

AHSS NEWSLETTER

2020



UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Dáin, Daonnachtaí agus
Eolaíochtaí Sóisialta

Arts, Humanities
and Social Sciences





**UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK**
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

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Dean's Welcome

Fáilte, welcome to our 2020 Newsletter issue.

What a year 2020 has been! We have faced many difficulties this year both as a faculty and as a University but despite this, staff and students have worked hard and shown exemplary resilience and fortitude in meeting and rising above these challenges. We have also achieved a lot which we can be proud of in 2020.

This year the Faculty was conferred with a Bronze Athena Swan Award which recognises our continued commitment to advancing gender equality, representation, progression and success for both staff and students.

2020 also saw UL and the Faculty sign a “game changing” agreement with the Algerian government which aims to support the upskilling of young Algerian Academics to PHD level through a specially designed International Structured PHD programme.

Our Journalism students scooped six of the top prizes at the 2020 National Student Media Awards including Student Journalist of the Year, Video Journalist of the Year, Sports Writer of the Year and awards for Magazine of the Year, Website of the year and Magazine Layout and Design of the Year.

Donal Ryan won the Eason Irish Novel of the Year at the An Post Irish Book awards for his acclaimed novel “Strange Flowers”. This follows on from the success of Professor Joseph O’Connor, who won the award last year for his novel “Shadowplay”, whilst a graduate of the MA in Creative writing Helena Close was also nominated this year in the Young Adult Fiction category for her novel “The Gone Book”.

Our faculty have remained committed to excellence in research and teaching and to engaging with our stakeholders and communities despite this difficult year and there are many examples of this throughout this newsletter issue. I want to thank our colleague Oonagh Grace and our Coop student Emma Larkin for the great work they have done in compiling the issue. I hope you enjoy reading about all the activities and achievements in this most exceptional of years.

Beannachtaí na Nollaig agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir!



Professor Helen Kelly-Holmes
Dean, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Research News



Music Therapy and Chronic Pain: Original Research at UL

Music therapist and researcher Katie Fitzpatrick
with fellow researcher, Steve Ryan

Researchers at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance led innovative research exploring the potential of music to assist people living with chronic pain to improve their health and well-being. Dr. Hilary Moss and Katie Fitzpatrick of the music therapy department at UL, and Prof Dominic Harmon, Consultant Anaesthetist at University Hospital Limerick, worked with members of Chronic Pain Ireland (CPI). CPI is an NGO providing support services to people living with chronic pain and advocating on their behalf.

The field of music, music therapy and chronic pain is underdeveloped in Ireland and Europe. Evidence of the benefit of music in reducing pain is scarce and often has poor rigour. Research was needed in this area and UL and the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance have supported this research through their work and positioning UL as centre for music therapy and pain research in Ireland and Europe. As part of this research appearances were made on Lyric FM (Music and the mind series) and Marian Finucan radio show on RTE1 (November 2019) which brought the research and the role of music therapy for health and wellbeing into the public sphere.

The data gathered revealed that participants found music therapy assisted with emotional release, relaxation, and diversion from pain. It was also found to be a supportive and meaningful occupation for people living with chronic pain.

Dr. Eoin Callery awarded patent for new audio technology

During October, Dr. Callery together with collaborators Jonathan Abel and Elliot Canfield-Dafilou of Stanford University were awarded a patent for a new piece of audio technology capable of generating interactive virtual acoustic spaces. They are now working on developing projects that will seek to use this technology over networks, allowing people in different locations to share the same acoustic space.



Whichcandidate.ie aided voters in making their final decision in General Election 2020



Dr. Rory Costello, Department of Politics and Public Administration, developed the whichcandidate.ie website which helps voters see how their own views align with current election candidates. The first website was piloted for the 2014 local elections in Limerick and after that was launched nationally in subsequent elections. Earlier this year the website was launched ahead of the General election 2020 to give voters further information on candidate choice and gauge which candidate most aligned with their values.

'Shaping Palliative Care Policy using a Human Rights Approach' project - funding awarded

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission announced funding for projects under its Human Rights and Equality Grants Scheme 2020. Dr. John Lombard (School of Law) and Dr. Owen Doody (Dept of Nursing and Midwifery) were named co-applicants in a successful funding bid led by the All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care.

The title of the project is 'Shaping Palliative Care Policy using a Human Rights Approach'. The research project aims to give voice to nursing home residents, their families and care workers in relation to their experience and expectations of palliative care to ensure that any changes to palliative care policy, especially due to Covid-19, will be informed and shaped by the needs and perspectives of rights holders. It will also educate and inform policy makers, service providers, healthcare professionals, the public and specifically people living in nursing homes, their families and care workers on their rights in relation to palliative care during a pandemic.

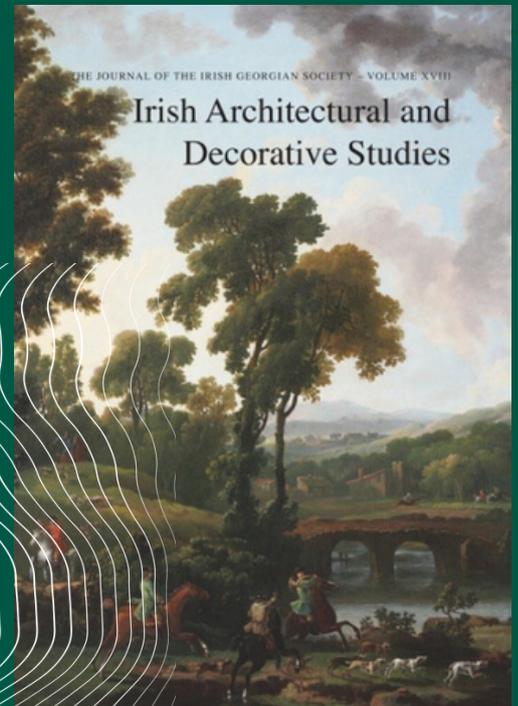
Partner organisations in the project include the Health Information Quality Authority, Health Service Executive, Mental Health Commission, Nursing Homes Ireland, Irish Hospice Foundation, Age related Healthcare Department Tallaght Hospital, and Medicine for the Elderly St Vincent's Hospital.



