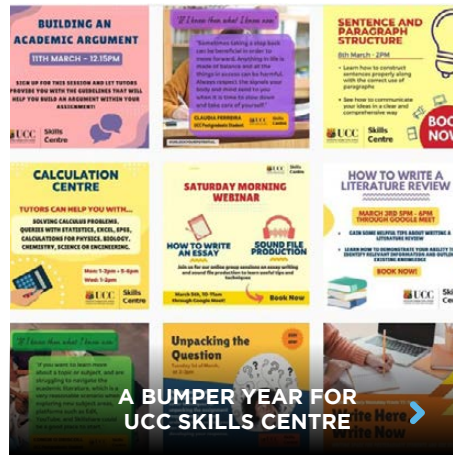
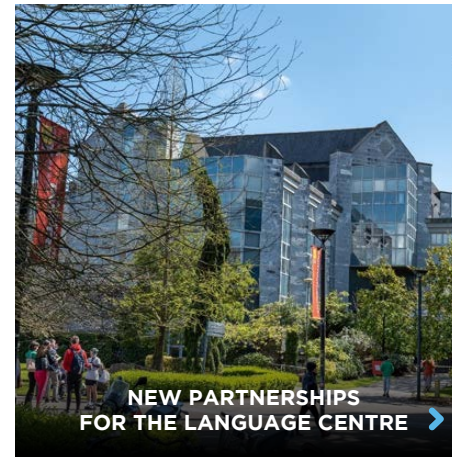
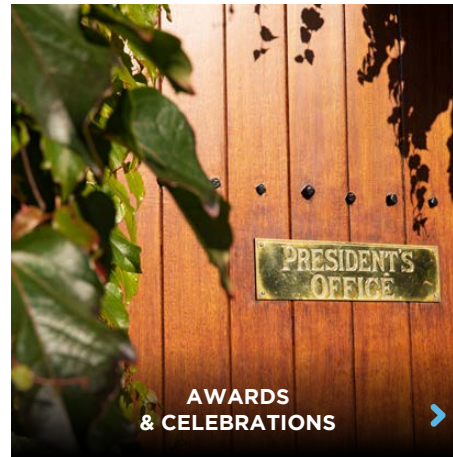


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## STORIES BY TOPIC:



## WELCOME TO THE SUMMER EDITION OF THE OVPLT ENEWSLETTER 2022



*Professor Paul McSweeney, VP Learning & Teaching*

Welcome to the latest edition of the OVPLT eNewsletter. We hope everyone has been enjoying the sunny weather and the buzz around campus in the run up to exam season. In this edition we celebrate the achievements of the awardees of the President's excellence in Teaching Awards and hear from some of the successful nominees. We also were proud to have two members of the OVPLT team recognised in the Staff Recognition Awards and we are delighted to extend Congratulations to the eleven graduates of the MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Recently, the University paid tribute to the many contributions that Professor Áine Hyland has made to Education by naming a room after her in the Student Hub.

As always there are many new courses under development and this edition brings you news of new programmes in the Language Centre, opportunities for

our students with the Skills Centre, new courses from Adult Continuing Education and opportunities and support for staff are always available from the Centre for Digital Education.

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and welcome any comments or submissions for the next newsletter.

Please contact Jacqui at  
✉ [j.churcher@ucc.ie](mailto:j.churcher@ucc.ie)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul McSweeney". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Professor Paul McSweeney**

**VP Learning & Teaching**

 [www.ucc.ie/teachlearn](http://www.ucc.ie/teachlearn)

## AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

### THE NEW AINE HYLAND ROOM

UCC has named a room (formerly G12) in Hub as the “Áine Hyland Room” in recognition of Áine’s significant contribution to the advancement of Irish education at all levels including Higher Education.

Áine Hyland, Emeritus Professor of Education and former Vice-President of UCC, has been one of the most influential figures in Irish education over the past 50 years. Áine earned her PhD in Trinity College Dublin and after serving initially as a civil servant in the Department of Education she later worked as Admissions Officer in Carysfort College, Senior Lecturer in University College Dublin (UCD), Professor and Chair of Education at University College Cork (UCC) from 1993 until 2006, and Vice-President of UCC from 1999 to 2006.

Together with a number of colleagues at UCC, she set up Ionad Bairre – the Centre for Teaching and Learning – afterwards renamed CIRTL – the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning. In the early 2000s, she introduced the President’s Awards for Excellence in Teaching as well as the Certificate, Diploma and Masters in Teaching and Learning. She was a strong advocate for recognising teaching as a form of scholarship and for ensuring that there was parity of esteem in UCC’s strategies and policies for teaching and research.

“Áine has made an immense contribution to both UCC and to learning at all levels. We hope through this recognition in the heart of our campus that future generations will be inspired to follow her wonderful impact on Irish education”, Commented Professor Paul McSweeney, Vice-President for Learning and Teaching.

A founding member of the Dalkey School Project, the State’s first state aided Educate Together primary school, in 1978, Áine has been a member of various education boards and commissions in Ireland and internationally, and has published widely on various aspects of education including teacher education and equity of access and participation. A recipient of several honorary doctorates in recognition of her impact on all levels of Irish education, she is since 2018 a Member of the Royal Irish Academy, Ireland’s highest academic honour. Since her retirement in 2006, she has continued to be actively involved in educational activities both in Ireland and abroad.



