



MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology

Third Year Handbook

Ba Politics

Academic Year 2018-19

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1. About the Department of Sociology, Maynooth University

We are delighted to welcome you back to the campus of Maynooth University to resume your studies in Politics.

This handbook is intended to provide you with the information you need about our programme for the year and our policies: you should read it carefully at the outset and keep it for ongoing reference during the year. You will find additional information about the Sociology Department on our website.

<http://www.maynoothuniversity/sociology>

Further inquiries can be made to the department office - Room 1.5 in Auxilia (note **the Auxilia building has been re-numbered during the summer break.** Faculty and administration remain in the same offices but these have been re-numbered)

The Third year Co-ordinator for 2018-2019 is:

Professor John O' Brennan

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In the next section of this handbook we present our overall vision of how our degree programme is developing our students' base of knowledge and skills over its three-year course. Apart from this standard programme organised for each undergraduate year, you may be interested in other initiatives that are run by or in conjunction with the Department of Sociology. These will be advertised on the department's notice boards. You may also access information on forthcoming events on the Departmental website.

<http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology>

[Twitter: MU_sociology_johnobrennan2](#)

Third Year is, of course, your final undergraduate year. In addition to catering for over eight hundred students across our undergraduate programme, a further fifty students are engaged in postgraduate studies in the Department. We offer a taught M.A. programme: 'Understanding Social Change: Societies in Transition', as well as supervision for M.Litt and Ph.D degrees.

If you are interested in considering studying Sociology or Politics at the postgraduate level, you may find useful the listing of the specialist areas of interest of the members of the Department below. We are particularly interested in using the Special Topics regime to develop your ideas about and interest in potential areas of research in politics at postgraduate level.

Staff Research Interests

Dr. Mary Benson

Urban sociology, changing cityscapes, gentrification, place exploration, visual sociology, class and community.

Dr. Delma Byrne

Research interests include social stratification in education and the labour market spanning the primary, second-level and higher education sectors as well as post-secondary education and training; transitions between education and the labour market and the evaluation of educational interventions.

Dr. Barry Cannon

Research interests are on Latin American politics, with particular expertise on Peru, Venezuela and Central America, especially on issues of democratization, power relations, Left and Right politics, civil society, and development. Current research focuses on opposition politics in Venezuela; right wing politics in Latin America; and, comparisons between collective reactions to crisis in Latin America and in Ireland and Europe.

Dr. Brian Conway

Research interests include sociology of religion; collective memory; history of Irish sociology. Current research focuses on examining Catholic public discourses and institutional arrangements, trends and patterns in the Catholic workforce, and religious institutional responses to scandal, all in comparative perspective.

Professor Mary P. Corcoran

Research interests include the Irish migratory experience, professional media cultures, and urban transformation and change. Professor Corcoran is currently engaged in European research on public private partnership in urban regeneration, and a study of social and civic life in the Irish suburbs.

Dr. Colin Coulter

Research interests include development studies, global politics, Marxism, ethnicity and nationalism, popular culture and in particular popular music and Northern Irish politics and society.

Dr. Laurence Cox

Research interests include social movement research (movement waves, alterglobalization and anti-austerity movements, European social movements, movement theorising, protest policing, knowledge and learning production in social movements, activist sustainability); Buddhist Studies (Buddhism and Ireland, early western Buddhists in Asia); new religious movements; sociology of knowledge and culture (history of ideas, sociology of intellectuals, counter culture); working-class studies (community organising, oral history); social theory (western Marxism, socialist feminism); and methodology (participatory action research, community research).

Dr. Pauline Cullen

Research interests include political sociology; gender inequality, social movements; civil society and state relations; nongovernmental organisations; social policy and European Integration; coalitions between diverse constituencies; activism on social rights beyond national settings.

Professor G. Honor Fagan

Research interests include Human Security, Gender and Development Governance, and Social Sustainability.

Dr. Eoin Flaherty

Research interests include how patterns of inequality are formed and maintained, and how they change over time. I study these processes with a particular focus on income inequality during the late 20th/early 21st century, and instances of famine during the 19th century (mainly Ireland).

Dr. Jane Gray

Research and teaching interests include families and households, comparative-historical sociology, life history analysis. Her current research focuses on: life histories and social change in twentieth century Ireland; family and community, gender, household economies and social change.

Dr. Aphra Kerr

Teaching and Research interests focus on technology and media in society and digital sociology. Current research explores the implications of data driven

digital media design, online community management work, production in the global digital games industry, and the rise of the 'indie'. Recent projects have explored broadcasting and diversity, innovation in animation companies, the design of future telecommunications network services and applications and gendered practices and representations in digital games culture.

Dr. Rebecca King Ó Riain

Research and teaching interests include globalization, emotions and technology; racial/ethnic beauty pageants; critical race theory; qualitative methods; interracial marriage and multiracial people. Her current research explores the 'Globalization of Love' through qualitative research with transnational, mixed couples and their children looking at uses of digital technology to create and maintain global emotional networks.