Independent Review group - use of Tablet Devices in Schools

Between October 2019 and January 2020 Dr. Ann Marcus-Quinn worked as part of the independent review group tasked with conducting a review of the use of tablet devices at Ratoath College. Dr. Marcus-Quinn presented an overview of the findings to the Louth Meath Education and Training Board in February and the report was published at the end of February 2020.

The findings and recommendations of the review were widely reported in the media and featured on television, radio and the print media. The report was also discussed on social media and the Irish Times described the report as "likely to be influential in shaping how other secondary schools incorporate technology in the classroom". The review group comprised former school principal Cora Dunne and former Deputy Chief Inspector (DES) Dr. Carl Ó Dálaigh. At the start of the physical school closures in March Dr. Marcus-Quinn was interviewed by RTE's Education Correspondent Emma O'Kelly. Dr. Marcus-Quinn has also written a number of articles on technology in schools which have featured in The Irish Times this year. Recently, Senator Ger Craughwell noted her ongoing work with Dr. Triona Hourigan in the Seanad.



Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies - Dr. David Fleming appointed editor

Dr. David Fleming, Head, Department of History, has been appointed editor of Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies, the only peer-reviewed journal devoted to the study of Irish art, architecture, visual and material culture. The journal, founded in 1998, is published by the Irish Georgian Society, and attracts an international authorship. Dr. Fleming stated that he was "honoured to accept the position, and to follow in the footsteps of several eminent scholars who have edited the journal over the years".



Vulnerable Witnesses Report Published in The International Journal of Evidence and Proof

In May of this year The International Journal of Evidence and Proof published a research article by Dr. Alan Cusack of the School of Law at the University of Limerick.

The article which is entitled, 'Addressing Vulnerability in Ireland's Criminal Justice System: A Survey of Recent Statutory Developments', offers a critical appraisal of recent statutory efforts aimed at securing the increased accommodation of victims of crime with intellectual disabilities within Ireland's criminal trial.

74 days: Inside Terence MacSwiney's Hunger Strike Documentary

Dr. Ciara Breathnach, Department of History, participated in a documentary entitled 74 days: Inside Terence MacSwiney's Hunger Strike, which aired on RTÉ1 on 21 October 2020.



Since 2010 part of Breathnach's research has focused on Prison Medical Officers and their role in disciplining bodies in the carceral context.

She gave a Plenary on 9 October at the commemorative conference on MacSwiney organised by colleagues at University College Cork on 9 October. Her research on Death and Burial: Ireland 1864-1922 is funded by the Irish Research Council and her RTÉ Brainstorm piece on MacSwiney was published on 20 October.

Centre for Early Modern Studies: Research activities

Centre for
Early Modern Studies
Limerick

The Centre for Early Modern Studies, Limerick hosted a lively series of interdisciplinary research seminars in 2020 featuring papers from Dr. Leanne Calvert (Hertfordshire), Dr. Sparky Brooker (Queens University Belfast), Prof. Alison Forrestal (NUIG), Dr. Annaleigh Margey (DKIT) and Dr. Gordon Ó Riain (UL). Since September, the seminars have moved online which has significantly expanded and internationalised the audience. This year's CEMS Dissertation Prize was awarded to Keith Ó Riain of Mary Immaculate College for a dissertation supervised by Dr. Liam Chambers and titled 'Filí na Máighe: A case study of Gaelic Irish mentalité in the mid eighteenth century'. Keith has also been announced as the Global Winner in the History category of the 2020 Undergraduate Awards.

Dr. Richard Kirwan awarded Senior Fellowship in Utrecht

Dr. Richard Kirwan was appointed as a Senior Fellow at the Descartes Centre for the History and Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities at the University of Utrecht in February 2020. The University of Utrecht is a leading centre for the intellectual history of the early modern period and is to the fore in advances in digital history.

The Senior Fellowship enabled Richard to continue his ongoing research on the experiences of exile and migration among scholarly religious converts in early modern Germany, a project which has been funded by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung. It also provided a platform for intellectual exchange with other scholars at the Descartes Centre and opportunities to learn about new digital methods for understanding historical networks.



Personal and social experiences of COVID-19 (PERSOCOV) Survey

To better understand the personal and social consequences of both the pandemic and the consequent social restrictions, a collaborative project between Professor Michael Breen of Mary Immaculate College and Professor Ross Macmillan of the University of Limerick conducted a nationally representative survey of residents of Ireland. Participants were surveyed in the first week of June 2020 and were asked to retrospectively recount their life circumstances and experiences during the first COVID – 19 restrictions period, during the month of April. In addition to documenting specific details about experiences of social distancing, social isolation, and economic disruption and family change associated with the public health restrictions, survey participants were also asked

- social and psychological responses to the pandemic itself;
- impacts on health and well-being;
- perceptions of the national, both state and civilian, response to COVID-19;
- assessment of trust in key political entities;
- social attitudes, relationships, and experiences both with respect to family and friends, as well as members of society in general;
- attitudes towards immigration and cultural diversity;
- impacts on human value priorities; and
- implications for social and institutional trust more generally.

A key feature of the study was the inclusion of survey items that appeared in the Irish panels of European Social Survey (hereafter ESS) who were surveyed biannually from 2002 to 2018, as well as content from the World Values Survey (WVS). Importantly, these surveys allow specific and detailed comparison with earlier data and hence can identify shifts in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors associated with the pandemic and the resulting public health restrictions. The data are among the first and only nationally representative sample for Ireland and one of the first such surveys in the world dealing with these aspects of the COVID-19 experience.

