Department of Government and politics

University College Cork

Postgraduate Government and Politics

Handbook

***Academic Year 2020-2021***



**Overview**

Welcome to the Department of Government and Politics in UCC. Here you will find a vibrant climate in which to undertake your research, supported by knowledgeable and helpful staff with a strong commitment to postgraduate education. Internationally recognised for its research excellence, and expertise and professional connections that range from local and national politics, to international issues and global governance, the Department is committed to an ambitious research and publishing agenda. All staff members ae research active and publish in international journals.  They have produced a wide range of books in all of the major sub-fields of the discipline, and are involved in EU, IRC and other externally funded research programmes.

**Organisation**

All postgraduate matters are dealt with at Department level by the Department’s Research and Graduate Studies Committee. These matters include:

* Processing of applications for all research Masters’ programmes and the PhD in Government and Politics
* Regular reviews of students’ progress
* Organization of Departmental research seminars, guest lectures, workshops, etc.
* Review of existing and creation of new postgraduate programmes of study

**Postgraduate Applicants**

If you are interested in applying to undertake PhD research in the Department of Government and Politics, you should contact the programme director and potential supervisor to discuss your research idea in the first instance. You will then need to submit an application via PAC, a central processing point for all applications to read for higher degrees at Irish universities. This application will include a research proposal of approximately 1,500-2,000 words. The processing of PAC applications may take a couple of months. Academic staff members are always available for discussion of potential PhD research topics, and to advise prospective students on drafting their proposals.

**Information on Department of Government and Politics**

**Address:** Department of Government and Politics,

 2nd Floor, Block B,

O’Rahilly Building (ORB),

 University College Cork,

Cork.

***Phone:***  021 490 2770/2087

***Email:*** government@ucc.ie

***Web Address:*** <https://www.ucc.ie/en/government-and-politics/>

##### Research Activities

Further details on the research interests, publications and profiles of individual staff-members are listed on the departmental web site:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/government/>

We are committed to developing cutting-edge research in both mainstream and novel areas, which in turn feeds into all programmes at undergraduate, postgraduate and post-experience levels. The Department has grown considerably in recent years and has developed two research groups to provide for focused discussions of research activities.

* Government group
* Politics group

Each member of academic staff is assigned to a research group, and all PhD students are expected to join a group. More information can be provided by your supervisor.

The Department has close ties with academic institutions in the UK, France, Germany and the US. Staff regularly attend and contribute to international conferences as well as publishing in leading journals. As a research student in the Department, the discoveries you make will contribute to the research profile of the Department and the University.

**European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)**

The Department is a member of the ECPR ([www.ecpr.eu](http://www.ecpr.eu)). This organisation provides extensive opportunities for postgraduate students, including spring and summer schools in research training, a biennial postgraduate conference and a postgraduate network. All postgraduates are advised to join the postgraduate network and to utilise the facilities offered by the ECPR.

**Political Studies Association of Ireland (PSAI)**

The PSAI ([www.psai.ie](http://www.psai.ie)) has a postgraduate network which also offers a range of opportunities for postgraduates. Membership of this organisation is encouraged and participation in the biennial postgraduate conference is strongly recommended.

The PSAI offers some financial support to a postgraduate student in each affiliated Department to attend a conference or Summer School each year. It also publishes the journal *Irish Political Studies* and awards the Basil Chubb prize each year for the best PhD completed in politics on the island of Ireland.

**The Academic Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES)**

Members of the Department, including staff and PhD students, may currently enjoy the benefits of membership in UACES (<http://www.uaces.org>) without having to pay an individual subscription. Benefits include eligibility to attend UACES events at the membership rate, and to apply for UACES funding to support seminars, workshops, etc.

**Conferences**

The Department considers student attendance at conferences an essential part of student development. Students are strongly encouraged to attend conferences, to present their findings, to meet and network with colleagues in the field of political science and to gain additional insight into their research. Most hosting associations (e.g. APSA, ECPR, PSAI) offer some financial support for students.