Dr. Mary Murphy

Research interests include the impact of globalisation on welfare states, the political mediation of social policy reform, local governance and institutional mechanisms to support social innovation, social inclusion and citizenship, gender and social welfare, commodification, conditionality and welfare to work policies.

Dr. Peter Murray

Research and teaching interests include political mobilisation and the growth of the modern state, industry, work and technological change, health, illness and healing.

Professor John O'Brennan

Research interests include the process and politics of European Union enlargement; the EU's relationship with the western Balkans and prospective enlargement to South Eastern Europe; the dynamics of EU external relations; EU-Russian relations; constructivist theories of International Politics; and the identity dimension to European integration. I am also very interested in Ireland's experience of European integration, its relationship with the European Union and the impact of Brexit on the island of Ireland.

Professor Seán Ó Riain

Research interests are in the sociology of work, economic sociology, comparative and global political economy and social inequality. Specific areas of interest include work organisation and workplace regimes; developmental states; the global knowledge economy; economic liberalism; changing European societies.

Dr. Paul Ryan

Research interests include masculinities, gay and lesbian studies, social movements and qualitative research methods specifically the use of life history

Dr. Eamonn Slater

Research interests include the structure of modernity, the heritage industry (including tourism), the social construction of landscape and the environment, visual sociology and historical sociology. All of these sociological areas are investigated with a special emphasis on Irish society.

2. The Politics Degree at Maynooth University

The BA in Politics

This degree allows students to explore the different ways that politics shapes our lives, the various forms that politics takes, and how politics is organised differently around the world. The key distinguishing feature of Politics at Maynooth is that we expand the study of politics beyond the conventional focus on formal political institutions to include political sociology and a distinctive focus on active citizenship. Adding these extra pillars to the politics degree means that the BA Politics at Maynooth includes, but goes beyond, the traditional study of parties and elections to include a much broader variety of aspects of politics (including public opinion, community activism, the media, NGOs, new social movements, trade unions etc.). The three interwoven strands of the course are outlined below.

Political institutions

The study of politics begins with the effort to understand political institutions - the formal mechanisms and instruments employed at local, regional, national and international level, to give expression to the political character of collective (human) groupings. Political institutions are formed by and embedded in specific cultural and historical practices. They reflect both traditional or local sensibilities and important external influences on political ideas and societal organization.

The core courses which you will take will focus on the most important political institutions to be found at local, regional, national and international level, the actors who are most active within them, and the activities which these institutions engage in. These institutions range from local bodies such as Kildare County Council to national institutions such as the Dáil and Oireachtas Committees, to regional groupings such as the European Union, and international organizations such as the United Nations, the IMF and NATO.

The study of political institutions is vital to gaining an understanding of how individuals are represented within different types of political systems. It also reveals much about where power is concentrated in given political settings, and how specific political actors and social agents interact to produce policy outcomes. We hope that the study of a diverse range of political institutions, from the local to the global, will provide students with a sophisticated understanding of how politics is constituted in the formal sense in different parts of the world.

Political sociology

Political sociology is the study of political inequalities and the connection between political and other forms of inequalities across class, gender and ethnicity. Political sociology is therefore interested in power, who has it and how it is used. It includes a broad range of approaches which study the relationship between politics and society. It studies how underlying social contexts of class, gender and ethnicity impacts on political actors, pressure groups and social movements and how, in turn, politics shapes social structures.

It examines the central issue of how power is distributed between the state and society, how it is institutionalised and how it is exercised. It examines competing definitions of power including traditional theories of elite power, pluralist power and corporatist power as well as theories of informal power including citizenship, participative democracy, social capital and social movements. In exploring the interdependent relationship between the state and society it examines various arguments for the state to have a more minor or more central role in modern societies. The modern evolution of the state and society has been made more complex by globalization and the course examines how globalization might impact on state - society relationships, whether it might, for example, diminish the power of the state, whether it gives rise to new forms of power in the shape of new social movements and how it might impact on citizens capacity to be active shapers of their own environment.

Politics and active citizenship: a study, a practice and a career

This course is aimed towards those interested in the process of politics and active citizenship - creative involvement in political life whether at a community, national or global level. We have a quota for mature students and many students will already be active in this way.

Students are likely to go on to find work in areas such as NGOs, political research, activism, diplomacy and international affairs, journalism, development work, community work, public policy, human rights, or other forms of active involvement. Others again may enter electoral and party politics or the institutions of the European Union. Indeed quite a number of our BA Politics graduates from recent years are now working for individual TDs/MEPs or political parties in Dublin and/or Brussels.

The second-year "Active citizenship and participation" core module includes a placement element geared towards active engagement in some area of everyday political life. Your dissertation will also often involve you in a degree of practical work, and may well grow out of your placement. Finally, it is planned to organise

an extended field trip or summer school in a European city as an elective module which would substitute for one of your final-year electives (including prior preparation and a subsequent essay). These elements are an invaluable way of gaining practical experience and developing your own direction for political involvement as well as possible future careers.