Photo: Alan Place



Faculty News



Photo: Alan Place

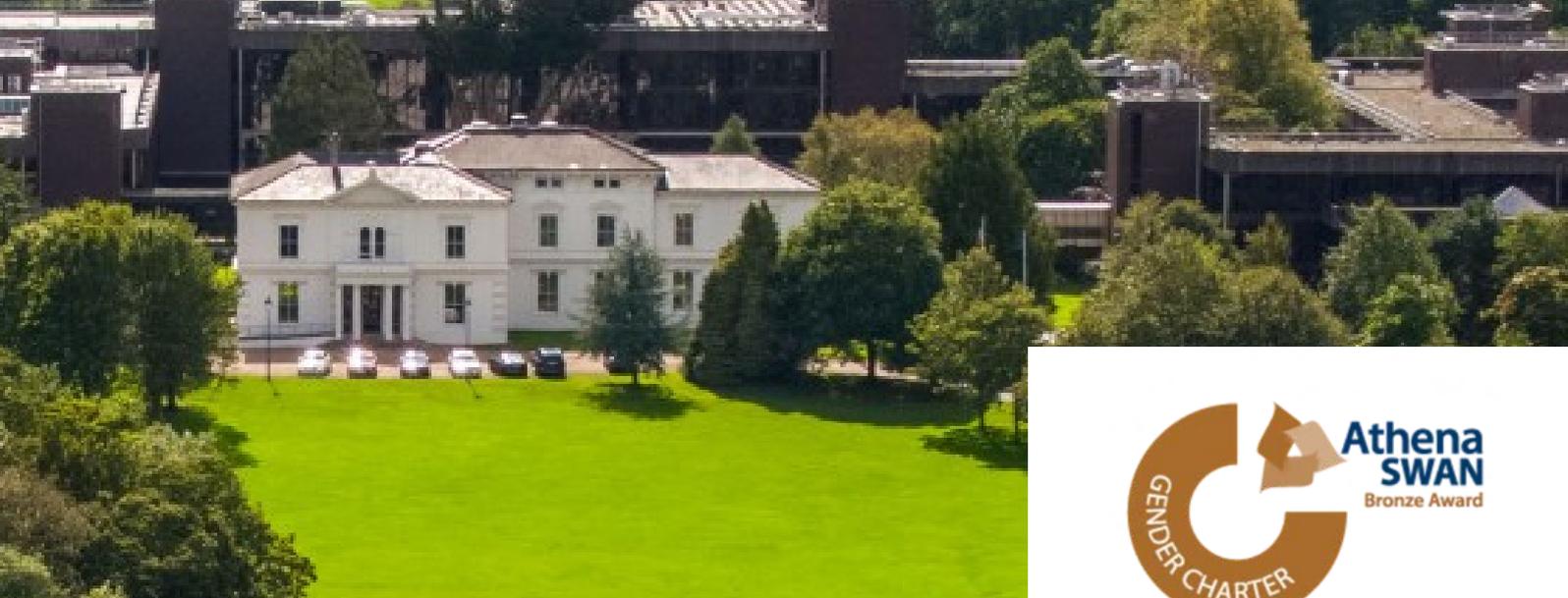
School of Law launch new Postgraduate diploma with the Criminal Assets Bureau

The School of Law and the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) are working together on the new Postgraduate Diploma in Proceeds of Crime and Asset Identification which will provide training to law enforcement in the area of proceeds of crime investigation, asset identification, seizure, confiscation and recovery. The objective of the postgraduate diploma is to provide a recognised standard of training for staff in CAB and other law enforcement, regulatory and administrative agencies in both Ireland and internationally who require academic and professional training in the field of specific investigations.

AHSS launch innovative new Graduate Certificate in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in 2021

The faculty is delighted to launch the new Graduate Certificate in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion led by Dr. Lydia Bracken, Assistant Dean for Equality Diversity and Inclusion, AHSS. The programme is designed for learners who wish to develop an interdisciplinary understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and to explore strategies for change. The programme will provide learners with the knowledge and understanding needed to deal needed effectively with issues of equality, diversity and inclusion at all levels of Irish society, the community and the workplace. The programme is currently accepting applications for the coming academic year.





Athena SWAN Bronze Award for AHSS

The Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Limerick has been conferred with a Bronze Athena SWAN award. The award recognizes the Faculty's commitment to advancing gender equality, representation, progression and success for both staff and students. The award is valid until April 2024.

The Faculty is committed to implementing a four-year action plan to achieve the commitments made to the Athena SWAN Charter as part of the assessment process. This will serve to improve working practices and to ensure an inclusive culture for all staff and students. The submission Self-Assessment Team, led by Dr. Lydia Bracken, Assistant Dean for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in AHSS, included representatives from all departments and schools within the Faculty.

Silver Award in Best in Government and Not for Profit: Hate and Hostility Research Group

Dr. Jennifer Schweppe and Dr. Amanda Haynes of the Hate and Hostility Research Group were delighted to accept the Silver Award in the "Best in Government and Not for Profit" category at the 2020 Digital Media Awards on Friday. Jennifer accepted the award along with colleagues at We The People on behalf of the HHRG and the Transgender Equality Network Ireland for their work on the Call It Out campaign. The Call It Out campaign was funded by the European Union and part of a ten country project which sought to raise awareness of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

At the GALAs LGBT+ Awards on February 8th, the HHRG and the Call it Out campaign were shortlisted for two awards: Best Event and Digital Changemaker. The HHRG was longlisted for a GALA LGBT+ Award for Best Ally.



UL's Greentown Project wins first place at European Crime Prevention Awards

The Greentown research project based at University of Limerick has won a major European Crime Prevention award. The innovative research project is a strategic partnership between UL's School of Law and the Department of Justice on the design, implementation and evaluation of youth justice interventions.