**Department Research Seminars**

The Department organizes a lively research seminar series featuring contributions by members of UCC staff and visiting scholars. All postgraduate students are expected to attend the research seminars, and PhD students are expected to deliver at least one presentation per year in this forum.

**Postgraduate Research Structures**

**Departmental Research & Graduate Studies Committee (RGSC)**

The primary role of the Departmental Research & Graduate Studies Committee is to monitor and support the progress of PhD students. It provides a mechanism for local identification and resolution of any problems that may emerge in relation to a student’s progress.

The RGSC manages progress reviews, in terms of identifying the staff responsible for the review and verifying that such reviews have taken place. Progress reviews are intended to assess whether:

(i) The student has knowledge and skills appropriate to the stage of his/her research programme;

(ii) S/he has completed work of a quality to justify continuation, and that the research methods are appropriate and practical;

(iii) A realistic plan is in place for progression and eventual completion of the research within the expected timeframe.

The RGSC also co-ordinates reviews involved in transfer between Masters (Research) and PhD programmes.

**PhD (Government and Politics) Programme Details**

The Department offers a structured PhD programme which targets the highest quality students and provides them with an enriching academic experience preparing them for careers in education and research, social justice work, politics/governance, and business/industry. While MSc work may merely reflect competence and training in research, which is not necessarily publishable, PhD work must be publishable in whole or in part. In fact, it is the policy of the Department to encourage publication of all research carried out, whether for an MSc or PhD degree. The minimum time period allotted for PhD research is nine terms (i.e. three academic years) and generally PhD studies should not take longer than six years (full time).

In exceptional cases, and with the approval of the Academic Board on the recommendation of the Interfaculty Graduate Studies Board and the Faculty, the minimum time-period required may be reduced to six terms.

For a 3 year PhD, the maximum number of credits that can be undertaken is 30 credits. For a 4 year PhD, the maximum number of credits that can be undertaken is 90 credits.

Only those modules developed specifically for postgraduate student training (i.e. that are PG-coded) can be taken with free choice by students and count towards the 15 credit minimum requirement for the PhD programme.

Students who choose to take one or more of these modules will be formally registered once they have completed all compulsory elements, including assessment. Postgraduate training modules are assessed on a pass/fail basis only. It is expected that supervisors will discuss with their students the most appropriate modules to undertake at an early meeting, and these modules do not require sign-off at approval stage. Further modules will be developed and approved over the academic year.

**Responsibilities of Research Students**

It is the responsibility of the student to maintain a professional relationship at all times with the supervising academic members and other university staff. The student is responsible for the progress and completion of her/his study. After registering it is the responsibility of the student to:

1. Prepare and submit a thesis of original research, in consultation with the supervisor(s) and the RGSC.
2. Be familiar with the University’s regulations and departmental guidelines.
3. Attend all courses in research training organised by the department.
4. Observe the Health and Safety regulations of their department.
5. Be aware of the University’s administrative requirements pertaining to all steps in the process (e.g. dates and deadlines for thesis submission, etc.).
6. Agree to a schedule of meetings, which will ensure regular contact with the supervisor.
7. Develop competence in written and oral communication skills.
8. Take the initiative in identifying problems and seeking solutions to these.
9. Satisfactorily pass any coursework that may be required by the Department/GSC.
10. Document the progress of work as agreed with the supervisor and present written or other material in sufficient time as requested.
11. Present written or other reports in sufficient time as may be required by the RGSC/Department.
12. Satisfy the requirements of the Department/programme at the progress reviews, for which details will be set out by the Department at the beginning of the programme.
13. Submit a final draft for approval not less than one month before the submission date.

**Responsibilities of the Supervisor**

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to maintain a professional relationship at all times with the research student and to:

1. Give guidance about the selection of a thesis topic, research methods/techniques used, the planning of the research programme, presentation of the research proposal to the RGSC, literature searching and, where necessary, appropriate courses to attend and the standard expected.

2. Give advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of work so that the thesis may be completed within the scheduled time.