For students with prior experience, they offer the chance to reflect in a more systematic way on their own everyday practice, and to bring research and theoretical skills to bear on the area. A degree in politics will also provide the knowledge, theories and research skills that will serve students well in any career. The degree equips the graduate with various skills, including the abilities to understand topical issues, to investigate public life through systematic research, to analyse and present information, and to apply these skills to a wide variety of societies around the world.

The course gives you a good overall grounding in key areas of political understanding: active citizenship, formal politics, political theory, political sociology and research methods. You can develop each of these to a greater or lesser extent although you will engage seriously with each pillar of the degree. Each year develops each of these strands within the overall theme of the year.

Third Year - Doing Contemporary Politics

Goal for the Year:

To continue developing your political imagination and skills and to put those skills into practice through designing and operationalising an original political science research project.

Research Methods and Design:

Additional optional research courses are available where you can develop your research skills. All students carry out a research project, based on their own collection of original data/material and using their own original analysis. This research project is developed through a small group structure (Special Topics Group) where participating students study similar political issues or phenomena together.

Attendance at Lectures

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that attendance at lectures and seminars is not optional. These are the places where people with real expertise in Sociology will introduce you to various aspects of what can often be a complex discipline. If you do not come to class, you will miss an important opportunity to learn and you will be poorly prepared for the various forms of assessment that appear along the way. So please bear in mind that the Department requires your attendance at all lectures and seminars.

3. Department of Sociology Timetable

Third Year Politics Timetable 2018-19

Consult the online course finder for the most up to date times and locations

Semester 1

24th September 2018 – 21st December 2018

COMPULSORY MODULES:	Credits	Day / Time	Venue
PO303 Special Topic Research Project	2.5	See PO303 Moodle page for sign-up information	
PO315 Irish Politics and Society Dr. Mary Murphy	5		
You must choose <u>1</u> compulsory module from the following 3 modules:			
SO204A Survey Research Methods Dr. Brian Conway	2.5		
SO205A Fieldwork Methods Dr. Mary Benson	2.5		
PO309 Files and Documents Dr. Maighread Tobin	2.5		
OPTIONAL MODULES: Select <u>1</u> module from the following group:			
SO319 Revolutions John Brown	5		
PO311 Politics of Ethnic Conflict Prof. John O'Brennan	5		
PO312 Gender and Politics Dr. Pauline Cullen	5		
GY337 Geo Politics: Power and Space Prof. Gerry Kearns	5		

Semester 2

4th February 2019 – 10th May 2019

Consult the online course finder for the most up to date times and locations

COMPULSORY MODULES:	Credits	Time / Date	Venue
PO303 Special Topic Research Project	5		
OPTIONAL MODULES:			
Select <u>2</u> modules from the following group:			
SO311 Sociology of Development Dr. Colin Coulter	5		
SO324 Threats, Risks, Conflicts & Human Security Prof. Honor Fagan	5		
SO338 Sex, Law and Society Dr. Paul Ryan	5		
PO209 Political Parties, Elections and Corruption Dr. Mary Murphy	5		
PO314 Policies and Policy-Making in the European Union Prof. John O'Brennan	5		
SP304 Social Policy and Welfare States Dr. Joe Larragy	5		
KD311 Africa and the International System Frida Besong	5		
GY327 Environmental Politics Dr. Claire McGinn	5		
GY347 Electoral Geography Dr. Adrian Kavanagh	5		

4. Module Descriptions

SO204A Survey Research Methods

This module introduces students to the techniques of survey research methods, reflecting on the both strengths and limitations of survey research methodology.

SO205A Fieldwork

Fieldwork techniques are essential to qualitative research. Fieldwork is one of the key research methods in sociology and anthropology, as well as journalism and espionage! This course will introduce the principles and practice of fieldwork through hands-on learning as students design and carry out a piece of fieldwork research together with a group of other students. Learning outcomes for the course include the ability to work with a group, the ability to take the initiative in creating a research project, and the increased empathy and reflexivity involved in good quality fieldwork.

PO309 Files and Documents

Bureaucracy is the modus operandi of the modern political state and is widely adopted by non-state organisations, especially by large private businesses. Bureaucracies function on a day-to-day basis by generating new or consulting previously written documents ("the files"). This course explores the possibilities, pitfalls and practicalities of carrying out theoretically informed research using documents created within bureaucratic and other contexts.

PO311 The Politics of Ethnic Conflict in Europe and the Wider World

This course introduces students to the causes, nature and consequences of ethnic conflict in Europe and the wider world. It aims to familiarize students with the theoretical debates surrounding ethnicity and nationalism in the contemporary world and moves from the general to the particular by introducing a series of case studies which emphasise the importance played by ethnicity and ethnic contestation in divided societies. Students will thus get the opportunity to compare and test the applicability of different theories of ethnic conflict against 'real world' cases where inter-ethnic contestation has led to significant confrontation and violence. Among the key case studies to be considered are: Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, and the Basque Country.