The pilot initiative is aimed at disrupting recruitment of children by criminal gangs and was awarded first place at the European Crime Prevention Awards on Friday. The award committee particularly noted that the Greentown project "holds an unparalleled theoretical foundation. It is well designed with a methodological and holistic approach. The project is a good example of a multi-agency approach.... the project is well documented and as a result can be replicated in other countries. Although the project is in its early stages it is considered one to keep a close eye on in the future." Receiving the award on behalf of the Department of Justice, Professor Sean Redmond from the School of Law, University of Limerick said: "I am delighted to accept this award on behalf of the Department of Justice and the University of Limerick. It's terrific that our work in Ireland has been recognised by crime prevention experts across Europe. We are very happy to share our approach with other jurisdictions."

Minister of State at the Department of Justice with responsibility for Youth Justice, James Browne TD, offered his congratulations to the REPPP team (Research Evidence into Policy Programmes and Practice project) who developed Greentown.

Dr. Norah Burns elected to the board of the National Women's Council

Dr. Norah Burns of the School of Law was recently nominated by the Irish Women Lawyers Association to run for election to the board of the National Women's Council. The NWC represents 180 NGO and civil society groups and is the leading national representative organisation for women and women's groups in Ireland. Following the tallying of the votes of the membership of the NWC, Dr. Burns was appointed to the board of the NWC. A non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation, founded in 1973, the NWC seeks to achieve equality for women.



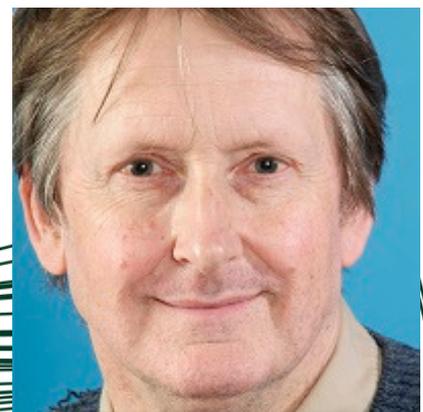


Launch of the BSc in Social Sciences (LM019)

The Faculty is pleased to announce the launch of a new undergraduate programme, BSc. Social Sciences (LM019). The first intake will be welcomed in September 2021. Course Director, Prof. Ross Macmillan explained during his recent presentation as part of UL's Open Days that this programme is an excellent fit for students who are interested in understanding people & societies and who wish to develop skills in analysing social data. The Bachelor of Science in Social Sciences emphasizes interdisciplinary study, allowing students to combine three disciplines. Students choose one major and two minor subjects from a selection of nine academic areas which fall under the umbrella of social sciences as well as core modules in academic skills & data science. Graduates will be in an excellent position to leverage the skills & knowledge gained in the pursuit of this degree in the working world as critical understanding of communities and the societies along with the other skills honed on this programme are attractive to potential employers across a wide variety of sectors. More information on BSc. Social Sciences can be found [here](#).

AHSS Faculty Retirements

This year marked the retirement of our most esteemed colleague, Professor Tom Lodge (Former Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, UL), who has made a significant contribution to research, teaching and leadership during his time at UL. Also retiring this year are Professor Anthony McElligott (Head, Department of History) and Dr. Frederic Royall (School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics). They will all be missed as colleagues and friends and we wish them all the best in their individual retirements.



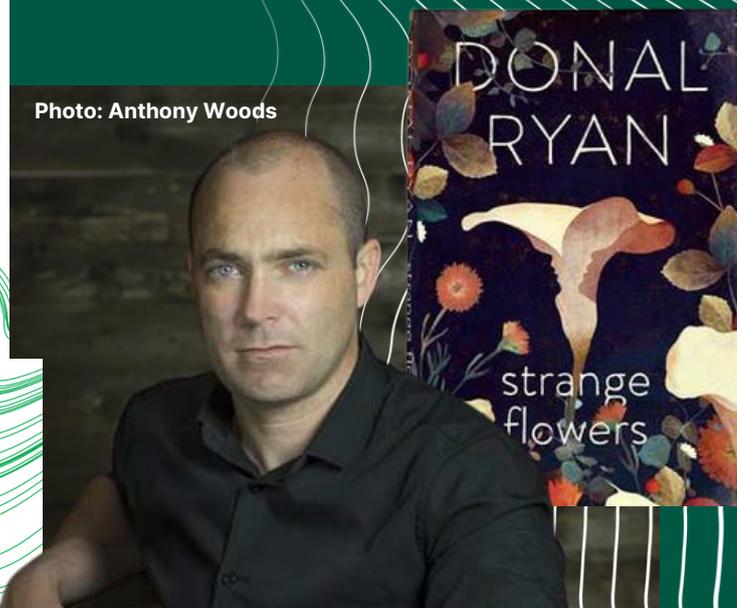
Prof. Tom Lodge

“Strange Flowers” wins the Eason Novel of the year at the An Post, Irish Book Awards

Many congratulations to our Creative Writing faculty colleague Donal Ryan, who recently won the Eason Novel of the Year for his acclaimed book ‘Strange flowers’. The An Post Irish Book Awards celebrate and promote Irish writing to the widest range of readers possible. Each year it brings together a huge community passionate about books – readers, authors, booksellers, publishers and librarians – to recognise the very best of Irish writing talent. The winners were announced at a gala ceremony in Dublin on 25th November.

Donal is the second member of the Creative Writing faculty to win the Irish Novel of the Year award at the An Post Irish Book awards following Prof. Joseph O'Connor's success last year for his novel ‘Shadowplay’. One of the graduates of the MA in Creative Writing, Helena Close, was also nominated in the Young Adult Fiction category for her novel ‘The Gone Book’.