3. Familiarise the student with any reviews required by the RGSC.

4. Encourage the student to show research initiative and self-motivation in order to pursue independent research with confidence.

5. Establish and maintain a schedule of regular meetings with the student. Such meetings are to be held at the request of either the supervisor or the student. The supervisor should keep a record of all meetings.

6. If a supervisor is to be on leave for a period greater than two-three weeks, the supervisor should ensure that adequate supervisory arrangements are made.

7. Request regular written work, interim reports or research results as appropriate and return such reports and draft chapters, with comments, within two weeks.

8. Ensure that the student is made aware of inadequate progress by specifying the problems and suggesting ways of addressing them. If the supervisor feels obliged to recommend a candidature be terminated because of unsatisfactory progress, he/she must make this recommendation to the RGSC who will inform the student accordingly.

9. Advise the GSC of the progress of the student at the Annual Review.

10. Undertake the Review with the nominees of the RGSC.

11. Ensure that the work reported in the thesis is the student’s own. The student should be made aware of any concerns that the supervisor has about the originality of the work.

12. Encourage, where appropriate, publication of the research results. Ensure agreement is reached with the student on authorship of publications and acknowledgements of contributions.

13. Ensure that the student is aware of the standard of work that is generally accepted.

14. Seek to ensure that research projects sponsored by industry grants or contracts should not impose unreasonable restrictions on dissemination and publication of work done as part of a thesis or compromise the independence of the research. Where a confidentiality agreement exists between a Department and a sponsor, the implications should be made explicit to the student. Submission of the thesis should not be delayed by the Department/Sponsor’s interest in the confidentiality of the student’s own work.

15. Approve the submission of the thesis for examination.

**Thesis Review, Submission and Examining**

**Annual Review**

At the end of the each year a review is completed and students submit a 1,500 word outline of their progress to date. All students applying for transfer between research programmes (e.g., between MSc/MPhil and doctoral degrees) will be subject to reviews by the RGSC.

The purpose of this review is to ensure that the student is complying with the research proposal, has sufficient knowledge of the fundamentals of the chosen research topic (including literature, methodologies, data, etc.), and to assess the likelihood of the student completing the masters or PhD successfully within the time-scale allowed.

The purpose of progress reviews is to support both student and supervisor(s) by giving an opportunity to reflect and report on progress and achievements in the year concerned, and plans for the subsequent year. Progress will be recognised and acknowledged and, where appropriate, constructive and detailed feedback and advice will be provided. In cases where problems with the progress of research are identified, local steps to resolving such problems will be identified during the review and followed up. More specifically, the GSC assesses whether the student is complying with the research proposal, has sufficient knowledge of the fundamentals of the chosen research topic (including literature, methodologies, data, etc.), and to assess the likelihood of the student completing the masters or PhD successfully within the time-scale allowed.

The review panel will include the Chair of the RGSC and at least one additional member of staff, who is not a supervisor of the student under review.

Following the review, the RGSC decides whether the student’s progress is:

* Satisfactory: recommend the student continue with their research;
* Not satisfactory: request another review meeting within a specified number of months (normally within a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 6 months, specified by the RGSC) with a full report addressing concerns. In such cases, detailed and clear feedback on the type of achievements which are expected in this period will be provided in writing to the student.

Following a second unsatisfactory review of progress, the RGSC may advise a student that it is in their best interests to choose to change their registration or deregister from their research degree programme. However, if a student wishes to continue in their programme despite this advice, this will result in the initiation of an adjudication process to determine the student’s likelihood of successful progression.

Students should be made fully aware that positive results in progress reviews should not lead them to assume that their thesis examination is in any way pre-determined, as the examination process will be conducted in a manner that is entirely independent of preceding reviews and commences on submission of the thesis.

**Submission Approval**

The supervisor may decline to give approval on any one of the following grounds:

1. The student has not been adequately supervised as a result of failing to consult the supervisor sufficiently in the course of preparing the thesis.

2. The presentation of the thesis is compromised by excessive grammatical, typographical and similar mistakes.

3. The referencing system fails to meet the standards required in the discipline.

4. The thesis contains plagiarised material.

5. The data, arguments or evidence provided are inadequate for the purpose of the thesis, or are not organised satisfactorily.