PO312 Gender and Politics

This module will provide an assessment of the key debates about the relation between gender and politics in the Western political tradition. It will explore how gender has shaped and been shaped by key political ideas (including the public-private distinction, the idea of contract, political representation, rights, justice, identity and equality), connections between conceptual debates institutional politics and, more specifically, gender inequality and political representation.

PO314 Policies and Policy-Making in the European Union

This module studies the EU by asking what it is that the EU *does*, that is by focusing on its policies. Through in-depth study of different policy areas, we will analyse how this evolving and expanding tier of European governance impacts on national political systems. The module is divided into two parts. The first part sets the scene for the study of EU policy-making and introduces students to the evolution of the EU, its treaty base and theories explaining integration. We also review the composition and powers of the main EU institutions (the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council and the Courts), as well as interest groups, and their respective role in the policy process. The second and more substantial part of this module focuses on the EU policy base. It identifies EU policy competences and examines a series of the most salient policy areas including agriculture, environmental and regional policies, the Euro, asylum, foreign affairs and security, and enlargement. This fast-paced, seminar style course will allow for plenty of topical debates, while developing students' analytical skills, encouraging students to look beyond the headlines to understand how the EU works (and how it does not).

GY327 Environmental Politics

The module provides an introduction to different environmental discourses as well as the history of the environmental movement and the emergence of 'green parties' in western democracies. Trans-boundary environmental issues will also be focused upon the manner in which environmental regulation has been shaped by political concerns will be a key theme in this module, illustrating the degree to which such legislation is often the result of a balancing act between environmental concerns and economic pressures.

GY337 Geo Politics: Power and Space

This course will examine the relations between power and space at a variety of scales. It will have three main areas. First, the Political Geography of Ireland and its place in colonial and postcolonial worlds. Second, the geopolitics of race in the United States. And, finally, the global geopolitics of the Cold War and the New World Order that has replaced it. The central concepts of the course will be scale, race, colonialism,

postcolonialism, power, exclusion, and imperialism.

GY347 Electoral Geography

This module introduces students to the key themes and debates in electoral geography and the recent literature in this field. It will offer a cogent argument as to why geography and geographical concepts (such as space and place) matter when it comes to explaining political behaviour and in particular electoral behaviour. This module will draw on examples from the Irish and the international context. Key themes to be covered during this module include:

- * Electoral systems and how these are expressed in terms of geographical patterns of support both for "major" political parties and for "minor" parties and the levels of proportionality/disproportionality associated with different political systems
- * How political parties "use geography" to organise themselves and to maximise their representation levels based on current/expected levels of support
- * The shaping of electoral boundaries and how these may impact on the ability of political parties to translate given support levels into parliamentary seat numbers/representation levels, with specific reference to current/past examples of gerrymandering
- * The geographical dimensions of "under representation" in political systems with specific reference to different demographic and social groups (e.g. females, younger voters, working class voters, ethnic minorities) - what are the causes and the implications of this?

SO338 Sex, Law and Society

In this course we move beyond common sense and 'natural' explanations of sexuality to show how it is a social construct of competing scientific, religious and legal discourses. We focus specifically on the state's regulatory role in the field of sexuality and how it has contributed to the creation of sexual insiders and outsiders through the extension of sexual citizenship (e.g. marriage, civil partnerships, hate crime laws etc). We examine resistances to this regulatory code governing sexuality and how it has contributed to the construction of sexual identities and social movements. The course also focuses on contemporary debates around the political economy of sexuality exploring controversies around the criminalisation/decriminalisation of sex work and the sexualisation of children.

SO311 Sociology of Development

The Sociology of Development seeks to describe and explain the dramatic and growing inequalities in power and wealth. What it means to be a "developed" society, the ways in which the west has conventionally constructed what is often described as the "third world" and the recent radical transformations at work in the global economy, politics and culture as well as a number of contemporary issues in the field of

development studies.

SO319 Revolutions

Theories and explanations of the forms, causes and consequences of social and political revolutions will be introduced.

SO324 Threats, Risks, Conflicts & Human Security

In the 'new world order' traditional threats - such as nuclear annihilation - fade while new threats - such as 'global warming' - gain currency. The focus on military threats emanating from other states is being contested - despite criticisms from the realists - by a far broader interpretation of security as any factor that conspired against human or individual security. The new conceptualising of security entailed in the term human security- albeit contested by the realist school and the dominant states - is both based on, and leads to, a new understanding of world politics. Human security, its focus on protecting people from threat, risk and negative impact of conflict in the context of globalisation processes, is the main subject of this course. Students will be presented with some social, cultural, economic, and political aspects or facets of contemporary globalisation and in this context security issues will be critically examined from a human security perspective, in its broader and deeper sense. In this way, students will be introduced to the re-conceptualisation of the globalisation debates and the re-visioning of what security means in the 21st Century. The areas of intersection between global human security and development, environment, health, war, migration, and gender policy feature specifically on this course.