Photo: Anthony Woods



2021 Arts Council/UL Creative Writing Writer in Residence: Kit de Waal

UL Creative Writing is delighted to announce that Kit De Waal has been appointed as 2021 Arts Council/UL Creative Writing Writer in Residence. Her debut, *My Name is Leon* (2016), won the Kerry Group Irish Novel of the Year 2017 and is being adapted for the BBC. Kit's second novel, *The Trick to Time*, was longlisted for The Women's Prize. Her first YA novel, *Becoming Dinah* was shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal. Her latest book, a collection of short stories called *Supporting Cast* was published in 2020.

Kit has taught at the UL Creative Writing Winter School several times with Winter School founder Prof. Sarah Moore, Donal Ryan, Rob Doyle and Prof. Eoin Devereux and has visited our MA Creative Writing class. In 2021 she will teach on the spring modules ‘Creative Writers in the Community’ with Prof. Eoin Devereux and on the ‘Individual Writing Project’ module. In the autumn semester she will teach on the ‘Project Development for Creative Writers’ module, as well as taking part in a number of Creative Writing outreaches and events.

Events

Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival

2020

Monday September 28 - Sunday October 4

Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival

love learning



AHSS Faculty participated in the Limerick Lifelong Learning festival presenting diverse topics such as Irish Gothic Literature, building communities through local history and racism and anti-racism in Ireland to name a few. The week long schedule of events took place from Monday 28th September until Sunday 4th of October where the theme of the festival centred on Celebrating and Building Learning Communities.

CPERN Conference

CPERN, The Critical Political Economic Research Network of the European Sociological Association were scheduled to have their mid-term workshop at the University of Limerick in June 2020. Instead, it maintained the original schedule and successfully 'went' online. Organised by the CPERN board, which Dr. Owen Worth was the local representative, the conference was attended by over 150 academics from several time-zones. There was also a training day for young researchers the day before. Panels topics included finance, social movements, authoritarian forms of capitalism, health, race and inevitable, the COVID crisis. The board decided that they would have the next workshop in two years (2022) at Limerick



Launch of New Double Degree MA in European Studies by the German Ambassador to Ireland, Ms Deike Potzel

On 3 March 2020 the German Ambassador to Ireland, Ms Deike Potzel, came to UL to launch the new Double Degree MA in European Studies, a pioneering Masters programme run in co-operation with the Europa Universität Flensburg (EUF) in Germany. The EUF was represented at the launch by Prof. Anne Reichold, Professor of Philosophy and Course Director, BA in European Studies at the EUF.

The MA in European Studies is a two-year programme with semesters 1 and 2 spent at the University of Limerick (UL) and semester 3 and 4 at the partner university. Alternatively, students can apply to study at EUF in first year and spend the second year at UL.

The programme applies the interdisciplinary understanding of European Studies characteristic for UL's undergraduate programme to postgraduate level and aims to give students skills and competencies required in a post-Brexit Europe in key areas such as politics, economics, law, languages and European cultural studies.

During her visit the Ambassador also opened the photo exhibition "Totally East - Life in East Germany" in the Language Learning Hub and introduced the award-winning German film *Das schweigende Klassenzimmer / The Silent Revolution* (with English subtitles). The Ambassador subsequently discussed the film with fourth year students of German.



Photo: Don Moloney



Cultural Representations from the Old World and the New

An online interdisciplinary symposium was held on 11 November in advance of a forthcoming book of essays to be edited in collaboration with the Grupo de Sociología de la Cultura from the Universidad Autónoma y Metropolitana in Mexico City. It was organised by Dr. Alistair Malcolm, with papers given by speakers from across the Faculty, including Dr. Cinta Ramblado, Dr. Mairead Moriarty, Professor Eoin Devereux, and Professor Anthony McElligott. The book is intended to consider different aspects of cultural theory, and the symposium contributions embraced such areas as art, music, gender, emotions, representation of power, self-fashioning, scripting by the media, and linguistic landscapes. Questions were chaired by Professor Helen Kelly-Holmes and by Dr. Richard Kirwan, and a lively discussion yielded many useful ideas from those who attended. It was also a special pleasure to welcome five attendees from Mexico.

Centre for Applied Language Studies Books' Launch

In March, members of the Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALs), a research centre within the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics, launched 8 recently published volumes at a special books' launch event. The occasion was hosted by the Director of CALs, Professor Fiona Farr and the books were launched by Professor Michael McCarthy, Professor Emeritus at the University of Nottingham, and adjunct member of CALs.



Facilitating the Transition from Emergency Teaching to Fully Online

Dr. Darina Slattery and Jess Beeley are members of the UL Learning Technology Forum (LTF), which coordinates professional development in the area of technology-enhanced learning and provides support to the campus community. The LTF comprises members from across UL, who planned a suite of resources and training sessions that would facilitate remote working and learning. All the resources developed by members of the LTF are available online.

Once the lockdown commenced in mid-March, Darina and Jess provided extensive support to AHSS teaching and administration staff. Darina's on-campus DUO workshops, which provide participants with the knowledge and skills needed to design and develop blended and online programmes, were redesigned and offered in the form of two synchronous webinars. The first webinar covered the planning and design phases and the second webinar covered the delivery and evaluation phases.

Complementing the DUO workshops, Jess developed a six-week training course on Sulis. The course centered on a module template, designed by Jess and translated into Irish with the assistance of Aonad na Gaeilge. In addition, Jess developed online orientation sites, which were rolled out to programmes across the faculty, thereby preparing incoming students for online learning.

Darina and Jess also contributed to an early draft of the UL Guidelines for Preparing Teaching and Learning, which originated in the AHSS faculty office and was subsequently adopted campus-wide.



They are also members of the Effective Technology Support (ETS) Working Group, which met weekly during the summer to carry out a campus-wide review of third party relationships with educational technology partners, and to make a start on an institutional virtual learning environment (VLE) review.

While many teaching staff report that they feel more comfortable using technology now, than they did back in March, the LTF still has more work to do. More recently, the LTF launched its blog series, which includes a three-part posting by Darina. The LTF will be rolling out additional resources in the coming weeks and months.