6. The methodology used is inadequate. This may include a failure to address issues of bias in the presentation of results or a failure to adopt a satisfactorily critical attitude to the material presented or discussed.

Where submission approval is withheld, the supervisor must submit a report to the RGSC giving the academic reasons for refusing permission to submit the thesis for examination. The RGSC should ascertain if there are any other circumstances that should be taken into consideration before reaching a decision on further action. It may choose to seek further opinions on the merits of the work. It should consult with and take advice from the Head of Department and the relevant professor on the circumstances that have arisen.

The RGSC may either confirm or reverse the decision to refuse permission to submit the thesis for examination. The decision should be taken in the best interests of the student. The RGSC should appoint a member of staff, other than the supervisor, to advise the student of the circumstances surrounding the decision. If the student is still dissatisfied, there is a right of appeal to the President.

**Thesis Submission - PhD**

You need to notify the Graduate Studies Office of your **Intention to Submit** at least three months prior to your proposed date of thesis submission. This notice of intention is a trigger for the Graduate Studies Office to write to the Department, asking for extern and intern nominations for the PhD examination. Should you wish to submit your thesis before the three months, you can do so. Similarly, you can submit any time after the 3 months but this may result in a delay in examining your thesis.

For PhD students, your Supervisor(s) is responsible for making arrangements for the viva -voce Examination, and for communicating same to you. In cases where the Supervisor will not be present at the Examination, the Internal Examiner will make the arrangements.

There is an expectation that the Viva-Voce examination will normally take place within three months of submission.

For both Masters and PhD students, the Graduate Studies Office will send a copy of thesis to each of the examiners (extern and interns), together with the appropriate examiner report forms. The examiners will return an Examiners Report to the Graduate Studies Office, giving one of the following recommendations:

* Award, no amendments needed
* Award, on condition minor amendments are carried out
* Award, on condition major amendments are carried out
* Reject, but permit submission of a revised thesis
* Reject

The report will go before the Academic Council Graduate Studies Committee meeting for formal approval.

If you are required to undertake minor amendments, you should liaise with your supervisor. Once the corrections are carried out you can submit your final hardbound thesis to the Graduate Studies Office, together with a letter from **your Internal Examiner** confirming that the corrections have been carried out. Major amendments require a letter from **all** examiners confirming that the corrections have been carried out to their satisfaction.

Along with your hardbound, students are also required to submit a Summary/Abstract of thesis on memory stick not exceeding 300 words and a library permission form.

PhD students are expected to submit an e-thesis at the same time as their hard bound thesis.  E-theses will be stored and made available online through the UCC institutional repository [CORA](http://cora.ucc.ie/handle/10468/1).

To submit your abstract on-line (PhD students only), you must first register with CORA at https://cora.ucc.ie/register. Then you complete a thesis description form and upload your thesis abstract (not exceeding 300 words) through CORA. For detailed guidelines see the http://booleweb.ucc.ie/index.php?pageID=503

* If you are submitting an e-thesis you can also do this through CORA.
* If you are not submitting an e-thesis, you must complete a ‘Decision to withhold form’ with your supervisor and submit this to the Graduate Studies Office.

**Funding**

**CACSSS Excellence Scholarships (PhD)**

UCC offers a number of Excellence Scholarships to applicants who intend to start a PhD, PhD Track or MPhil degree in the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences in September 2018 or January 2019.  The scholarships cover EU tuition fees and are tenable for the duration of the student's chosen postgraduate course.

The scholarships are open to EU and non-EU students. However, the funding will only cover the EU fee, so successful non-EU applicants will be responsible for the balance.

Applicants must have at least Second Class Honours (Grade 1) or equivalent in their first or subsequent degree and must have already applied for their chosen postgraduate course at [www.pac.ie/ucc](http://www.pac.ie/ucc). A referee's report will be required as part of the application process.