KD311 Africa and the International System

This module seeks to outline some of the main development challenges facing African States in both national and international contexts. Key to this study will be to invite participants to challenge stereotypes and analyse critically various established perspectives about Africa in order to generate a better and more nuanced understanding of the development challenges of the continent and its constituent states in the global context.

PO315 Irish Politics and Society

This module focuses on the issues facing contemporary Ireland and seek to enable students apply their basic theoretical knowledge to key political questions and policy problems the world of Irish politics and society experiences today. By using fundamental conceptual and analytical tools used in the discipline to consider such questions the module seeks to enable students to critically analyse the major political questions in Irish society and beyond. Particular attention is paid to how political and social discourse is framed and who frames and sets agendas in Ireland.

SP304 Social Policy and Welfare States

This module explores change and continuity in welfare states, particularly since the 1970s. One part of the module covers the macro themes of crisis and welfare state reform, European integration and globalisation, demographic trends, environmental challenges and wider social change as they impinge on welfare states. The Irish case is explored in the wider context of change and continuity. A second part of the module covers issues that have come to the fore in recent times affecting individuals, e.g., household indebtedness, particularly since the global financial crisis and policy responses.

PO209 Political Parties, Elections and Corruption

The late Mair (2009) has, among others, put forward some key contemporary evidence that parties are changing from 'mass parties' into 'cartel parties' and becoming more distant from both the electorate and party members. This course examines the implications of such change. If democracy requires parties and parties are in decline, is democracy then in trouble? Parties and representative democratic government require electoral systems. What impact do different electoral systems have on political parties relationship with their voters and power seeking behavior? Is electoral reform a mechanism to strengthen democracy and restore voter or citizens faith in political parties? Are some electoral systems less prone to corruption and more likely to gain the trust of the electorate? Which countries (or systems) are more prone to specific types of corruption? If parties are now less representative or connected to either voters or members who are they connected to and whose interests do they represent? Are voters now less important than political party funders? What are the implications of state funding of political parties? Is the nature of and type of political party corruption likely to change?

PO303 Special Topic Reading, Discussion and Research Groups

You will participate in a Politics Special Topic reading, discussion and research group. Meeting once a week for one hour, each of these groups will focus on a specific theme or area and will have a staff director. Working within one of these groups during the first semester you will initially build up your knowledge of the topic by studying a series of key readings set by the group director and you will contribute to the group's discussion of these readings. At the end of the first semester, and for most of the second semester, the group will provide a forum within which you develop and carry out a research project on a subject that falls within the group's Special Topic area. In this project the methodological knowledge you have acquired in research courses you took in previous years is put to practical use.

Research projects may be carried out on an individual or a group basis. Decisions on the nature of the projects to be undertaken will be taken by the directors of the groups in consultation with the student group members. The group director must approve all project topics and work in progress on the projects must be presented to meetings of the whole group according to arrangements made by the director. Any project submitted that does not fulfill these conditions will not be marked.

Students should expect to spend approximately 8-10 hours carrying out the empirical research for their special topics thesis. This quantity may vary from group to group, particularly when groups involve collaborative research or collective data collection.

As a guide, this would translate into approximately:

8-10 hours of participant observation;
8-10 semi-structured interviews; or,
25-30 survey interviews.

Students will receive further guidance on the research requirements from the special topics group directors.

All registered PO303 students should automatically have access to the module's Moodle page.

The **signing-up** arrangements for Special Topics groups in 2018-19 are as follows:

- **Each group will meet throughout the year's two semesters at the same time.** It is **your** responsibility to make sure that your group's meeting time does not clash with required courses in other Departments in either the first or the second semester.
- Sign-up for workshop times will be done through the PO303 module Moodle site, on a first-come, first-served basis.
- PO303 group sign-up will **commence** on the PO303 Moodle site on **THURSDAY 27th September at 10am and run until 12 noon on TUESDAY 2nd October 2018;**
- Once the sign-up process concludes, you cannot change out of your selected group;

The groups will commence the week beginning **Monday 8th October 2018**

Please note: if you are taking Politics **and** Sociology you must sign-up on the PO303 Moodle site for your Politics Special topic and sign-up on the SO303 Moodle site for your Sociology Special topic.

Please note that at registration you will register for PO303 Special Topic Research Project. This is the only Third Year Politics module that is not completed within a single semester and, as set out in the Assessment section below, your Special Topic mark has three different components. First, a written assignment related to the work done in the first semester is due on **Thursday 20th December 2018**. Thirty percent (30%) of total marks are allocated to this assignment. Second, the research project, the deadline for which is **Thursday 25th April 2019**, carries 60% of the total marks. The remaining 10% are awarded for group meeting attendance and participation. For this reason, the supervisors in all of the groups will keep a record of attendance.

