

Research Newsletter



St Mary's
University College
Belfast
A College of Queen's University

COLLEGE'S NEW 3-YEAR RESEARCH STRATEGY

The Strategic Plan for Research Development 2014-2017 was approved by the College's Board of Governors in March 2014. The aims of the strategic plan are: to increase the level of engagement in research among academic staff and the quality of research outputs produced, strategically building the strength and capacity of the research base; to ensure that research and scholarship, including original research by staff, underpin high quality teaching and learning and enhance the student experience at the College; and to build capacity among students of teacher education and the liberal arts as the next generation of educators and professionals and to motivate them to disseminate and to apply research critically.

A model was proposed to provide a framework for research development between 2014-2017. It reflects the areas of interest, expertise and current research output of academic staff as well as the needs of the College. Research activity in the College will focus on two themes, which include Teacher Education & Pupil Learning as well as International Studies.

Five research groups/centres were proposed to reflect the particular research interests of academic staff and to provide a forum for academic activity in relation to those interests. They include:

- ◆ Catholic Education Research Group/Centre;
- ◆ Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment Research Group/Centre;
- ◆ Global Justice Research Group/Centre;
- ◆ Irish-medium Education Research Group/Centre;
- ◆ Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) Education Research Group/Centre.

IMPACT OF SUCCESSFUL EUROPEAN EDUCATION PROJECT IN GERMAN SCHOOLS

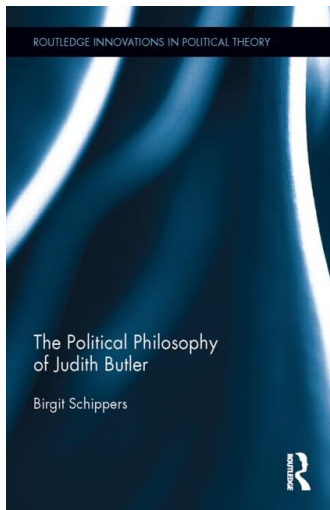
Following on from the success of the recently completed *PAM-INA* project funded by the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme, which involved Dr Angela Vaupel, Dr Tracey McKay and colleagues from various institutions across Europe, the researchers are continuing to see the impact their research has in schools. The applied output of the *PAM-INA* project, which included a multilingual teacher manual and toolkits on European dimension/identities and citizenship education, will be integrated into the new Social Studies curricula for a large number of post-primary schools. The school curricula bodies in Germany are at the discretion of the German Federal States (altogether 16 states) and in this case, the federal state of Saarland will include the toolkit in its compulsory syllabi list of teaching material for Social Studies subjects in post-primary education. Therefore, from the beginning of the new 2014-2015 academic year the toolkit will be used in the actual school teaching environment and, as a result of this, will be used also in initial teacher education degree courses in the Saarland.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- * College's new 3-year research strategy
- * Impact of successful European education project in German schools
- * A significant contributor to research in international political philosophy
- * QUB briefing on Horizon 2020 to research committee
- * Two academics highlight educational work and research on local and global citizenship
- * Representation at conference on deploying narrative in researching Irish society
- * Two academics present their research at a seminar and public lecture
- * Research papers delivered at international studies conferences in Ireland and Canada
- * Key stage 3 art and science subjects used in a model for interdisciplinary learning
- * Academic gets published in first volume of Greek education journal
- * Opinion on globalisation being a mixed blessing for international development
- * Book six of sixteen published in the "16 Lives" series
- * Staff profile

A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTOR TO RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY



The world's leading academic publisher in the humanities and social sciences, Routledge, published a book written by Dr Birgit Schippers on the 16th April 2014 titled, *The Political Philosophy of Judith Butler*. The publisher describes the book as a detailed exposition and analysis of Butler's recent ideas, championing her efforts at articulating the possibilities for radical politics and ethical life in an era of global interdependence. Birgit encountered Judith Butler's ideas initially during her doctoral studies under the supervision of Professor Moya Lloyd from Loughborough University. In the introduction to the book Birgit wrote,

"Like many of her readers, I first encountered Butler's ideas through *Gender Trouble* ... I do remember being both 'troubled' and exhilarated by this text and its ideas. For me, *Gender Trouble* pointed up the possibilities of feminism, and in doing so, it made feminism exciting: it changed my thinking about what feminism could be, what gender could mean, and what gender theory could explain".

"A detailed exposition and analysis of Butler's recent ideas championing her efforts at articulating the possibilities for radical politics and ethical life in an era of global interdependence."

QUB BRIEFING ON HORIZON 2020 TO RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Dr Inmaculada Higuera, who is the EU Thematic Lead at QUB, met with members of the Research Committee in March 2014 and gave a presentation on Horizon 2020 which is the new EU Framework Programme for Research & Innovation. It was an excellent opportunity for members to establish contact with Dr Higuera for possible future Horizon 2020 projects and to communicate this research funding opportunity to academic staff. In her presentation Dr Higuera provided an outline structure of Horizon 2020, introduced the idea of partnerships with other European institutions, and gave an account of the relevant opportunities that are available within the pillar of Societal Challenges.