L to r; Professor Paul McSweeney, Dr Marian McCarthy, Professor Áine Hyland, President John O'Halloran, Dr Bettie Higgs



Professor Áine Hyland

## AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS



*Graduates of the MA in Teaching and Learning (above)*

## CIRTL CELEBRATES THE CONFERRING OF 11 NEW GRADUATES OF THE MA IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

CIRTL's MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education class of 2020/21 were conferred in April for the first time in the Centre's history with the College of Medicine and Health. CIRTL and CoMH came together to celebrate the conferring of 11 graduates of the MA programme from across UCC and further afield. Photographed were: Dr Rhoda Dullea and Dr Michelle Finnerty, School of Music; Dr Richard Scriven, Department of Geography; Dr Mutahira Lone, Department of Anatomy and Neuroscience; Dr Jerry Reen, School of Microbiology; Dr Catherine O'Mahony, CIRTL; Karen Donovan, Nursing Practice Development Unit, Mercy Hospital; Dr Dapeng Dong, Computer Science, Maynooth University; and Dr Bernard Drumm, Life and Health Science, DKIT. Graduating in absentia were Prof. Justin Doran, CUBS and Dr Siobhán McMorro, Dental School and Hospital. Also in attendance were President, Prof. John O'Halloran; the VP for Learning and Teaching, Prof. Paul McSweeney, and the MA supervisory team including Dr Ciaran Dawson, Ionad na Gaeilge Labhartha; Dr James Cronin, CIRTL; Dr Briony Supple, School of Education; Dr Marian McCarthy, former VP for Learning and Teaching and Prof. Ger O'Keeffe, Anatomy and Neuroscience. A huge thanks also to Dr Robbie Butler, School of Economics; Dr Serena Fitzgerald, School of Nursing and Midwifery; and Dr Niall O'Leary, School of Microbiology. An enjoyable ceremony was had by all and a round of applause to the graduates on their ongoing commitment to teaching and learning.

AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

## PRESIDENT'S AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING 2021

The President's awards for Excellence in Teaching were presented to awardees on the 26th April. This was the first in-person ceremony in two years and was held in the Aula Maxima. The awardees this year were; Eugenia Bolado Colina, Department of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies; Dr Frank Crowley, Department of Economics; Dr Aoife Daly, School of Law; Dr Hannah Daly, School of Engineering; Dr Philip Hoevel, School of Mathematical Sciences and the UW0005 Sustainability teaching team.

The awardees this year were:



**EUGENIA BOLADO COLINA,**  
Department of Spanish,  
Portuguese and Latin  
American Studies



**DR FRANK CROWLEY,**  
Department of Economics



**DR AOIFE DALY**  
School of Law



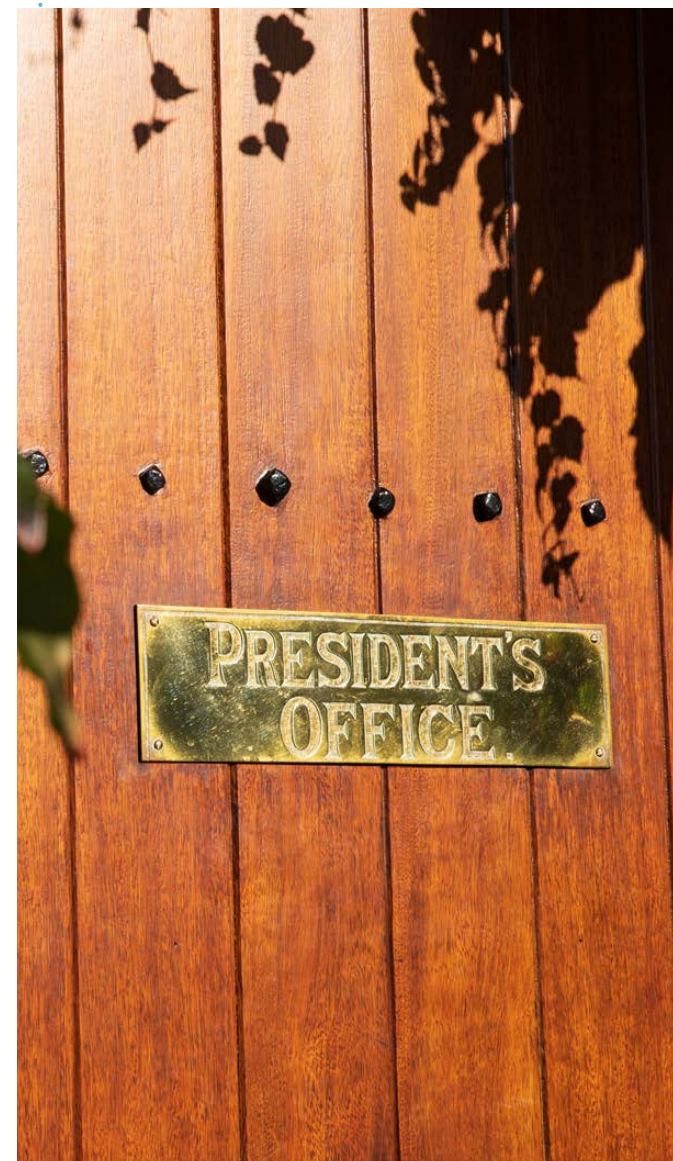
**DR HANNAH DALY**  
School of Engineering