The Special topic groups for Third Year Politics 2018-2019 are:

John Brown (Thursdays, 3-4, CB3 - Callan Building)

Researching Politics: Issues, Questions, Methods

For much of the latter half of the 20th century, politics seemed to have a future. Political parties were genuine mass movements with solid social bases and firm ideological identities. Popular participation in elections was high with social and material conditions steadily improving for increasing numbers of people. These certainties seemed to dissolve, however, in the aftermath of the Cold War. Politics, rather, has become a byword, in the popular imagination, for deceit and mistrust and participation in political parties and in elections has decreased dramatically from their post-War highs, a process which seems to have accelerated since the Great Financial Crash in 2008. In its stead huge popular movements have appeared throughout the world, seeking a new form of politics which transcends existing systems, but which have failed, for the moment at least, to solidify into living alternatives. What form may this new politics take? What, if anything should remain of the present system? Are political parties - indeed politicians - of any use in the new era? Do ideologies - left and right - have meaning anymore? Will democracy survive; indeed does it deserve to do so? This special topic aims to help students identify the main issues confronting politics today, formulate relevant questions which can help advance politics in the current context, and devise appropriate methodological strategies to help answer these questions. In this way the sessions aim to blend discussion on politics with approaches to its study in order to help students complete their final year dissertations successfully.

Dr Mary Murphy (Wednesdays 3-4, Auxilia Seminar Room)

Personal troubles and public issues: who decides?

C. Wright Mills argued that a sociological imagination distinguishes between personal troubles and public issues (Mills 1967). A *trouble* is a private matter while *issues* have to do institutions of society and their failings or crisis. Often to hide such failures governments present *public issues* such as homelessness,

unemployment, poverty, or inequality as *private troubles* and the fault of individuals rather than outcomes of structural or political arrangements. Students are invited to use their political imaginations to consider how certain topics and public issues are framed and who gets to define how they are understood. Each student will be invited to select a particular problem or policy concern as a case study for their dissertation. Using a **power systems analysis** the group will explore the **interaction of ideas, interests and institutions** in influencing different stages of the policy cycle so as to explore how different public policies are framed and who frames them, or how some public issues are suppressed from emerging as public policy problems. Each student, having examined different approaches, will then build their own framework to help them explore their chosen case study of a specific issue. This special topic is structured to help students identify the main ways public or social policy is constructed, to formulate relevant questions to examine the case study they have chosen and to devise appropriate methodological strategies to help answer those questions. The emphasis is on active learning which blends discussion on politics and public policy with practical group and individual support to assist students to research write and complete their final year dissertations successfully.

6. Assessment

<i>Course</i>	<i>Forms of Assessment</i>
PO303 Special Topic Research Project	(a) written assignment at end of first semester (30%) (b) research project submitted towards end of second semester (60%) (c) Seminar attendance and participation (10%)
GY327 Environmental Politics	(a)50% Continuous Assessment (b)50% 1 x 1 hour exam
GY347 Electoral Geography	(a)50% Continuous Assessment (b)50% 1 x 1 hour exam
GY337 Geo Politics: Power and Space	(a) 33.33% Continuous Assessment (b) 66.67% 1 x 2 hour exam
PO312 Gender and Politics	1 x 2 hour exam
PO311 Politics of Ethnic Conflict	(a)50% Continuous Assessment (b)50% 1 x 1 hour exam
PO314 Policies and Policy-making in the EU	100% Continuous Assessment
SO204A Survey Research Methods	100% Continuous Assessment
SO205A Fieldwork Methods	100% Continuous Assessment
PO309 Files and Documents	100% Continuous Assessment
KD311 Africa and the International System	(a)1 x 1.5 hour formal written examination at the end of the semester (60%) (b)Continuous assessment (40%)
SO338 Sex, Law and Society	(a)50% Continuous Assessment (b)50% 1 x 1 hour exam
PO315 Irish Politics and Society	(a)60% Continuous Assessment (b)40% 1 x 1 hour exam
SO324 Threats, Risks, Conflicts and Human Security	100% Continuous Assessment
SO311 Sociology of Development	1 x 2 hour formal written examination at the end of the semester (100%)
PO209 Political Parties, Elections and Corruption	100% Continuous Assessment
SP304 Social Policy and Welfare States	(a)50% Continuous Assessment (b)50% 1 x 1.5 hour exam
SO319 Revolutions	(a)50% Continuous Assessment (b)50% 1 x 1 hour exam

7. Key Dates

Mon Sept 24th	Lectures commence
Mon Oct 8th	Special Topic classes commence this week
Mon Oct 29 th - Fri Nov 2 nd	Study week
Thurs Dec 20th	Special Topic Assignment due
Fri Dec 21st	Conclusion of first semester classes
Jan 2019	First semester examinations begin

Mon Feb 4 th	Lectures commence
Mon March 18 th - Fri March 22 nd	Study week no lectures/tutorials
Mon April 15 th - Friday April 19 th	Easter break
Fri May 10 th	Conclusion of second semester classes
May 2019	Second semester examinations
Wed July 31 st	Deadline for Repeat candidates to submit Continuous Assessment work

8. Consultation

It is vital that we are made aware, as soon as possible of any difficulties you may have in relation to your work or with any aspect of the third year programme. If you have a problem or question which relates generally to the third year programme, or to your participation in it, please contact the third year co-ordinator.

