

Research Newsletter



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

CRITICAL WRITING RESEARCH SHARED AT CONFERENCE

The Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South (SCoTENS) had its annual gathering during October 2019 in Cavan, Ireland and the theme was “Leadership Across Boundaries: Challenges for Educators and Teacher Educators”. Approximately 100 people gathered at the conference where, among other events, a series of insightful research presentations were delivered by researchers across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland that gave rise to interesting questions and debates.

One of these presenters was Jonathan Worley, who delivered a research paper related to his innovative work in a local post-primary school, where he used the approaches developed in the College's Writing Centre to address issues relating to the revised A-level English specifications.

Jonathan referred to A-level English students in Northern Ireland being in their third year of examination using a revised curriculum from the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment that emphasises criticality. In developing effective strategies for the teaching of such critical writing, Jonathan suggested that it is arguably advantageous for teachers to keep in mind the underlying rationale for such an approach, which has the potential to be both motivating and clarifying.

His research explored both practical strategies for teaching critical writing, which are currently being piloted in several schools, and the underlying principles that make critical writing an essential competence for students, first to become accomplished and successful but also to negotiate quotidian political discourse and the often fragmentary presentation of information in the news and social media.



Jonathan Worley presenting to delegates at the annual conference organised by SCoTENS



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ANNUAL STAFF RESEARCH EVENT 2019

The beginning of the 2019-20 academic year saw a number of research-related events held during the middle of September 2019, which were attended by members of academic staff. One of these events was the Annual Staff Research Event, which entered its third year of operation. This event provided time and space for academic staff to disseminate the outcomes of research projects with colleagues. It included an opportunity for individuals to be involved in a 3-minute thesis initiative and members of the four research groups also had the opportunity to consolidate their work by mapping out a 2019-20 plan for the work of their particular group.

The three elements to the programme included:

- Disseminating the outcomes of research projects, which involved presentations to peers that examined theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, analyses, research findings, and impacts on teaching/learning.
- A 3-minute thesis initiative that put academic staff, who were undertaking doctoral study, through their paces to effectively explain their research in three minutes in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience.
- Mapping out the plans of each research group, which involved meeting in the respective research groups to talk about ideas that related to planned research activities of the group.

“This event provided time and space for academic staff to disseminate the outcomes of research projects with colleagues”.



(From l. to r.) Dr G. Nig Uidhir, Dr S. Mac Corraidh, S. Haughey, C. Gilliland, Dr E. Mhic Aoidh and Dr B. Schippers

The College's Research Officer and Principal welcomed academic staff to the event and introduced the event in the context of research within the College.

The event programme focused on four in-depth research presentations provided by:

- ♦ Catherine Gilliland
- ♦ Sharon Haughey
- ♦ Dr Seán Mac Corraidh, Dr Eibhlín Mhic Aoidh and Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir
- ♦ Dr Birgit Schippers

The titles of the presentations were:

- ♦ “Tell me a Story, Show me the World” - C. Gilliland
- ♦ “Faith, Leadership and the Catholic School: A Research Case Study” - S. Haughey
- ♦ “Casadh an tSúgáin (Twisting the Rope)” - Dr S. Mac Corraidh, Dr E. Mhic Aoidh and Dr G. Nig Uidhir
- ♦ “Nothing to Hide - Nowhere to Hide: Automated Decision-Making and the Threat to Human Rights” - Dr B. Schippers

ANNUAL STAFF RESEARCH EVENT 2019 (CONTINUED)

The event programme also provided an opportunity for two doctoral researchers to present a synopsis of their research study within a time period of three minutes. They included:

- ⇒ Denise McKee “A Perspective on the Social and Collective Identities of Irish Speakers”
- ⇒ Dr Claire Connolly “Reflective Activists? Gathering Students’ Perceptions of (Dis) Advantage and Selection”



(From l. to r.) Dr Claire Connolly and Denise McKee

Following a break, the event programme enabled members of academic staff to meet within their particular research groups to discuss research plans for the future.

