can I print my lecture notes?

Yes, you can print any of the resources you find in Moodle. You can print directly, using File and Print… in the web browser, or you can choose File, Save As… and save resources to your computer, floppy disk or memory stick, in order to access them another time. We have given more details of how best to save and print resources in the Students’ Frequently Asked Questions on the Moodle homepage.

I cannot open documents in Moodle – what can I do?

If you are using Moodle away from campus, then check that your computer has the software you need. Moodle is best viewed with Netscape 7 or above, or Internet Explorer version 4 or above. Many lecturers will use Microsoft Office packages to make their teaching materials. If you do not have Microsoft Office on your computer, you can download free ‘viewer’ software from the Microsoft site http://www.microsoft.com/office/000/viewers.asp. Similarly, if you are viewing a PDF file you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader, available from http://www.adobe.com/.

More Help

You can request login help from the Computer Assistants in the Public Access Computer Room (PACR). If you are having difficulties regarding course material and topics covered, you should contact the lecturer in question.

If you would like to leave details of your query, or request help with basic computer skills e.g. using the Internet or email, please leave a message on (01) 708 6287, or extension 6287 on campus.

For any other Moodle-related problem, you can email moodlesupport@nuim.ie or consult further sources of help on the Moodle homepage. https://moodle.nuim.ie