Third year Co-ordinator 2018-2019: Professor John O' Brennan, Room 2.2 Auxilia, Email: john.obrennan@mu.ie

If you have a query in relation to a particular lecture course, please contact the lecturer who is giving that course. Staff members are available for consultation at various hours during each week of term. Each staff member has consultation hours posted on his or her office door. Please try to attend at those hours. Alternatively, you may make an appointment by telephone, email, or by contacting Áine Edmonds or Trish Connerty, Sociology Department Executive Assistants, Room 1.5, The Auxilia Building, Tel: 7083659. Email: sociology@mu.ie

In addition to consulting with individual lecturers or the third year co-ordinator, students may communicate with the Sociology Department through the **Staff Student Consultative Committee**. The purpose of this body is to provide a forum where the concerns and interests of students can be raised. The committee consists of the staff year co-ordinators and student representatives of the various years who will be elected by students after the beginning of term.

Should you wish to raise a matter at the Staff-Student Consultative Committee you can do so in the following ways:

1. Talk to the staff member who has administrative responsibility for third year.
2. Talk to your third year student representative after he or she is elected.

9. Communications

It is assumed that you will be present at all lectures, tutorials and other class meetings. It is also assumed that you will check the departmental noticeboards in the Auxilia Building once every two to three days. You are responsible for familiarising yourself with announcements or notices provided during periods of time that are absent from class or from campus. It is assumed that you check your NUIM email account every two to three days (even if you primarily use another email account) and that you check module moodle sites regularly.

10. Penalties for Late Work

Where applicable, the following penalties apply. If coursework is submitted late, 10 marks will be deducted. No coursework will be accepted 14 calendar days after the deadline. These penalties will apply except upon presentation of a medical certificate covering the relevant period or in other extremely extenuating circumstances, which must be communicated to, and accepted by, the lecturer/tutor prior to, or immediately after, the relevant deadline.

11. Requirements for Autumn Supplemental Examination

Students who are registered to repeat must have a returned mark for both continuous assessment and exam.

If they have already submitted C.A. the mark attained for that work will be carried forward toward the REPEAT. The student **MUST ALSO RE-SIT THE FORMAL EXAM IN AUGUST 2019.**

If they have not already submitted C.A. they must submit by July 31, 2019. The student **MUST ALSO RE-SIT THE FORMAL EXAM IN AUGUST 2019.**

12. Preparing and submitting an essay

- 1) Essays should usually be a maximum of 3,000 words in length (there may be individual exceptions for some modules) and should be typed, single-sided and double-spaced (about 8-10 pages).
- 2) Essays must be put in the Sociology Post Box (Ground Floor, the Auxilia Building) with a blue cover sheet attached on or before the deadline date. Supplies of cover sheets are available in the Sociology Department.
- 3) You must refer to some reading material assigned for the course. Reading beyond the assigned material will be interpreted favourably only if you show clearly how it relates to themes and issues covered in the lectures.
- 4) Essays must be carefully referenced, showing the sources for any information or argument you refer to. A list of references should be appended, listing all sources referred to in the essay, including internet sources.
- 5) It is imperative that your essay referencing and bibliography adhere to the style guidelines described in this handbook.
- 6) Please read and take note of the statement on plagiarism in this handbook.
- 7) You must keep an exact copy of each written assignment you submit to the department. Should your assignment be mislaid, you will be asked to provide a replacement copy.

13. Essay assessment

The main criteria in assessing an essay are:

- level of understanding of the issue
- number of readings and the use which is made of such readings
- logical development of the discussion
- awareness and discussion of alternative arguments or viewpoints

- clarity of the writing style.

A first class essay or paper will show an excellent understanding of the issue; demonstrate an ability to use analytical reasoning; mobilise a good range of readings; and it will be written in a clear and concise style. An essay will fail if it does not address the question; reveals a fundamental lack of understanding of the issue; or is based on far too limited a range of readings.

14. Plagiarism

Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves an attempt to use an element of another person's work, without appropriate acknowledgement in order to gain academic credit. It may include the unacknowledged verbatim reproduction of material, unsanctioned collusion, but is not limited to these matters; it may also include the unacknowledged adoption of an argumentative structure, or the unacknowledged use of a source or of research materials.

For example, when you directly copy another person's text without placing it in quotation marks and without acknowledging the source, you are plagiarising. The same is true when you present someone else's original idea, research or argument as though it were your own.

Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. It reveals an unwillingness to think for oneself and is both unethical and illegal under copyright laws. Please do not make the mistake of assuming that we won't recognise plagiarised material. It is almost always possible to identify text that has been professionally copy-edited, or is different in style from your own. The direct copying of passages (including illustrations) from a book, an article or the Internet without adequate references is a serious breach of academic trust and practice. Submitting essays or projects written by anyone other than yourself will also result in heavy penalties. As your final assessment is partly based on written assignments, plagiarism is equivalent to cheating at examinations.