**DR PHILIP HOEVEL**  
School of Mathematical  
Sciences



**UW0005 SUSTAINABILITY  
TEACHING TEAM**



## AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

# EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

## DR FRANK CROWLEY, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Frank has 16 years of experience in research and teaching in the discipline of Economics at UCC. He is Co-Director of the Spatial and Regional Economics Research Centre in Cork University Business School. Frank has research led teaching at the core of his teaching approach and he integrates Multiple Intelligence (MI) theory and Constructive Developmental Theory (CDT) in his teaching frameworks. Recently, Frank embarked on a teaching journey to develop a greater appreciation and understanding for Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles by recently completing the digital badge in UDL and the Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning at UCC.

The redesign of his teaching approach incorporating the UDL Framework and Teaching for Understanding principles were especially important during the COVID-19 period, where face to face interaction was greatly reduced and online resources were critical for effective teaching delivery. The UDL framework is a critical lens for incorporating and engaging the diversity of multiple intelligences and learning styles across the student population and encompasses a 'teaching for all' perspective. Performances for understanding and classroom assessment techniques can be easily incorporated within the UDL framework and into the online setting.

UDL reminds the lecturer to start with some basic principles whilst also nudging the lecturer to consider increasingly more complex ways to help student engagement with the curricula. For example, Frank uses pre-recorded videos that have video, audio, and text captions so students with learning disabilities and/or different learning styles can access the teaching content in multiple ways. A diverse range of online tool applications can further assist students to explore the material in a variety of more in-depth ways. For example, applications like Mentimeter, Google Jamboard and MS Team breakout rooms provide different platforms for enabling students to conduct Performances of Understanding in independent and collaborative settings. The variety of technology assisted applications in his modules enables differentiated ways for the learner to express what they know. The appropriate use of online apps can provide a high challenge, high support, inclusive learning environment and can ensure continued interest, engagement, and



Dr Frank Crowley with President John O'Halloran (pic from Twitter)

motivation from students. And, in many ways, the online environment can provide a more thorough paper trail of student learning assisting teachers in scholarly reflection.

Traditionally, Frank's modules relied on face-to-face interaction, the buzz of the classroom and a very interested student audience. But of course, the pandemic presented many initial difficulties with that model. However, the adoption and the integration of the UDL method, classroom assessment techniques and TfU frameworks with online applications and resources resulted in a highly rewarding teaching experience and delivered exceptional student feedback and learning.

*"I really enjoyed the content and the delivery. In spite of the virtual setting, each lecture was very well delivered in terms of engaging the class and encouraging interaction. I liked that the content was posted to Canvas each week and that it was created in bite sizes bits of varying length rather than a long recording. I also liked the variety of the content (recorded lecture sections, videos, case studies and relevant reading material). It was clear that a lot of effort went into the planning and preparation for each week. The Jamboard sessions were good to really think about and apply the knowledge learned plus it facilitated getting to know more of our fellow classmates. Overall, I really enjoyed this module and I am much more positively inclined towards understanding more about economics and how the world works from this aspect. Thank you!"*  
(Student testimonial)

Frank is currently a student on the MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education at UCC and is completing a research article under the supervision of Dr Marian McCarthy focusing on the integration between teacher supports, self-directed and collaborative learning strategies in the classroom.

## AWARDS &amp; CELEBRATIONS

## EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

### DR AOIFE DALY, SCHOOL OF LAW

Aoife Daly is a Lecturer in the School of Law and in 2021 was recognised with a President's Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching for the innovative *Foundations of the Irish Legal System* module of which she is co-ordinator. She used popular culture to engage students in learning.

Aoife joined University College Cork as a law lecturer in 2020. She writes and teaches on law and human rights from interdisciplinary perspectives, drawing for example on feminist theory and psychology. In 2018 she published '[Children, Autonomy and the Courts: Beyond the Right to be Heard](#)' with Brill/Nijhoff, arguing that courts should support and prioritise children's own wishes to the extent possible when making decisions about them. She is at present researching youth climate activism; writing about its [protest rights element](#), and argues that such activism is [changing the arena of human rights](#). She is currently writing a book entitled *Youth Climate Activism and International Human Rights Law* (forthcoming with Routledge in 2023). She is also at present part of a DCU-UCC group facilitating a youth assembly on biodiversity and is co-writing (with Prof Laura Lundy) a report on youth climate justice for the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children.

Aoife was funded 2019-2021 by the [Independent Social Research Foundation](#) to research how a greater evidence base can be brought to how the law treats children's decision-making. She will also work with Swedish colleagues 2020-2023 examining how equality law can encompass and benefit children as a group ([funded by the Ragnar Soderberg foundation](#)). In 2018 she also led a [team](#) advising the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission on good practice examples for making rights a reality in the UK. She is part of a team training NHS nurses in consent and children's rights across the UK.