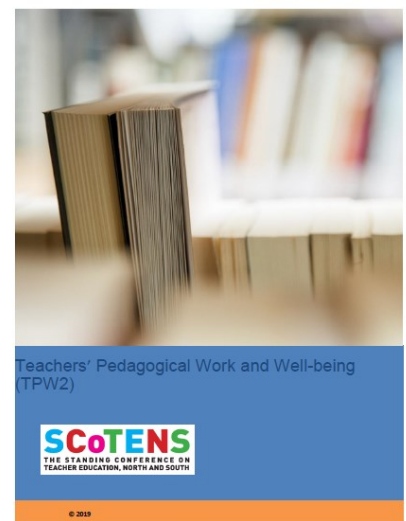
The event concluded with a summary of feedback from Professor Anne Moran (Visiting Professor for Research) and was drawn to a close by Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir (Chairperson of the Research Committee).

RESEARCH REPORT ON TEACHERS’ PEDAGOGICAL WORK AND WELL-BEING

Two members of academic staff in the College, Paddy Tally and Dr Elaine McLaughlin, were part of a research team who co-authored a research report that was submitted to the Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South (SCoTENS) in September 2019. The report, titled “Teachers’ Pedagogical Work and Well-Being”, was a result of a research project which received funding from SCoTENS in 2016 and involved their colleagues from the University of Limerick, Ireland.

The research report focused on teacher well-being, resulting from a project that involved two higher education institutions, the School of Education at the University of Limerick and St. Mary’s University College Belfast. In particular, it sought to explore teachers’ perspectives and understandings on what is referred to in the literature as teachers’ pedagogical well-being. Both of the institutions involved in the project had an aligned partner school. The College partnered with a Catholic co-educational special school in Belfast. The project team from the School of Education at the University of Limerick also partnered with a co-educational Catholic school in County Limerick.

It was intended that each of the case study schools would offer insights into teachers’ perceptions and understandings of their pedagogical well-being. It was anticipated that these insights could be made available for early career and newly qualified teachers, with a view to enabling them to arrive at constructed experiences of pedagogical well-being in their professional work as educators.



RESEARCH ON PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

Peter Stevenson and his colleague, Rita Day, had their research featured at two conferences towards the end of 2019.



(From l. to r.) Rita Day and Peter Stevenson

The first was within a strand of the final conference of the European policy experiment

project, known as “Evaluating and Upscaling Telecollaborative Teacher Education” (EVALUATE). The theme of the international conference, which was held at the University of León, Spain during September 2019, was “Virtual Exchange and 21st Century Teacher Education” and it was of interest to practitioners, researchers, university educators, policy makers, representatives of public authorities, as well as university management.

The second was at the “World Conference on Online Learning”. The theme of the conference, which was held in Dublin, Ireland during November 2019, was “Transforming Lives and Societies” and it aimed to explore many of the contemporary problems and opportunities facing today’s educators in the globally connected digital-era.

Their presentation at the first conference was titled “A 21st Century Approach to Problem-Based Learning” and at the second conference it was titled “The Probability Approach to a Better Understanding of Diversity in an Ever-Changing World”.

“The researchers wished to explore if the case study and problem-based learning approach could be recreated in a virtual exchange, with an international group of learners”.

Their research objective was to achieve a better understanding of disabilities by working on a real-life case study, using a problem-based learning approach. Students collaborated and researched with students from various European countries, to find a solution during a three-day time frame. They had to define disability, establishing whether the case could be categorised as either an inequality or an injustice. The researchers wished to explore if the case study and problem-based learning approach could be recreated in a virtual exchange, with an international group of learners. The students received the same socio-cultural exchange experiences through a virtual international working team.

As future teachers, the students required digital pedagogical competencies and relevance to future employability, this was embedded in their course and fully integrated with the College’s digital plans for 2020. It created the exchange of information, allowing students to compare and analyse through the cultural interaction and development of collaborative partnerships.



TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP ENABLES INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH IN MASSACHUSETTS, USA

Dr Martin Hagan was successful in receiving a Gordon Kirk Memorial Travel Scholarship from the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), which enabled him to conduct research at the University of Massachusetts Lowell (UML) in Massachusetts, USA. This travel scholarship resulted in a report submitted to and published by UCET in October 2019. The title of the report was “Early Influences on Teacher Identity: A Perspective from the USA” and it is available on the UCET website. These scholarships offer up to £2,000 to allow colleagues from UCET member institutions to investigate aspects of teacher education or undertake educational research in one or more overseas universities.