Maynooth University considers plagiarism to be a serious academic misconduct, deserving of academic penalties. This document sets out the procedures for dealing with cases of plagiarism or suspected plagiarism in taught programmes of the University.

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/Plagiarism%20Sept%202015_0.pdf Please note that when you submit work to the Department you sign a statement that your work is original and does not constitute plagiarism under the Maynooth University Policy on Plagiarism.

The Department of Sociology operates an "early warning" system. If a student is suspected of plagiarism or incorrect use of citation, the student is required to meet with the appropriate lecturer to discuss the problem. If this is a first instance, the student will receive a warning but will be allowed to resubmit their work.

Second and subsequent instances of this kind will be dealt with strictly in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Maynooth University Policy on Plagiarism.

15. Guidelines for citation

Books and articles read by you and referred to in your essay must be cited both in the essay itself and in the list of references at the end. **Only include in your list of references material you have read yourself and have referred to in your essay.** The usual procedure in sociology is to integrate references into the text itself.

Citations in the text include the last names of the authors and year of publication. Include page numbers when you quote directly from a work or refer to specific passages. Identify subsequent citations of the same source in the same way as the first. Examples follow:

- If **author's name** is in the text, follow it with the publication year in parentheses: ...in another study by Duncan (1959).
- If **author's name** is not in the text, enclose the last name and publication year in parentheses: ...whenever it occurred (Gouldner 1963).
- **Pagination** follows year of publication after a colon; omit the space between the colon and the page number: ...Kuhn (1970:71)
- Give both last names for **Joint Authors**: ...(Martin and Bailey 1988).

Quotations in the text begin and end with quotation marks; the author, date, and/or page numbers follow the end-quote and precede the period:

Wright and Jacobs (1994) found that "the variation in men's earnings relative to their peers in the labour force was not a reliable predictor of men's flight from

feminising occupations"(p. 531).

OR

One study found that "the variation in men's earnings relative to their peers in the labour force was not a reliable predictor of men's flight from feminising occupations" (Wright and Jacobs 1994:531).

Block Quotations are presented in smaller type and are set off in a separate, indented paragraph. Block quotations should not be enclosed in quotation marks:

As stated by Wright and Jacobs (1994):

The variation in men's earnings relative to their peers in the labour force was not a reliable predictor of men's attrition. This finding is inconsistent with the prediction that declines in earnings are responsible for male flight from feminising occupations. (p. 531)

Reference List Formats: Some Examples

- Books

Garner, Steve. 2004. *Racism in the Irish Experience*. London: Pluto Press.

Berlin, Gordon and Andrew Sum. 1988. *Toward a More Perfect Union: Basic Skills, Poor Families and Our Economic Future*. New York: Ford Foundation.

- Editions of Books

McCullagh, Peter and John A Nelder. 1989. *Generalized Linear Models*. 2nd ed. London: Chapman and Hall.

- Articles From Collected Works

Clausen, John A. 1972. "The Life Course of Individuals." Pp. 457-514 in *Aging and Society*, vol. 3, *A Sociology of Age Stratification*, edited by M. W. Riley, M. Johnson and A. Foner. New York: Russell Sage.

- Articles From Journals

Goodman, Leo A. 1947a. " The Analysis of Systems of Qualitative Variables When Some of the Variables are Unobservable." *American Journal of Sociology*. 79:179-209.

_____. 1947b. "Exploratory Latent Structure Analysis Using Both Identifiable and Unidentifiable Models. *Biometrika*. 61:215-231.

Conger, Rand D. Forthcoming. "The Effects of Positive Feedback on Direction and Amount of Verbalization in a Social Setting. *Sociological Perspectives*.

- Articles From Newspapers and Magazines

Guiles, Melinda and Krystal Miller. 1990. "Mazda and Mitsubishi-Chrysler Venture Cut Output, Following Big Three's Lead." *Wall Street Journal*, January 12, pp. A2, A12.

- Electronic Sources

On-line journal article

Jacobson, John W., Jane A. Mulick, and Anne A. Schwartz. 1995. "A History of Facilitated Communication: Science, Pseudoscience and Anti-science." *American Psychologist* 50:750-65. Retrieved January 25, 1996 (<http://www.apa.org/journals/jacobson.html>).

Newspaper article

Goldstein, Amy 1997. "Dying Patients' Care Varies Widely by Place, Study Says." *Washington Post*, October 15, P. A1. Retrieved October 15, 1997 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/Wplate/1997-10/15/0661-101597-idx.html>).

An Action Alert Posted on a Web Page

American Sociological Association. 1997. "Call for Help" (ASA Action Alert, October 15). Washington DC: American Sociological Association. Retrieved October 15, 1997 (<http://www.asanet.org/racecall.htm>).

Should you need more detailed information about citations, please consult *The American Sociological Association Style Guide 2nd edition*. 1997. Washington DC: American Sociological Association, from which all of these excerpts were taken.

ENJOY YOUR YEAR!
September 2018