#### Teaching

Aoife is a Senior Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy since 2019. This grade of professional membership, awarded on the basis of an assessed portfolio, represents significant leadership in the promotion of teaching excellence. She is a

winner of the *2021 Teaching Hero Award* of The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. She was also nominated for two teaching awards in the UK, including in 2019 for Findamasters Ph.D. Supervisor of the Year Award.

The first year *Foundations of the Irish Legal System* module at the School of Law, UCC has approximately 225 students, some from non-law backgrounds. It is the main introduction that students will have to the intricacies and philosophies relating to the law. As with most other teachers at the time, Aoife had to deliver this module in 2020/2021 online.

Aoife understood that this large group would involve a great diversity of students. It would include mature students for example and students with various learning disabilities. It was also going to have to be taught online, to students many of whom had had a traumatic year during Covid lockdowns, relating to cancellation of the Leaving Certificate exam and social isolation for example. Many students would likely feel lonely and overwhelmed in such a large group, learning online, at the start of their degree.

Innovative pedagogies were required to ensure an excellent learning experience for all students in this module. Aoife worked to find ways to bring the teaching material to life for students, and ways to bring students together through learning. Aoife engaged in innovative teaching such as using popular culture references as a teaching tool; and opportunities for students to socialise through learning.

The effectiveness of these teaching innovations is evident in the student feedback outlining how Aoife enhanced their knowledge of the law, and their enjoyment of the module.



Dr Aoife Day,  
School of Law

## AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

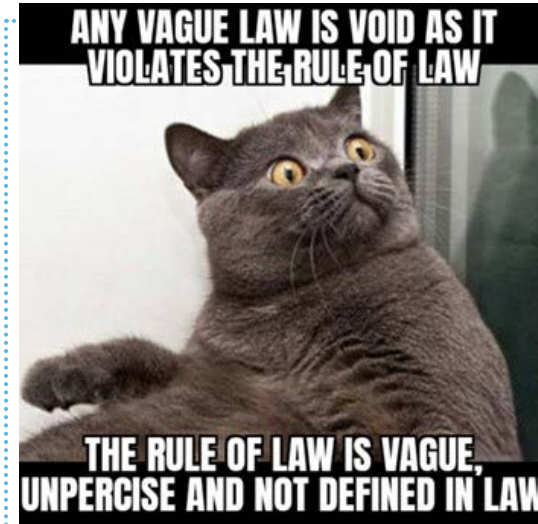
### Using memes as a teaching tool

Aoife created humorous memes to convey some of the legal concepts on the module, culminating in a meme competition for students. The students had to consider complex legal concepts, and then think of a way to portray them through memes. There were 25 student entries, and an award ceremony at the end of the semester. This allowed diverse student strengths to come through in class, in that some students who may not be as academically strong as others could demonstrate their knowledge of the law through meme-ing skills. Creating inclusive settings “requires designing policies, strategies, processes and actions that contribute to ensuring the success of all the students” (Moriña, 2017, p.3). Some students will have social anxiety and may struggle to partake in class discussions. Aoife hoped that meme-ing was a way in which students who would otherwise not be able to engage in class could do so.

The memes were a way of consolidating learning and encouraging class participation, but there were also further benefits. Aoife shared memes with the students by including a new one in each canvas notification for the module. She anticipated that this would make students more likely to read the emails that they were sent informing them about aspects of the module. She also hoped that it would create a strong sense of community for the class, and that students would enjoy seeing each other’s humorous law work. This seemed particularly important at a time where students were learning from home, and unable to meet their peers in their first year of university.



### Examples of Student Memes



Meme by Niall Cooper



Meme by Amy Gebruers



## AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

### Using Lego as teaching tool

Aoife also used Lego as a teaching tool. Lego is a popular culture feature. Even adults now often feel very positive about Lego characters as they feature in popular movies. She introduced a Lego mascot to the class, spontaneously created by her seven year old son Cian, when he saw Aoife preparing lectures online. To Aoife's surprise in the live classes, students began to ask about the Lego mascot and to discuss it. She realised that there was teaching potential to this, and the character ('Lego Aoife') became a feature of the class, lobbying for law reform and becoming an elected representative, to demonstrate various elements of the legal system. It proved a very useful tool for talking students through complex and somewhat tedious processes such as how legislation is passed. Students said:

*"I never feel overwhelmed in your classes but at the same time it is engaging. Your passion for the course and imparting knowledge on us really is contagious. Lego Aoife is a plus too. Thank you!"*

*"I like how the module reinforces the wording and terminology I come across in other modules, making my understanding of the language easier. As a big Lego fan I appreciated Lego Aoife's contribution to the class."*

*"Always a clear breakdown of lecture layout and learning intentions, I find the powerpoints very helpful, everything is explained very clearly with instructions for the following week. (also Lego Aoife makes Monday mornings much better)"*

Prof Conor O'Mahony, Vice Dean of the School of Law for Student Affairs said:

*"[I]t was notable that in Student Council meetings during the year, there were numerous instances of student representatives singling out Dr Daly's modules as one of the most enjoyable and beneficial modules they had studied, and as a bright spot during an extremely difficult year. The first-year students, who in my experience had the hardest year of all, were particularly effusive in their commentary on the efforts made and success achieved by Dr Daly in helping them to make the transition to third level amid the challenges posed by COVID. It was evident that she had a strong ability to strike a rapport with the students in spite*

*of the online medium, and that her imaginative use of popular culture helped to make students feel at ease and grabbed their attention."*

Aoife continues to engage these teaching tools in in-person classes and hopes that they will remain useful for teaching students about the law in the years to come.