Gordon Kirk Travel Bursary 2018-2019: Report to UCET

Having completed a doctorate at the University of Bristol that focused on the development of teacher identity in the first stage of professional learning, Martin wished to extend his research profile in this area by conducting a comparative study in a different socio-cultural context. As he had existing contacts with colleagues in UML, it seemed appropriate that he could achieve his aims by locating his research at its College of Education. Martin’s visit to UML was beneficial in terms of allowing him to conduct research with student teachers in the American context for the purposes of comparison with those in Northern Ireland. UML recently developed a BA in Education as an undergraduate major and Martin believed that there were distinct similarities between this programme and the BEd (Hons) programme which he leads in the College.

Dr Martin Hagan
10-30-2019

The research study visit had four aims:

- to network with colleagues in the College of Education at UML with a view to developing ideas for potential further research collaboration;
- to engage in teaching activities either at undergraduate or postgraduate level;
- to disseminate the findings of his existing research on teacher identity development in the context of Northern Ireland;
- to collect qualitative data from undergraduate student teachers engaged on the BA in Education programme at the university in order to develop his work on teacher identity development, but within the American context.

RESEARCH PAPER ON AI BY ETHICS INFLUENCER

The professional periodical, “Political Insight”, which is published by the Political Studies Association featured an article, titled “Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Politics”, written by Dr Birgit Schippers in February 2020. This particular publication



Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Politics

From digital campaigning to social media, the internet has transformed politics. But the rise of artificial intelligence poses even more profound challenges for democratic processes. Can democracy survive in the age of AI? Birgit Schippers investigates.

In the run-up to the 2016 US presidential election, Donald Trump's team hired a little-known Anglo-American company called Cambridge Analytica (CA) to work on the Republican candidate's social media campaign. CA used data analysis techniques to target tens

of millions of voters across the US with pro-Trump messages. The company's activities were made possible by the harvesting of data from over 87 million Facebook users, without their consent or knowledge. Assisted by a specifically designed algorithm, the profiles of Facebook users

were analysed to identify personality traits and potential voting intentions. This information, in turn, helped to identify swing voters and micro-target them with messages that, according to critics, constituted deliberate misinformation. Today, as the US prepares for another presidential election and Britain has left the European Union after a referendum characterised by aggressive social media targeting, Cambridge Analytica has become a by-word for technology-driven interference in elections. The data analysis

offers an insight into all aspects of research in politics. It is truly international and presents research into politics and international studies to a broad audience in an entertaining manner. “Political Insight” includes articles on many topics such as human rights, recent innovations in policy-making across the advanced industrial world, the impact of globalisation on politics and society, the changing nature of democracy, etc.

Birgit’s article argued that, from digital campaigning to social media, the internet has transformed politics. However, she also suggested that the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) poses even more profound challenges for democratic processes and asked whether democracy can survive in the age of artificial intelligence. Throughout the article, in which she explained the term artificial intelligence and referred to it in line

with democratic politics and the role of the political studies community, she also highlighted five areas of concern that merit particular attention. These included:

- the capacity of deepfakes to enable interference into democratic elections that extend way beyond the data analysis techniques associated with Cambridge Analytica;
- artificial intelligence enabling black-box, machine-generated decisions that are difficult or impossible for humans to reconstruct;
- the impact of black-box decisions on vulnerable or marginalised individuals and communities;
- the use of artificial intelligence driven appliances in state surveillance practices, such as facial recognition technology, increasing and extending the power of state agencies to create spaces for more authoritarian behaviours;
- artificial intelligence systems enabling public-private collaboration in sensitive fields such as public order, security and intelligence, as well as border control, but also in research and development.



Incidentally, Birgit was also recently cited by Onalytica in a list of the top 100 ethics influencers on facial recognition technology.

“... she explained the term artificial intelligence and referred to it in line with democratic politics and the role of the political studies community, she also highlighted five areas of concern that merit particular attention”.