Professor Eoin Devereux invited to write essay for The Cranberries release of 'No Need To Argue'

Universal Music London have just released a box set release of The Cranberries second album 'No Need To Argue'. The band asked Professor Eoin Devereux of the Popular Music and Popular Culture Research Cluster, AHSS to write an extended essay on the album's history to accompany the new release.

Eoin's essay examines the making of the record with producer Stephen Street, the design of its artwork and it also contains a detailed account of the writing of songs such as 'Twenty One' and 'Zombie'. He documents, for the first time, how 'Zombie' first came to life in a small garage in Mungret, County Limerick and examines the influences of Church singing and Sean Nos on the late Dolores O'Riordan's unique voice. Earlier this Summer, Eoin was also asked to MC a live broadcast with the band to announce the release of their record. The event featured the band in discussion with Eoin and responding to fan questions from all over the world. In addition to this, Eoin is also the author of 'Waltzing Back' a 10,000 word essay which was published in 2018 with the re-release of the band's 'Everybody Else is Doing It, So Why Can't We?'

Changemakers Conference

On 13 and 14 February 2020, over 250 festival-makers from across the country gathered in UL to take part in the Changemakers conference. Developed in partnership with the MA Festive Arts at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, this conference was the first national gathering of festival makers and festival stakeholders in Ireland. The aim of the event was to facilitate connections, and to listen to and learn from this group of people who invest their time and energy in making festivals happen, year on year.

The conference was titled Changemakers, reflecting the transformative impact of festivals on their communities. The full programme can be found [here](#).



International



Photo: Brian Arthur

International Agreement with Algerian Government

In February of this year, UL signed a “game-changing” International agreement with the Algerian government.

The ground-breaking research capacity building project, aims to support the up-skilling of young Algerian academics to PhD level through a specially designed International Structured PhD programme. The programme will provide a professional development focus in Year 1 on English as a Medium of Instruction and participants will then undertake a PhD research project from Years 2-4 with the supervisory panel at the University of Limerick. The project supports a decision by the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education to change the language of instruction in Higher Education from French to English.

The PhD was designed after a think tank of specialists and administration officials came together to find ways to open up the international environment for Algerian universities. A Memorandum of Understanding between UL and the Algerian Ministry of Education has been signed agreeing to the relationship and the fee structure over the first four years of the project, as well as a contract guaranteeing €5.5 million for UL on the initial intake

We are all Irish IWAMD St.Patrick's Day Video

Despite worldwide disruption to St Patrick's Day amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance and UL Global collaborated with international and Irish students to mark St Patrick's Day with a beautiful rendition of the song 'Mo Ghile Mear', in a video that celebrates the global nature of Irish culture, music and spirit.

Mexican composer Dr. Oscar Mascarenas, a lecturer at the Irish World Academy, arranged the Irish traditional song, which is performed by international vocalists singing as Gaeilge.

Filmed at UL, the video celebrates the music and culture that connects us – and on the one day, March 17, that we are all connected.



PostGrad Research

AHSS PhD Development Seminars for Postgraduate researchers



As part of the AHSS Professional Development Programme for postgraduate researchers, the AHSS Graduate Research Centre organised a series of seminars covering a wide range of research topics. Please see a list of the events that took place virtually within the last year and future events:

2020

- April-AHSS Annual Conference - Online Poster Event
- June – PhD Life Hacks – Managing Life Work balances and Teaching Practices
- July – PhD Life Hacks – What worked for me and my PhD· September - IRC Workshops· September – Gantt Chart Workshop
- Commenced October – Weekly themed PhD Virtual Coffee Chats
- November – Delivering an excellent Conference paper/Academic CV/Letter of application for funding/Induction for new AHSS PhDs

2021

- January-Publishing Seminar
- March-Understanding Research Impact, Articulating Transferable Skills and Viva Preparation

The comments and feedback from attendees was very positive particularly during the pandemic when the opportunity to connect with others was limited. The purpose of these events are to support early career researchers in their academic journey and career development. The events were organised by Dr. Niamh Lenahan and by Dr. Niamh Nic Ghabhann.



Samhain: Presentations of Research

The Irish World Academy is home to over 40 postgraduate research students, the vast majority of whom engage in PhD research. Some researchers are completing projects with traditional, text-based outputs, while others are registered on the PhD in Arts Practice. While students on the PhD in Arts Practice produce text-based research outputs, their work specifically includes aspects of practice.

Once a year, the work of this exceptionally rich research community is showcased in a series known as Samhain. This year presentations occurred online from the 23rd-26th of November.

Postgraduate researcher profile: Louise Ryan, PhD candidate, Department of Sociology

Louise trained as a digital marketing strategist after spending time as a staff writer collaborating with editorial and commercial teams for a digital news website in Dublin. Her PhD research is concerned with popular discourses relating to health and fitness, and the emergence of health and fitness industry authorities. She examines the relationships between Instagram influencers, the Instagram platform and their followers.



Louise employs emerging research methods to facilitate her study of algorithmically structured social spaces. She examines Instagram users' experience of social media use and uncovering influencers' performance of algorithmic optimisation. She identifies social media users who combine information about the technological infrastructures of social media with existing discourses of authenticity, entrepreneurship, empowerment and health.

Louise has presented her research internationally at The Instagram Conference, Middlesex University, London, the International Conference on Social Media and Society in at Ryerson University, Toronto and Theorizing the Web, New York.

Postgraduate research profile : Sandrine Ndahiro- Unsilencing Black Voices

Sandrine Uwase Ndahiro BA '18/MA '19 moved from her home in Rwanda to Ireland in 2006. A student, teacher and documentary maker, Sandrine recently co-founded a film project entitled "Unsilencing Black Voices". She believed it was time to start talking about her own experiences with racism, while also providing a platform for other black voices in Ireland.