... Lego Aoife and Lego Judge

## AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

### EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

#### DR. PHILIPP HOEVEL, SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Philipp Hoevel is a lecturer in the School of Mathematical Sciences and in November 2021 received a President’s Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching for his exemplary commitment to UCC’s students, student tutors, and teaching staff.

In 2020 and 2021, he graduated from UCC with a postgraduate certificate and diploma “Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education”. This is a journey that he is currently continuing by his MA research project on critical friendship in teaching.

Philipp’s teaching is guided by his philosophy that the central purpose of a university is the best education of the next generations. Teaching, promotion, and shaping the knowledge of and instilling curiosity in bright young people is at the heart of Hoevel’s understanding of a scientist and lecturer. In all his academic activities, he has considered the motivation of young talents of greatest importance.

His teaching philosophy encourages the communication between students and lecturer. A frequent exchange, lively discussion to explore problems and direct interactions lead to an inspiring feedback cycle that supports different types of learners: Deep learners will experience guidance to progress to even high levels of curiosity and exploration. Shallow or surface learners will be motivated to engage deeper with the material to take important steps to become independent thinkers.

Harvesting the potential of modern communication tools and technology-driven implementations are signatures of Philipp’s teaching. According to student evaluations, this has worked very well during the past semesters that were governed by online teaching:



L to r Dr. Kevin Hayes, Prof Paul McSweeney, Dr Philipp Hoevel, Dr. Claus Koestler

“Overall, amazingly structured module which was highly appreciated by so many. If all modules were like this one and if all lectures put in the time and effort like is shown here, online learning would be a far more tolerable experience. (Source: Student evaluation)”

Building on his personal experience and together with the colleagues from the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning, he brought together scholars of teaching and learning with lecturers of mathematics, statistics, and machine learning at the height of the current pandemic in a two-day workshop in March 2021. The workshop “Going all online” was devoted to rethink the potential of online and blended teaching, learning, and assessment.