[Excellence PhD Schol Application Form](https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/academic/cacsssgraduateschool/documents/ExcellenceScholarships%28PhD%29ApplicationForm.docx)

[Excellence PhD Schol Referee Report](https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/academic/cacsssgraduateschool/documents/ExcellenceScholarships%28PhD%29RefereeReport.docx)

[Excellence PhD Schol T&C](https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/academic/cacsssgraduateschool/documents/ExcellenceScholarships%28PhD%29TermsandConditions.pdf)

Further details are available here: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/cacsss/grads/scholarships_and_funding/pro_students/excellence_scholarships/>

**Boole International Doctoral Scholarships**

The Boole International Doctoral Scholarships in the Humanities and Social Sciences are for prospective doctoral students from non-EU countries.

Successful applicants will receive funding of 50% towards the non-EU doctoral fee, tenable for 3 years. To be eligible for a scholarship you must:

* Have applied for a PhD, a PhD Track or an MPhil in UCC's College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences via [www.pac.ie/ucc](http://www.pac.ie/ucc)
* Have a minimum Second Class Honours grade 1 (or equivalent) in your first or subsequent degree
* Be liable for non-EU fees (if you're not sure, click [here](http://www.ucc.ie/en/international/noneu-pg/am-i/))
* Be self-funded (i.e. not funded by any other organisation, government or scholarship scheme)

The Terms and Conditions and Application Form can be downloaded below:

[Boole International Doctoral Scholarships Terms and Conditions](https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/academic/cacsssgraduateschool/documents/BooleInternationalDoctoralScholarshipsTermsandConditions.pdf) (379kB)

[Boole International Doctoral Scholarships Application Form](https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/academic/cacsssgraduateschool/documents/BooleInternationalDoctoralScholarshipApplicationForm.docx) (63kB)

Further information is available here:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/cacsss/grads/scholarships_and_funding/pro_students/boole-scholarships/>

**PhD Scholarship: Fee Waiver for Non-EU Nationals**

This scholarship consists of a waiver of a portion of the normal fee. Non-EU students can apply for a scholarship on the same application form as for their PhD programme. This can be downloaded from the International Education Office webpage: [www.ucc.ie/en/international](http://www.ucc.ie/en/international)

**Irish Research Council**

The Irish Research Council ([www.research.ie](http://www.research.ie)) operates a suite of interlinked Research Schemes, such as the IRC Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarships and Government of Ireland Post-Doctoral Fellowships which fund research at pre- and post-doctoral levels.

A considerable number of students and staff in the past have had successful applications to the IRC in the past. The Graduate Studies Office provides grant preparation sessions on ‘Writing an IRC Postgraduate Scholarship Application’. Drop-in sessions are also provided for students prior to the submission date of the application where they can receive expert advice from academics. Attendance at these workshops and the one-on-one drop-in sessions is highly recommended.

**NUI Travelling Studentships**

These grants are available to NUI graduates in the Humanities and Social Sciences. For further information see <http://www.nui.ie/awards/postgraduates.asp>

**Local Authority Grants**

Applying to your local authority for a grant is another means of acquiring funding for your postgraduate study, although recent changes in the scheme have meant a reduction in the number of eligible applicants. Please visit the website of your local authority for more information, or the Citizens Information Board which provides advice in terms of eligibility for these grants: [www.citizensinformation.ie/categories](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/categories)

**Graduate Studies Office**

The Graduate Studies Office in UCC offers a wide range of services for all postgraduate students within the college community.

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/graduatestudies/student/>

**The Boolean**

University College Cork has over 1,000 doctoral students doing research in almost every field of academia. “The Boolean” is an annual on-line collection of short papers in which these students describe their area of research and some of their main findings.

The objective is to provide a platform for students to share their research with others within and outside the University besides the specialist readers who will learn of it through conventional academic publication routes.