TWO ACADEMICS HIGHLIGHT EDUCATIONAL WORK AND RESEARCH ON LOCAL AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Liverpool Hope University was the location on the 10th July 2014 for the annual conference of the Teacher Education for Equity and Sustainability Network, and St Mary's was represented by two members of academic staff – Dr Brian Hanratty and Dr Gerard McCann. The research conference focused on "Moving from the Edge to the Centre: The Role of Education for Sustainable Development / Global Citizenship in a Meaningful Curriculum" and explored how these two areas of learning contribute towards the curriculum in teacher education and schools.

Brian's paper was titled, *Literature of the Troubles Project: Implications for Local and Global Citizenship* and it provided a brief philosophical and socio-educational background to the project, along with an account of its organisation, methodology and a critical evaluation of the findings and outcomes. Due to its key emphasis on conflict resolution, primarily in Northern Ireland but with significant implications for conflicted societies globally, the paper addressed a very important aspect of both local and global citizenship.

Gerard's presentation was titled, *Enhancing the 'Global Dimension' in College Life* and it outlined the College's global dimension in education initiative since September 2005, including connected developments currently underway. The initial project involved staff integrating education for sustainable development and global citizenship actively into their teaching and learning schemes. It was placed within a more general drive to engage innovatively with some of the most challenging questions that Northern Irish society is dealing with today, regarding conflict and peace, reconciliation, poverty and excess wealth, interdependence and dependence, migration and human rights. The premise of the project was the recognition that, in a volatile geo-political environment, there is an urgent need to understand and to appreciate the changes that are occurring for society to develop. Both pieces of work appeared in the conference proceedings.

REPRESENTATION AT CONFERENCE ON DEPLOYING NARRATIVE IN RESEARCHING IRISH SOCIETY

The first Irish conference on narrative inquiry took place at the Sligo Education Centre based in the Institute of Technology, Sligo on 10th April 2014 and had representation from St Mary's through the research work of Denise McKee. The theme of the research conference was "Researching and Writing Irish Storyscapes" and focused on research papers across disciplines that had a theoretical, methodological and/or creative interest in narrative. Denise's paper was titled, *'Anglo' or 'Gael'? An Auto-Ethnographic Exploration of the Cross-Currents of Identity and Experience in the Life of an Irish Speaker*. It presented a self-narrative inquiry into the lived experiences, emotions and thoughts of an Irish speaker negotiating a bi-lingual and bi-cultural pathway in a strongly mono-lingual and mono-cultural society. The paper explored further the emancipatory experience of giving meaning to an aspect of one's identity which had been taken for granted previously. The immediacy and directness of voice which emerged during the self-exploration was considered also and compared to the use of other arts-based methods of self-inquiry such as collage.

RESEARCH PAPERS DELIVERED AT INTERNATIONAL STUDIES CONFERENCES IN IRELAND AND CANADA

The Radisson Blu Royal Hotel, Dublin played host to the British International Studies annual conference between the 18th – 20th June 2014, under the theme "A Crisis of Global Governance?" St Mary's was represented by Dr Birgit Schippers who delivered a paper titled, *Who is the Human in Human Rights?* In the paper Birgit, in developing the idea by Douzinas that "rights make humans", aimed to consider the relationship between the human, human rights and human rights discourse. Another paper by Birgit titled, *Becoming Post-Sovereign? Belonging and Cohabitation Across Borders* was presented at the International Studies Association annual convention held in Toronto, Canada between the 26th – 29th March 2014, with the theme "Spaces and Places: Geopolitics in an Era of Globalization". The paper sought to theorise prospects for cohabitation, political community and belonging across state boundaries, and to articulate a framework for ethical responsibility towards distant others in the context of global interdependence.

KEY STAGE 3 ART & SCIENCE SUBJECTS USED IN A MODEL FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

EDULEARN14, the sixth annual international conference on the theme of "Education and New Learning Technologies", was held in Barcelona, Spain between the 7th – 9th of July 2014 and was attended by Deirdre Robson. The conference provided the perfect platform to discuss the latest developments in the field of teaching and learning methodologies, educational projects and innovations and new technologies applied to education and research. Deirdre's paper titled, *A Model for*

Interdisciplinary Learning in Art and Science for Pupils Aged 11-14 was published in the conference proceedings and focused on the rationale for integrating the disciplines of art and science, giving consideration to international developments in academia and beyond the school environment in the world of work. The paper presented findings from a study where the model was used with 11-14 year old pupils who had recognised problems with the motivation to learn. The paper described how the model worked in practice and explained the mechanism for integration in secondary schools. The impact reported by pupils and teachers on learning and teaching was discussed. The paper focused also on how receptive the secondary school environment was to innovation and change by discussing flexibility in school structures, the role of school managers and teacher attitudes.