**View the workshop here**  
<https://www.ucc.ie/en/matsci/events/goingallonline2021/>

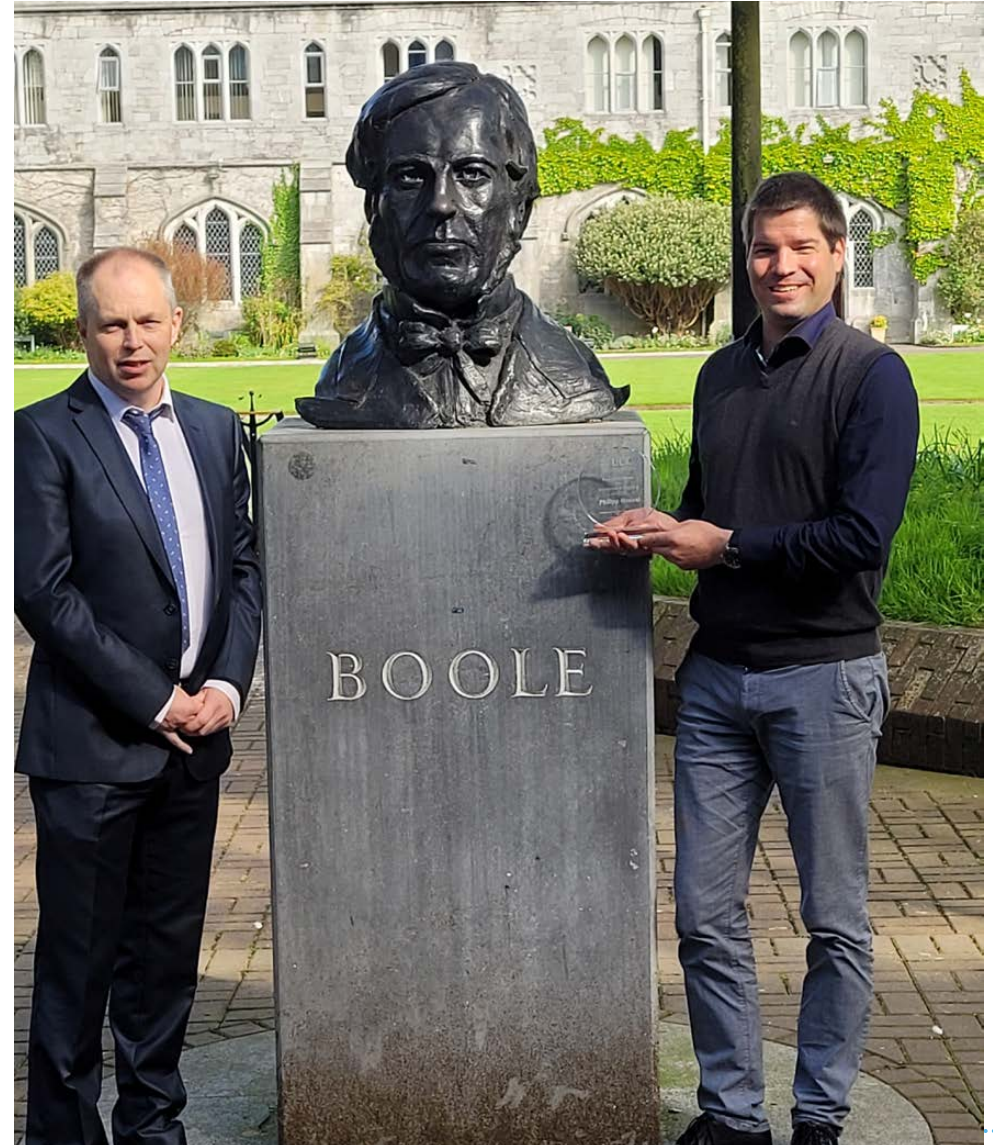


## AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

Since Philipp joined UCC in 2018, he has conducted informal mid-term and formal end-of-term student evaluations in all of his modules. This shows that giving feedback to students is as important to Philipp as receiving feedback. Extending the idea of feedback and contributing to the scholarship of teaching and learning, Philipp led a pilot in peer-review on teaching in semester 1. The project “You’ve got a friend in teaching (YogaFiT)” was driven by the following observation: Academics are used to giving and receiving feedback on their research. When it comes to teaching, however, there is a reluctance to open the door of the classroom to colleagues. The ability to take in constructive criticism is a pre-requisite for self-improvement. YogaFiT aimed to fill this gap by inviting active and open discussions about design and implementation of teaching. The resonance by his peers was overwhelmingly positive, and Philipp took the project as the nucleation point for his MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: invite meaningful critiques in a format that is simple to implement (low threshold and time investment, high gain for reflection and improvement). His vision is that similar schemes will promote the discussions about teaching in the wider university.

“*The President’s Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching is a wonderful recognition and a great motivation to continue my journey.*”  
said Dr. Philipp Hoevel

Get more information here:  
<https://www.ucc.ie/en/matsci/research/yogafit/>



Dr. Kevin Hayes and Dr Philipp Hoevel, School of Mathematical Sciences

## PROJECTS AND FUNDING

### TOGETHER - COLLABORATING ACROSS PRISON WALLS AND BORDERS

An interdisciplinary team of researchers from University College Cork and Queens University Belfast have secured €200,000 research funding from the Shared Island North-South Research Programme for their collaborative project entitled 'TOGETHER- collaborating across prison walls and borders'. The project builds on UCC's ongoing education partnership with the Cork Education and Training Bord in Cork Prison and QUB's partnership with HMP Hydebank Wood in Belfast. The collaborative cross-border research partnership is arising from the Irish Government's Shared Island initiative, delivered by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) on behalf of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science (DFHERIS). The transdisciplinary project will run from 2022-2024 and will explore the impacts of the prison-university classroom and co-produce (with participating students) an all-island curriculum that could be used across Irish prisons, north and south. The TOGETHER team are Dr Katharina Swirak (Sociology and Criminology, UCC), Prof Shadd Maruna (Criminology, QUB), Dr James Cronin (CIRTL, UCC) and Prof Maggie O'Neill (Sociology and Criminology, UCC).



### POSTGRADUATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS REVIEW

Academic Board has approved recommendations for a change to postgraduate English language entry requirements. The Language Centre's Kerry Platts worked with a panel of admissions teams, student recruitment colleagues and the International Office in a year-long review, which involved consultation across the university. The aims of the review were to bring postgraduate programmes in line with undergraduate programmes and also to streamline the admissions process for those students entering with discretionary measures. A similar review had been conducted in 2019 into the English language requirements for undergraduate programmes.

A benchmarking exercise was first carried out and this identified a range of admissions levels across the sector, with UCC lower than some comparable Irish universities. Following extensive meetings with heads of departments and colleges, it was recommended to increase the level of individual skills in English from the current levels. The Language Centre provided expertise in interpreting assessment scores (using IELTS as a reference point) and was able to demonstrate to stakeholders the difference between a 6.0 and a 6.5 score. While 7.5 is IELTS' awarding body's stated acceptable level for linguistically demanding



Kerry Platts, UCC Language Centre

## PROJECTS AND FUNDING

programmes, it is recognised that market factors would mean that an increase to this level would adversely impact recruitment. Because of this, there remains a need for support in language and academic skills for in-sessional degree students, as provided by the Language Centre and the Skills Centre.