A first class honours graduate twice-over, Sandrine is currently in the first-year of pursuing a Ph.D. Her research centres around third-generation African writers, such as Afrofuturists, who have emerged during the era of late liberalism and who have introduced multiple and nuanced perspectives for reflecting on African lives and aspirations.

'Unsilencing Black Voices' was recently chosen in its line-up by the 2020 Dublin Arts and Human Rights Festival to showcase and highlight the extraordinary work of human rights defenders in Ireland and around the world. Working on this documentary project provided Sandrine with the opportunity to incorporate her research interests and cultural background to highlight black lived experiences in Ireland.

Afrofuturists

This past summer, Sandrine and her friend Catherine Osikoya (pictured), a fifth-year architecture student at UL embarked on a new project. "We were inspired by the global resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement" Sandrine says "and so, we launched an online and multimedia campaign to document experiences of racism among the Irish black community". The result was a documentary called 'Unsilencing Black Voices', released in early August.



Testimonies

The multimedia project collected twenty testimonies from individuals in Limerick, Cork, Galway, and Carlow. The documentary is free and available to the public and is complemented by educational tool kits intended for use by primary and secondary schools, as well as third-level institutions. "We hope to continue to dismantle the issue of racism within Irish society" adds Sandrine.

It is Sandrine's hope that this project will provide a platform where black voices can feel heard and finally acknowledged and will create a safe space to discuss this issue of race. Sandrine concludes "I have found my voice and I vow to never be silent again when it comes to this issue of racism."



New Staff



Dr. Catherine Porter
Lecturer in Geography
Department of History

Dr. Catherine Porter was awarded a PhD in Geography from Queen's University Belfast. Prior to working at the University of Limerick, she held research and teaching roles at Lancaster University, the University of Hull, and Queen's University Belfast. In addition to her role at the University of Limerick she is an e-Tutor in GIS at Ulster University. She also holds the honorary title of visiting scholar at Queen's University Belfast and is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Catherine is a historical geographer with research interests in geospatial technologies and mixed method approaches for the analysis and interpretation of early source material. She specialises in the narratives of early cartography, with a focus on maps of Ireland from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. She has worked on projects funded by the European Research Council, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Leverhulme Trust and the J B Harley Trust for which she was recently awarded the J B Harley Research Fellowship in the History of Cartography.



Marta Fortes
Spanish Teacher
School of Modern Languages
and Applied Linguistics

Marta Fortes joined as a full time member of the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics, at the University of Limerick as a teacher of Spanish. She earned her MA in Applied Linguistics from the University of Limerick and also holds a Bachelor of Education. She has a vast amount of experience in teaching both Spanish and English languages from primary to higher education. Most recently she has been teaching Spanish at third level since 2018 at the University of Limerick and Shannon College (NUI Galway) where she has been coordinating modules related to Tourism and Business with Spanish. She is currently specialising in Spanish for Specific Purposes such as business, but is also interested in telecollaborative language learning between students from Universities in Ireland and Spain.

Emma's research interests are gender & international relations, peace and conflict studies and critical military studies. Her work has been published in International Feminist Journal of Politics, Gender, Place and Culture and Childhood. Her first monograph, Gender and Political Apology, is forthcoming in 2021 in Routledge's 'Gender and Global Politics' series and interrogates the ritual of governmental apology for conflict-related sexual violence. Before coming to the University of Limerick, Emma was a Teaching Fellow in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Aberdeen, after having received her doctorate there. She has also worked on a collaborative research project at the University of Aberdeen entitled 'War Commemoration, Military Culture and Identity Politics in Scotland'.



Dr. Emma Dolan

Lecturer, Department of Politics and Public Administration



Dr. Patrick Doyle

Lecturer in Irish Politics and Community Development
Department of Politics and Public Administration

Dr. Patrick Doyle was recently appointed Lecturer in Irish Politics and Community Development in the Department of Politics and Public Administration. Patrick's interests cover Irish political history as well as the historical relationship between capitalism and religion. Before joining the University of Limerick he was a Hallsworth Research Fellow in Political Economy at the University of Manchester Patrick's first book Civilising Rural Ireland examines the history of the co-operative movement and its role in Irish state-building. He is also a member of Ireland's Social and Solidarity Economy Network and interested in the application of democratic principles in community development

Alumni Success Stories

Read our alumni profiles below of AHSS graduates who are making an impact in their local communities:

Laura Ryan BA European Studies '97 - Head of Marketing and Communications, Limerick City and County Council

As Head of Marketing and Communications for the Limerick City and County Council, Laura headed up the 'Limerick: Atlantic Edge, European Embrace' brand launch which was unveiled through a live event in the city's St Mary's Cathedral. The new brand was the first major branding of the city and county which would promote it nationally and globally as a destination for inward industry investment, tourism, education and for people to live and work in. Developed by global creative agency M&C Saatchi, Laura adds "our new brand positioning aims to internationalise Limerick and capture the sense of warmth and resilience of our historic city and county."

Our Graduates



Aoife Madden BA Public Admin '02- 'Innovator to watch'- Business Improvement Department at Limerick City and County Council

2020 has been a very significant year for Aoife Madden. Through her role in the Business Improvement Department at Limerick City and County Council, Aoife was recently highlighted as an 'Innovator to watch' by the billion-dollar organisation Bloomberg Philanthropies. She featured in its newsletter Spark which is distributed to thousands of innovation subscribers and contacts across the world, as well as shared across its social media platforms.

The council was recognised by Bloomberg for its creation of a new Covid-19 communications tool and channel for employee feedback, which was a smartphone app for outdoor staff who don't always have access to email. The app enables staff to keep up with their work and key information on how to stay safe while doing so. It has since become a central platform for information related to staff health and wellbeing, leave policies, counselling services and more, particularly with remote working.



Alumni Success Stories

Meghann Scully, BA New Media and Irish '11, Radio producer, presenter and author

Following her graduation from UL in 2011 with a BA in Irish and New Media, Meghann who is originally from Galway began her career as a radio presenter and Road safety campaigner.