Further information can be found at <http://publish.ucc.ie/boolean/home>

**The Survival Guide, Viva Workshop Presentations**

The PhD viva is the internationally recognised means of determining whether a PhD degree should be awarded, and tests whether a PhD candidate is able to engage in high-level discussion on their thesis with examiners from within and outside UCC who are expert in the field. UCC traditionally organizes viva preparation workshops covering the following topics:

* The function of the viva voce examination
* The procedures for thesis submission and examination
* The examiners’ role in the viva
* Students’ experiences of their own viva
* Case studies of how to handle your viva
* After the viva – from examination to graduation

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**Almost P*h*inishe*D***

This workshop aims to help PhD students when the time for submission of the thesis is within sight, and co-ordination and planning in the final 6-9 months is critical to ensure timely submission of a good thesis.

This workshop covers topics such as the following:

* Planning and structuring the thesis
* Use of project management and planning tools to keep yourself on track
* Handling feedback and revision
* Key milestones and requirements to be completed before thesis submission
* Registration and administrative issues associated with the final stages

**Library**

An essential part of research training is development of an ability to locate and access previously-published work on a specific topic. In assessing progress reports and the final thesis, the University expects candidates to demonstrate a familiarity with background literature and to review the current status of the literature on their particular research topic in a manner which displays good critical ability. Training in use of online and paper resources is normally directed by the supervisor, but much of this activity is mediated through the University's library services (<http://www.ucc.ie/services/library.html>).

Online searching using databases is a good way to make a list of research papers worth reading. The Boole Library is the main library relevant to research. Various online services are provided by the University's library such as a list of journals and books held, status of an individual's lending account and access to certain databases.

Students will find that many journals are not held by the University library and it may be necessary to source photocopies of these papers externally (students should check on-line databases in the last instance). Photocopies of papers or copies of books not held in the library may be obtained by completing an inter-library loan order-card available from your supervisor. These must contain a token which is funded by the department (available in the departmental Main Office, Room 2.48). Orders for inter-library loans should be sent to: Inter-library Loans, Boole Library, (telephone contact: Ext. 2161). If a student wishes to order an inter-library loan at the library without these tokens, the cost for this is 15 Euro per loan. A cheaper and often quicker way to obtain copies of papers from journals unavailable in the library is simply to write or e-mail directly the corresponding author of the paper requesting a reprint.

It is advisable that students incorporate literature searching and reading into their routine activities at an early stage and, in particular, that visits to the library are made as time-efficient as possible.

While the bulk of your reading will concentrate on relevant journal articles and book chapters, you are encouraged also to read material which will help you to organise, present and assess your work better. This will aid you in planning your dissertation and in getting your work published.

**Library Materials**

It is normal for PhD students to acquire materials at their own expense during the PhD period. These acquisitions are worthwhile and provide the basis for a collection of materials that students will go on to use both in teaching and research for the duration of their subsequent careers. However, the Department is cognizant of the fact that some resources may not be within students’ means. If you have research resource needs that fit into this category, you will need to approach your supervisor(s) in the first instance, making your case. Your supervisor(s) will then bring the matter to the RGSC for discussion. Where the Department has available budget, and where a compelling case has been made for specific resources, assistance may be provided.

**Other Services**

**Careers Service**

Students should give some thought to their *curriculum vitae* as they progress through their research and keep careful note of items such as conferences attended, presentations given, publications, courses attended and techniques mastered. Supervisors and other members of the academic staff will be glad to advise students informally on career opportunities in their field of expertise. Research openings, conferences and jobs are regularly displayed on the internal departmental noticeboard. The Career Services Office of the University (<http://www.ucc.ie/careers>) provides information on current openings and training in matters such as preparing CVs and interview preparation and technique. Career Advisers are available to meet one to one. The Career Services Office is located on the ground floor of the StudentHub on the main UCC campus.

**Postgraduate Common Room**

This is located at 4 Carrigside, College Road (almost opposite the gates of UCC). This is available to all postgraduate students.

**Student Assistance Fund**

The Student Assistance Fund is designed to provide support in the case of financial hardship to full-time registered students.

Resources are targeted at those disadvantaged students most in need. Further information is available here [www.ucc.ie/en/saf](http://www.ucc.ie/en/saf).