SENIOR LECTURER DISSEMINATES RESEARCH-INFORMED TEACHING AT CONFERENCES

Catherine Gilliland presented her research-related work that informs her teaching in the College at three research conferences held between November 2019 and February 2020. One of these conferences, organised by the Literacy Association of Ireland, took place at Dublin City University, Ireland during November 2019 under the theme “Engaging Literacy Learners in Diverse Settings” and the presentation

was titled “The ‘Velcrocity’ of Story”. Catherine looked at the ability of stories to teach key concepts across all areas of the curriculum. The wisdom and story of Albert Einstein was central to her presentation and exemplified how vital it is to use stories to introduce and consolidate the language of the curriculum. The presentation offered a range of active approaches to storytelling including the use of graphic organisers, visualisation techniques and the importance of unlocking children’s semantic stores. Catherine suggested localising story to be a very important and effective classroom technique and she exemplified this strategy through a case study based on the children’s book “The Gruffalo”. This presentation was also given at a conference, organised by the Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement, which took place at Stranmillis University College Belfast, Northern Ireland during February 2020 under the theme “Imagining Children & Conflict: Learning from Comics and Picture Books in French”.



Children's
Research
Network

Children Should be Seen AND Heard

Children's Research Network

Annual Conference

In association with
Trinity Research in Childhood Centre (TRICC)

Another of these conferences, organised by the Children’s Research Network, took place at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland during December 2019 under the theme “Children Should be Seen and Heard” and her presentation was titled “The Vital Role of Bibliotherapy to Enable Children to Create Visualisation and a Creative Voice.” Catherine took those who attended her presentation on a journey from how children read to using reading to learn. She argued that picture books function as more than mere entertainment,

rather they help the child gain an understanding of the world and their own life experiences. Catherine’s presentation included:

- an overview of how storytelling, puppets and rhymes are central to language development;
- an introduction to the reading wheel and the vital nature of visual/auditory processing, the centrality of story, as well as bibliotherapy and how central it is to dealing with issues children raise;
- a discussion of Albert Einstein’s story, the work of Berthoud and Elkin, as well as how children are seen and heard through the world of story.

DOCTORATES IN EDUCATION AWARDED TO TWO PRINCIPAL LECTURERS

Congratulations go to two Principal Lecturers who were successful in achieving the highest degree within academia. Firstly, to Dr Claire Connolly who was awarded her doctorate in education towards the end of 2019, having completed her studies at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Claire's thesis, titled "Reflective Activists? Exploring Student Teachers' Emerging Practice in Northern Ireland: A Bourdieusian Analysis", focused on research she conducted with students of initial teacher education.



Dr Claire Connolly

In her research study, Claire focused on two aspects of the problem of inequality in relation to the issue of 'class', with the education system continuing to disadvantage working-class children while advantaging their middle-class peers. The first was the impact on education due to the perpetuation of class-based inequality and, secondly, the (in)ability of teachers to recognise and/or address this inequality within the system. Her research set out to explore student teachers' perceptions of social class and academic selection which, she argued, exacerbates and perpetuates unfairness in education in Northern Ireland. Claire's concern was that student teachers, having themselves been through processes of selection to gain a place on a course in initial teacher education and generally having come from socially 'privileged' backgrounds, may find it challenging to move beyond their own experiences to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils.

"Congratulations go to two Principal Lecturers who were successful in achieving the highest degree within academia".

Secondly, to Dr Donna Hazzard who received her doctorate in education towards the end of 2019, having also completed her studies at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Donna's thesis, titled "Developing Student Teachers' Critical Literacy Perspectives: A Bourdieusian Analysis", focused on research that was motivated by her desire to understand if student teachers have the capacity to develop a critical literacy mindset, and, if so, whether developing this skill can help orientate them in the direction of socially just teaching.



Dr Donna Hazzard

These issues were explored using Bourdieu's distinctive concepts (habitus, capital and field) that frame literacy as an ideological act, an act of misrecognition that results in 'symbolic violence', not meant in the everyday sense of the word. Donna argued that having a critical literacy mindset can help student teachers towards recognition, to seeing the world as it is. This, she suggested, can engender a commitment to transform or resist the symbolic violence the system exerts.