Now working on TV (Today Show, RTÉ), radio (Classic Hits) and as an online presenter and producer (Limerick Post), Meghann has worked in Dublin, Galway, Limerick, Cork and London. She also contributed to the 'Mental Health for Millennials' book series. During her teenage years, tragedy struck when her only sibling Marcus was killed in a car accident. The following year, her father Maxie died due to illness. Over the years, Meghann suffered greatly with loss and grief and began writing and sharing her experiences and thoughts which became the foundation for her first book entitled: "Broken Love: My Journey Through Loss and Grief"



UL Graduate wins Pulitzer for Syrian investigation

UL graduate Malachy Browne was named as one of the winners of the prestigious Pulitzer Prize. Mr Browne, a senior story producer with the New York Times, was part of a team of journalists awarded the prize in the international reporting category for a series of stories "exposing the predations of Vladimir Putin's regime", the Pulitzer committee said.

He studied engineering in UCD and completed the Masters in International Relations in UL before entering journalism.

Students



Students Sweep the Boards at the 2020 National Student Media Awards

UL journalism students swept the boards at the 2020 National Student Media Awards, scooping six top awards. Mostafa Darwish, who is studying for a Masters in Journalism, was named Journalist of the Year. As well as the University winning Journalist of the Year, UL fourth year journalism student Mairead Cleary was named Video Journalist of the Year. Ronan Coughlan, a third year journalism student, was named Sports Writer of the Year having been shortlisted in the same category last year. The awards for Magazine of the Year and Magazine Layout and Design of the Year both went to Grapevine, the magazine produced by second year journalism students. An-Focal, also won Website of the Year for the second year in a row.

IWAMD Dance Project with the Lir Academy, Liz Roche Company and Dance Ireland.

Students from the MA Contemporary Dance Performance at the Irish World Academy took part in an exciting new learning initiative with MFA students in Lighting Design from the Lir Academy Dublin in a supportive and resourced teaching environment to learn about and experiment with lighting design for dance productions. Mentored by choreographer Liz Roche and lighting designer Sinead Wallace, with Dr. Jenny Roche (Course director MA Contemporary Dance Performance) the dance students, Yumi Lee, Melissa Bori, Adrika Subhash and Wu Fei, were paired with lighting design students to develop and produce new choreographic works, which were then showcased in a performance at the Lir Academy in January.



School of Law Alumni Mentoring Network

The inaugural UL School of Law Alumni Mentoring Programme took place in the academic year 2019/2020. Due to Covid-19 the Programme has temporarily moved online. The Programme pairs over forty students from final year Law Plus, Law and Accounting and final year Graduate Entry programmes with mentors who have previously studied in the School of Law. All mentors give generously of their time.

Mentors come from LK Shields Solicitors, William Fry Solicitors, A&L Goodbody Solicitors, Holmes O'Malley Sexton Solicitors Limerick, Sweeney McGann Solicitors Limerick, Mason Hayes and Curran Solicitors Dublin, Michael Staines & Co Solicitors Dublin, Michael Hourigan Barrister at Law and the State Solicitor's Office. The mentors offer guidance on CV / interview preparation, tips on securing training contracts, and guidance on career planning. The mentors meet online with groups of four students. Mentors also communicate with each of their mentees individually, to offer one to one advice on career planning. The Programme was created in direct response to the wishes of students to have more engagement with those working in the legal profession and to establish connections with legal professionals for future work opportunities.



Professor Geoffrey Shannon (Adjunct Professor at the School of Law and Deputy Director of Education at the Law Society of Ireland) and his colleagues in the Law Society have prepared an information video for students on the Programme. The Programme was created and is directed by Dr. Norah Burns, Co-Director of Clinical Legal Education in the School of Law. Dr. Burns conducted a pre course survey with students to ascertain their needs and what they would like to achieve from the Programme, these suggestions will be incorporated into the Programme going forward. The Programme was also chosen as one of the pilot projects for AHSS Faculty Teaching Board Funding for 2020/2021.



The Ogham Stone 2020 - Online Launch

The 2020 edition of UL's literary journal The Ogham Stone was published online earlier this year. The Ogham Stone is compiled, designed and edited by the students on the MA programmes in Creative Writing and English under the stewardship of Dr. Carrie Griffin. Featuring a wide a selection of new writing in prose and verse from Ireland and beyond, the new issue includes work by Kieran Beville, Elizabeth Boyle, Catherine Day, Kevin Higgins, Emma Hynes, Patrick Moran and Ely Percy and others, as well as an introduction by UL Writer in Residence (2019–20) Gavin McCrea. The writing of UL student Ian McArthur, Martin Olivares, Lauren Preston and Gráinne Quinlan is also published in this issue. Dedicated to frontline workers, the 2020 issue may be downloaded for free from <http://oghamstoneul.com>. In lieu of payment the editors ask for a small donation to Gateway to Education Limerick



The 2021 issue is currently in preparation; for further details and to follow the work of The Ogham Stone see the website, or follow on Twitter (@TheOghamStone), Instagram (@theoghamstone) and Facebook (@oghamstoneul). Please see the links here or Information on the MA in Creative Writing and the MA in English here.

UL wins International Virtual Classroom Environmental Challenge

Two students of Geography Maeve Mc Carthy and Jacqui Mannix Geoghann represented UL in the Virtual Classroom Environmental Challenge, a project which saw students from Burkina Faso, France, Ireland, Norway and Slovakia compete to create ideas about a sustainable campus.

On Thursday Dec 10th 2020, Maeve and Jacqui competed in the final of this challenge and emerged successful winners for their innovative ideas on linking the UL Green Charter and Green Living on campus with students through an app through which students and staff at UL could record and track wildlife on UL campus.

Merry Christmas and a
Prosperous New Year

Nollaig shona agus athbhliain
faoi mhaise daoibh go léir