TWO ACADEMICS PRESENT THEIR RESEARCH AT A SEMINAR AND PUBLIC LECTURE

A research-based paper was presented by Dr Peter Collins at the Federation for Ulster Local Studies seminar on historical commemoration, under the theme "Divided Loyalties - Ulster and the Great War". It was held on the 24th May 2014 at the Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Memorial Library & Archive, Armagh and the title of Peter's paper was *Belfast Labour and the Great War*.

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick held a public lecture series in 2014 labelled "Worship, Life and Celebration". The final presentation was given by Rev Dr Niall Coll on the 10th April 2014, whose paper was titled, *Irish Identity and the Future of Catholicism*.



ACADEMIC GETS PUBLISHED IN FIRST VOLUME OF GREEK EDUCATION JOURNAL

Dr Geraldine Magennis and a colleague from University College Cork had an article included in the February 2014 edition of the "Athens Journal of Education", published by the Education Research Unit of the Athens Institute for Education and Research. The paper was produced as a result of a SCoTENS-funded research project and the title was *Assessment in Teacher Education: North & South (ATENS)*. The paper outlined a small-scale, Irish, cross-border research project which investigated the assessment of and satisfaction with school-based placements as experienced by a sample of primary and post-primary students and their tutors. The resultant connections between such professional practices and subsequent planning, teaching and learning were examined.

St Mary's University College, Belfast
191 Falls Road
Belfast
BT12 6FE
Northern Ireland

Phone: 02890 327678

Fax: 02890 333719

E-mail: research_admin@smucb.ac.uk



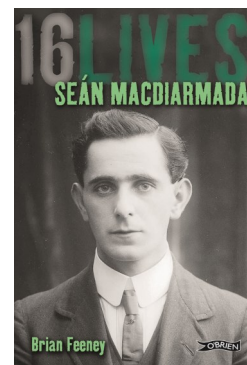
**St Mary's
University College
Belfast**
A College of Queen's University

OPINION ON GLOBALISATION BEING A MIXED BLESSING FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A journal that features articles on financial knowledge and economic affairs included an opinion in the June-July 2014 issue co-written by Dr Gerard McCann. The "European Financial Review" publishes articles by top scholars, economists and global leaders, and provides analysis from experts with a unique blend of indispensable insight and emerging ideas across a range of topics that have significant influence globally. The article was titled, *Recasting International Development in a Post-Recessionary World* and in it the argument was that greater resilience is required from development sectors to demand policy intervention, and that generous resources are needed to push on from the UN's Millennium Development Goals to eliminate finally the poverty gap between the global North and South.

BOOK SIX OF SIXTEEN PUBLISHED IN THE "16 LIVES" SERIES

A book that is part of the "16 Lives" series, written by Dr Brian Feeney, was published in March 2014 by The O'Brien Press. The book, *Seán MacDiarmada*, is a biography which gives him his proper place in history. In the book Brian writes, "this book sets out to give Seán MacDiarmada his proper place in the years leading up to the Easter Rising and his role in the detailed planning of the Rising which led to him signing the Proclamation of the Irish Republic second only to Tom Clarke".



STAFF PROFILE



Deirdre Robson became Head of Art in St Mary's University College in 1996 and started to engage in school-based research related to learning in art and science with colleagues in 2005. Nine years later she is working on phase two of an art and science project, *SCIART: Inspiring Pupils to Engage with Education - a KS3 Pilot*, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation involving teachers and pupils from schools across the British Isles.

Deirdre has managed five research grants, conducted three pilot studies and presented papers at numerous national and international conferences since 2005, including IJAS in Harvard, Boston (2013) and EDULEARN14 in Barcelona (2014). Deirdre has organised conferences also, including *SCIART Participatory Conference* (W5, 2012) and *Art and Science Moving Towards Creativity in Education* (SCoTENS, 2008). Significant research output from Deirdre includes a co-edited book, *The Leonardo Effect: Motivating Pupils to Achieve Through Interdisciplinary Learning*, published by Routledge in 2013 to which she contributed three chapters. Deirdre's work has featured extensively in books by other academics including *Expansive Education* (2013) edited by Lucas, Claxton & Spencer and *The Teaching of Science* (2009, 2014) by Harlen & Qualter.

Examples of art and science collaboration have increased exponentially in recent years. "The Leonardo Effect" teaching methodology, based on synchronised integration of art and science, is the only externally evaluated and extensively tested curricular model with art and science at the core. Primary schools across the British Isles use it currently, many of which are achieving at the highest level.