RESEARCH ON FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY SHARED WITH DELEGATES

Dr Birgit Schippers presented her current research at the “2020 Justice Conference”, which took place in Dublin, Ireland during February 2020. The conference brought together experts to focus on the main issues surrounding justice policy and delivery, as well as to look at collaboration to achieve the vision of a safe, fair and inclusive Ireland. Other speakers included the Department for Justice and Equality, Glasgow City Council and the Irish Prison Service. It provided a unique opportunity for all those operating within the sector, and those interacting with it, to come together for networking and discussion. As well as looking broadly at high-level organisational and culture change, the conference also dealt with areas such as community safety, mental health among prisoners, the issue of coercive control, achieving the human rights balance and restorative justice.



(From l. to r.) Dr Birgit Schippers and other speakers at the “2020 Justice Conference”

Birgit’s presentation focused on her research related to facial recognition technology. In her research Birgit refers to the rapid growth of this technology, which has triggered much-needed debate, with activists, politicians, academics and even police forces expressing serious concerns over the impact facial recognition could have on a political culture based on rights and democracy. As someone who researches the future of human rights, Birgit shares these concerns and has put forward ten reasons why people should be concerned about the use of facial recognition technology in public spaces. These include: it puts us on a

path towards automated blanket surveillance; it operates without a clear legal or regulatory framework; it violates the principles of necessity and proportionality; it violates our right to privacy; it has a chilling effect on our democratic political culture; it denies citizens the opportunity for consent; it is often inaccurate; it can lead to automation bias; it implies there are secret government watchlists; and it can be used to target already vulnerable groups.



Dr Birgit Schippers at the “2020 Justice Conference”

LATEST VOLUME OF ACADEMIC JOURNAL FOCUSING ON IME LAUNCHED IN COLLEGE

The editors of a new volume of the journal “Taighde agus Teagasc”, who included Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir, Dr Seán Mac Corraidh and Ciarán Ó Pronntaigh (An tÁisaonad), worked with a committee that involved Dr Eibhlín Mhic Aoidh, Denise McKee and Aileen Nic Íomhair (Bunscoil Eoin Báiste) to produce the latest research publication titled “Imleabhar 7 - Ag Treorú na Foghlama sa Ghaeloideachas”. It was launched during February 2020 at an event held in the College, which was attended by colleagues from universities, schools, the Department of Education and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment. Other attendees included representatives from the media, the community sector, the West Belfast Partnership Board and Cultúrlann Mac Adam-Ó Fiaich.



(From l. to r.) Ciarán Ó Pronntaigh, Dr Eibhlín Mhic Aoidh, Dr Seán Mac Corraidh, Dónal Ó hAiniféin, Prof Peter Finn and Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir

“Eleven research articles were featured in this latest volume and they explored a wide range of issues relevant to Irish-medium education”.

The launch referred to the latest volume of the academic journal, which includes research articles by academics and education professionals from universities throughout Ireland focusing on Irish-medium education (IME). The newest volume of this peer-reviewed journal stemmed from papers presented at a research conference on Irish-medium education held in the College during May 2017. The journal opens with an introduction by Dr Pádraig Ó Mianáin who was guest speaker at the research conference where he made an inspiring address. Eleven research articles were featured in this latest volume and they explored a wide range of issues relevant to Irish-medium education.



Some of the authors of the research articles that appear in Volume 7 of “Taighde & Teagasc”

Dónal Ó hAiniféin made an introductory address before officially launching the new publication. He asked the school principals in the audience to make the journal available to their staff and to use it to inspire debate and professional reflection on some of the research findings reported in the journal.

RESEARCH CONSULTANT ENHANCES THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

The College was delighted to welcome Dr Helen Kara who participated in two professional development events, organised by Gerry Trainor during September 2019, when she shared her expertise in the two very important areas of creative research methods and ethical research practice.

The first research-related event was titled “Creative Research Methods in Practice” during which Helen, a consultant who is published in this area, examined creative methods, arts-based methods, mixed methods, transformative research frameworks and creative data analysis. After welcoming the academic staff and introducing the expectations for the event, Helen offered a series of presentations, interspersed with group discussions, videos, work activities, as well as question and answer sessions.



(From l. to r.) Gerry Trainor, Dr Helen Kara and Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir

The second research-related event was titled “Ethical Thinking and Decision-Making in Practice” during which Helen, who has had books published on research ethics and has worked with a range of other universities and colleges, welcomed academic staff and outlined the expectations for the event. This included a number of presentations, discussion exercises, videos, group work involving real-life ethical dilemmas from research, as well as question and answer sessions.