The changes that have been made to the English language requirements are as follows:

- 1 The overall IELTS score remains the same at 6.5. However, individual skills score for all programmes will be increased to 6.0 from September 2022.
- 2 A number of new English language exams have been added to the list of acceptable exams for entry purposes. In addition, a number of exams taken online are now acceptable.
- 3 Discretionary measures for students entering with for example out of date exams or previous work experience in in an approved field have been streamlined and now apply to all postgraduate applicants.
- 4 The *factfile* pages on the website are to be updated to make them more user-friendly.
- 5 The English language requirements webpage is to include all the information on discretionary measures.
- 6 All colleges are now required to complete a review of their own programs, in order to evaluate the current/required level of English.\*

\*The College of Medicine and Health have already conducted a complete review of all their programmes and in consultation with the Language Centre have set their English language requirements.

As with students of special dual programmes at undergraduate level, students entering under certain postgraduate discretionary measures may now be admitted with a lower assessment score if they engage in an academic English programme provided by the Language Centre. Please contact [kerry.platts@ucc.ie](mailto:kerry.platts@ucc.ie) for more information on the Postgraduate English course (POGE) or the Undergraduate English course (UGE).

To support point 6, the Language Centre is planning a series of workshop-style staff training sessions on understanding IELTS scores and what they mean in practice. Details of these will follow shortly.

**The full 2022 review into postgraduate levels can be viewed here:**  
[PG Entry Requirements - Final version March 2022.pdf](#)



**The full 2019 review into undergraduate levels can be viewed here:**  
[AB report 050220\\_English Language requirements.pdf](#)



## EVENTS

### AHEAD CONFERENCE MARCH 2022

CIRTL was well represented at the AHEAD conference in March 2022, and contributed to the international conversation on flexible approaches to Teaching and Learning. Presentations from Dr Laura Lee and Siobhán O’ Neill documented the work CIRTL is doing in supporting an inclusive teaching and learning environment at UCC. Siobhán presented on behalf of the ongoing “Inclusive Assessment” initiative, the aim of which is to create a professional development offering for staff on the topic of Inclusive Assessment. Laura, together with Dr Brian Butler (DSS) presented on the Digital Badge in Universal Design for Learning, and its implications for teaching, learning, and assessment practices at UCC.

### LANGUAGE CENTRE VISIT TO THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBIA

Brendan Ó Sé, Head of Development and Professional Courses in the Language Centre, travelled to Columbia in March to deliver a bespoke specialist English language course to academic staff in a partner university of UCC: the National University of Colombia, Manizales.

The Language Centre had previously delivered a fully online course for the academic staff of Manizales in May 2021, which was received very positively and this led to the request for an onsite delivery in their campus. This also allowed Brendan the opportunity to visit the Bogotá campus of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and other universities and language agents in the city while in Colombia.

Brendan was invited to the Irish Embassy on Monday, March 14th, where Leo Varadkar, Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, officially opened the Irish embassy in Bogotá, Colombia and also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Education between Ireland and Colombia with Manuel Acevedo, President of ICETEX. This is great news for UCC and will build on the long-standing relationship our university has with its partners in the National University of Columbia.

On Saint Patrick’s Day, Brendan was invited to the Bogotá campus of Universidad Nacional de Colombia and presented and delivered an interactive English lesson on Saint Patrick, Irish culture and the English language offerings of our Language Centre to 110 students from the university. Again, it was a fun experience and the lively participation of the students in the interactive parts of the session made for a memorable experience.



Tánaiste Leo Varadkar and Brendan Ó Sé



Brendan Ó Sé with colleagues at National University of Columbia

FOR STAFF

## UCC SKILLS CENTRE - A BUMPER YEAR

The Skills Centre had a record-breaking year with over 12,000 student engagements, integration in all colleges and increased academic support. Awareness and integration of the Centre and its resources continues across all platforms.

Attendance at Skills Centre sessions and one to one appointments resulted in 12,204 attendances being recorded. Learners from all 4 colleges availed of the service as well as learners from ACE. Specific group sessions were delivered to cohorts of learners in addition to open sessions allowing for peer engagement. Academic referral increased this year with over 150 students referred for academic planning skills and writing engagement.

Headed up by Kathy Bradley, the Skills Centre has gone from strength to strength since its inception in 2017 and provides a confidential and non-judgmental space for students so they can work towards scholastic improvement in a comfortable environment, to unlock their potential.

### Student Testimonials

*"I believed I was so busy to make appointments all year with the Skills Centre, as there was so much going on with family, study, and placement. I kept saying 'oh next week when this or that is done' until I dug myself deeper into a hole, where I was struggling and could not see a way out. I reached out to the skills centre, and how much I had benefited from even one session was amazing. It helped reshape my thinking again."*

*"It has really helped me in my 1st year, I don't know would I have got through the 1st year without it."*

*"It really is such a valuable resource, just knowing if I am struggling with a particular area of study or a module that I can get assistance easily."*

If you would like to discover more about the Skills Centre and all the team have to offer, visit: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/skillscentre/>



## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIGITAL EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

A series of online and in-person workshops on using digital education tools and approaches to foster student engagement took place on the 5th and 12th May. Working with Dr Sarah Thelen in CIRTL, staff from across UCC used shared Google Docs, Google Forms, Mentimeter, Padlet, Google Jamboard, Teams chats, and other tools to explore key aspects of student engagement. We attempted to define what we actually mean when we talk about 'engagement' and identified a range of obstacles to student engagement, highlighting the ones best addressed through digital education approaches. Throughout the workshops, staff discussed the importance of rapport and student-staff relationships on student engagement and experimented with different ways to create space in class for student voices. If you missed these workshops and would like to be contacted when they run again, please email [s.thelen@ucc.ie](mailto:s.thelen@ucc.ie). And if you have ideas for future digital education workshops, please let Sarah know!



