Irish School of Ecumenics
Semester Abroad Programme, Dublin

Conflict, Religion, Peace-building in International Affairs
(30ECTs)

Introduction

This new course provides innovative and challenging opportunities for students who are interested in the increasingly relevant field of religion, conflict. The course is distinguished by a strong inter- and multi-disciplinary approach, drawing upon collaborations between the academic staff from the Master programmes Intercultural Theology & Interreligious Studies and International Peace Studies.

Students will develop a critical grasp of the interplay of conflict, peace and religion. Participants will also be able to apply their knowledge to current issues and selected case studies. Assessment will be based primarily on a written assignment.
Reasons to choose Semester Abroad Conflict, Religion, Peace-building in International Affairs

- Field trips to Belfast and UN Geneva and guest lectures from academic experts and diplomats
- Vibrant international environment
- Renowned university dating from the 16 century
- Excellent library and study facilities
- Strong pastoral care for students in small class-setting
- Lively and dynamic city

Visiting undergraduate students will benefit from the Trinity College experience of learning within a rich historical and cultural context. This will be facilitated through organised orientation processes and structured opportunities for cultural and fieldwork visits to Northern Ireland, the International Criminal Court in The Hague or the United Nations in Geneva. With students coming to ISE from every continent, this exciting new course will itself be an intercultural laboratory of learning, dialogue and engaging with diversity.
Module Summaries

Modules Offered: all modules are offered in Semester Two

Religion and International Relations, 10 ECTS
Engaging Religious Fundamentalism, 10 ECTS
Gender, War and Peace, 10ECTS

EM2303 Engaging Religious Fundamentalism

Coordinator: Prof Andrew Pierce
ECTS: 10
Semester Two

Aims

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

• Identify and describe the significant historical factors in the emergence of religious fundamentalism.
• Assess dominant paradigms of fundamentalist study.
• Analyse the key social, political and theological elements in the construction of religious fundamentalism.

Description

Christian expressions of fundamentalist religiosity; defining fundamentalism; methodology in fundamentalist studies; dialogue with the fundamentalist other.

Despite receiving widespread scholarly attention across a range of disciplines, so-called ‘religious fundamentalism’ attracts strikingly minimal attention from within Christian theology. This module, therefore, explores religious fundamentalism from an explicitly theological perspective, and with a concern (though not an exclusive concern) for Christian expressions of fundamentalist religiosity. Amongst the challenges for module-participants are: defining fundamentalism; methodology in fundamentalist studies; and dialogue with the fundamentalist other.

Core reading

EM Gender, War and Peace
Coordinator: Prof Gillian Wylie
ECTS Value: 10
Semester Two

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Identify and discuss the debates in Gender Studies concerning sex and gender, femininity and masculinity, gender and difference in the field of war and peace studies.
- Critically review the gendered nature of war and the relationships between masculinity and violence and femininity and peace
- Critically discuss the need for gender-based approaches to understanding conflict resolution and peace-building

Description

What does gender analysis reveal about the causes and dynamics of war and peace? In this module we begin by exploring and criticising some basic gendered assumptions - such as that war is the business of men and peace that of women. Instead we challenge these dichotomies by examining issues such as the complicated relationship between the social construction of masculinity and soldiering and the challenge posed to militaries by the inclusion of women in their ranks. We ask why peace processes have generally excluded women and what the consequences of that are for the sustainability of peace, while at the same time querying the assumption that 'women' as an essentialised group have particular skills to bring to the peace table. Through these debates we examine the ways in which war and peace are gendered experiences which also shape our understanding of what it is to be a gendered person.

Teaching Method

The course is based on an interactive teaching approach. Each session is divided into a one hour lecture and a one hour seminar per week, which will turn on an assigned reading or audiovisual material to illustrate the case.

Assessment

Three thousand word essay on agreed topic

Core Readings

Cheldelin, S. (ed.) Women Waging War and Peace: International Perspectives of
EM2302 Religion and International Relations
10ECTS
Semester 2
Coordinator: Prof Carlo Aldrovandi

Aims

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Assess the normative debate about the role of religion in International Relations, focusing on the following traditions of IR theory: Realism, Liberalism, Marxism, Constructivism and the English School.
- Discuss contemporary issues in international affairs which are associated with the idea of a widespread religious resurgence (i.e. globalization, religious Fundamentalism and violence, transnational religious actors, faith-based peacemaking and diplomacy).
- Address the religious dimensions in contemporary world conflicts, whilst identifying perspectives and movements within main religious traditions which contribute to peacemaking, conflict resolution and reconciliation.
- Evaluate the salience of religious beliefs, identities and movements in selected national contexts such as the United States, Israel, Iran and Sri Lanka.

Description

The purpose of this module is to provide an understanding of the on-going salience of religion (broadly defined here as the main world religions) in the contemporary globalized era. The overall aim is to address the ways in which religion has been marginalized or excluded from the secular perspectives of International Relations theory (Realism, Liberalism, Marxism, Constructivism, etc.), whilst providing the intellectual basis for how religiously inspired spheres of thought can be brought back into the picture. This module also challenges the common view that the politicization of religion is always a threat to international security and inimical to the resolution of world conflict.

Assessment

One three thousand word essay on agreed topic
Core Readings


Field Trips

There are various field trips and guest lectures and social events throughout the year. Students who are taking the Semester Abroad programme are welcome to join us for these events.

**The United Nations (UN) Geneva trip**

comprises a two-day conference hosted by UN staff in Geneva, providing lectures and discussion about various topics, including Human Rights, Peace-Keeping and Disarmament, Development.

![UN Geneva trip](image)

**The Belfast field trip**

includes guest lectures and a tour of Belfast for Dublin-based students.

"The trip to Belfast was absolutely one of the most valuable experiences I have had while in Ireland. The opportunity for candid conversations with people in this conflict"
society is something I hoped for when I applied to Trinity. It is an opportunity that no one in our program should miss."

By Mary McCartin, MPhil International Peace Studies, 2011-12

The Belfast Summer School

involves lectures and field-visits linked to the bonfires and parades of 11-12 July.

NB: Students must finance the additional cost of these trips themselves and provision of field trips is subject to adequate demand from students.

Course Learning Outcomes

Our focussed modules, field trips, guest speakers and learning environment mean that on successful completion of the semester, students should be able to:

• Identify and describe the relationship between religion, conflict and its resolution in social, religious and geo-political contexts;
• Compare and critically discuss existing explanations for ethnic conflict;
• Critically review research and scholarly debates on the role of religious belief and identity claims in conflict and peace;
• Identify and critically evaluate the theories and frameworks used in researching theology, religion and peace studies;
• Communicate arguments and positions clearly and effectively in both verbal and written form, based on evidence and critical reasoning
Further queries?

Please contact

Website address: http://www.tcd.ie/ise/