All academic staff attended these research-related events and were provided with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in relation to creative research methods and ethical research practice, which will help them in their future research endeavours.

DOCTORAL STUDY ON IDENTITY PRESENTED AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Denise McKee attended the “Multilingual and Multicultural Learning: Policies and Practices” international conference held in Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic during December 2019 to present her research titled “Identity Matters: Motivations, Experiences and Perceptions Among Irish-medium Education Students”. The conference focused on all aspects of the linguistic and sociolinguistic competences and practices of bi/multilingual speakers who cross existing social and linguistic boundaries, adopting or adapting themselves to new and overlapping linguistic spaces.

Denise’s research paper drew upon her current doctoral study which examined the social, cultural and collective identities of a cohort of undergraduate Irish-medium education students, who were preparing to teach in Irish-medium primary schools. English is the first language of the majority of the cohort who did not start to learn Irish until post-primary school. In addition, all of the participants attended the only higher education institution in Northern Ireland that educates students to teach in the Irish-medium primary sector. Drawing on an arts-based methodology, Denise sought to examine the motivations and identifications of these individuals who share both a career path and a mutual appreciation of the Irish language. The research explored the influences that specific experiences and events have had on fostering this love for their heritage language and it investigated the students’ perceptions of how they and others view the Irish language and its speakers.

RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES 2019-2020

Catherine Gilliland “The Process of Writing a Chapter for ‘Playful Teaching and Learning’ ”

Denise McKee “Identity Matters: Motivations, Experiences and Perceptions among Irish-medium Students”

Geraldine Parks “ ‘Back To The Future’: The Creative Use of ICT to Improve Problem-Solving Skills in Student Teachers”

Dr Seán Mac Corraídh “Expression, Style, Vigour, Antiquity, Passion, Spirit and Word-Music: Just Some of the Attractions of Sean-Nós (‘Old Style’) Traditional Singing”

Dr Gerard McCann “The Origins and Outcome of Brexit”

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

Phone: 02890 327678

Fax: 02890 333719

E-mail: research_admin@smuc.ac.uk



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

SENIOR LECTURER FROM COLLEGE PRESENTS AT QUB

Dr Birgit Schippers presented her research at an event held at the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice in Queen's University Belfast (QUB), Northern Ireland during February 2020. The title of Birgit's presentation was “Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Human Rights” and her focus was two-fold: firstly, to assess political-theoretical approaches that consider the complex intertwinement of human living with AI; and secondly, to draw upon relational, especially posthumanist, perspectives to consider new ways of thinking about human rights. Her research harnesses posthumanist approaches to examine the intersection of human rights, artificial intelligence and the figure of ‘the human’.

STAFF PROFILE



Peter Stevenson has been a Senior Lecturer in Business Studies for the past fourteen years and his research interests have evolved substantially since then. He first presented at a conference during July 2010 in Lusaka, Zambia on the theme of “Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Northern Ireland”, leading to a chapter published in the 2011 book titled

“Issues in Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa”. After refocusing his research on classroom learning, following a SCoTENS funded project awarded in 2016 and in collaboration with Dr Maria Campbell from St Angela's College Sligo, Peter co-presented at the “ESAI” conference during April 2019 in Sligo, Ireland. The paper was titled “Preparing Irish Student Teachers for Culturally Diverse Classrooms: Exploring Opportunities, Challenges and Perspectives from Both Jurisdictions”.

Peter also co-presented a ‘virtual’ paper, titled “A Problem-Based Learning Approach to Diversity”, at the “END” conference during June 2018 in Budapest, Hungary. This was based on work completed with students on a series of ‘Humint’ conferences, resulting in a chapter published in the 2019 book titled “Educational Applications and Developments IV”. During April 2019, Peter co-presented a research poster, titled “A Better Understanding of Diversity in an Ever-Changing World” at the “Learning and Teaching” conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Later in September 2019, Peter co-presented a paper, titled “A 21st Century Approach to Problem-Based Learning” at the “EVALUATE” conference in León, Spain that focused on collaborative online learning and the development of soft skills. In all these research activities, Peter collaborated with Rita Day from Dublin Business School.