"Engagement" definition word cloud from one of the 5th May workshops



Jamboard from one of the 5th May workshops





## FOR STAFF

## CPD CERTIFICATE IN DIGITAL EDUCATION

Would you like to broaden your understanding of theories and methodologies in Digital Education? Do you wish to assess your existing skills and practice in light of national, international, and disciplinary frameworks? CIRTl is offering a part-time CPD Certificate to help you to build on these strengths to design (or redesign) learning activities, assessments, or feedback plans using digital education approaches. This course will allow students to evaluate and use a variety of digital education tools and approaches with a view to integrating them as appropriate to their own discipline and pedagogical approach. Through practical workshops, reflections, discussions, and assessments, participants will gain a foundational knowledge in digital education as well as the confidence to respond to unexpected challenges. Students will reflect on the ways that digital education can support student learning and will articulate their own approach to digital education and rationale for the degree they do (or do not) integrate these approaches into their own teaching. Get in touch today to learn more about this exciting new programme and register your interest with Dr Sarah Thelen, [s.thelen@ucc.ie](mailto:s.thelen@ucc.ie)



## CIRTl TO LAUNCH INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERING

CIRTl were delighted to present the Inclusive Assessment Course at the Inclusive UCC Symposium on the 19th May 2022. The Inclusive Assessment course will launch in Semester 1 of the 2022/2023 Academic Year and will be open to all staff with responsibility for assessment. There are two options for completion: a Self-directed Pathway; and a Digital Badge Pathway (approx. 20 hours of learner effort). [You can sign up for early notification of the course by clicking here.](#)



## FOR STAFF

## CONNECTING THE DOTS IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

### THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU TO SUPPORT A CONNECTED CURRICULUM

Launched in 2018, UCC's first ever Academic Strategy set out an ambitious work-plan to transform UCC's academic offerings. Central to this was the Connected Curriculum framework which sought to ensure a distinctive educational experience for all UCC students. The following were developed by an institutional working group to create a raft of supports to enable staff to bring the Connected Curriculum into their teaching to enhance student learning.

#### Resources

- 1 Learn about the Connected Curriculum and its application across all academic and professional service departments through a [self-paced course for all UCC staff](#). You can obtain a digital badge upon completing this course and its accompanying short reflection.
- 2 Look through two digital toolkits for staff on how to integrate [civic engagement](#) and the [sustainable development goals \(SDGs\)](#) in learning and teaching. These toolkits draw together a range of resources to support the careful integration of these topics and highlight practice-based examples.
- 3 Review your teaching in light of the [Connected Curriculum self-evaluation tool](#). This tool can be used to identify the extent to which the various elements of the Connected Curriculum are part of your teaching already, and then prompts reflection on how some of these elements could be further integrated in your teaching.

For further support, CIRTl can organize curriculum development workshops or 'Design Sprint', to support module redesign in support of a Connected Curriculum. Please contact CIRTl [cirtl@ucc.ie](mailto:cirtl@ucc.ie) to request a design sprint for your programme team.

## LEARNING ANALYTICS LITE

The Learning Analytics LITE project, based in the Centre for Digital Education, is shortly wrapping up - with two exciting events to showcase its work before doing so. On **June 2nd** the Case Study contributors will present their work at a hybrid delivery in the ORB. Four interesting projects from each college, with very different research approaches, contributed to the project. If you are interested in attending the presentations, please email [sophie.gahan@ucc.ie](mailto:sophie.gahan@ucc.ie).

The research team, based in the CDE and CIRTl, have also written a contextual study paper. This was presented at **Edtech**, UCC, on May 26th. The paper gives an overview of the case studies - as well as how they fit with staff and student focus group and survey findings, which were gathered earlier this year.

**Guidance for staff** around the ethical use of Learning Analytic data is currently being drafted, in consultation with OCLA, Strategic Planning and Institutional Research, Teaching and Learning, IT, and Library Services. It is hoped that this will be published later this year.

The Learning Analytics LITE research project is a **National Forum 'SATLE 2020'** funded initiative. Its aim is to 'investigate how existing Learning Analytics tools can be used to inform teaching and learning practice in UCC'. A huge thank you to Michelle Donovan, Research Support Officer, for all her work on this project. Thank you also to Owen Jump and Eadaoin Whelan, CIRTl, for supporting this research.



*Michelle Donovan, Research Support Officer*

FOR STAFF

## UCC DIGITAL EDUCATION PLAN

### Overview

The Digital Education Leadership Forum (DELf) was established in 2021 as part of the university's Quality Enhancement Plan to the [Thematic Review Teaching and Assessing with Technology Final Report](#). It is composed of the Vice President for Learning and Teaching, the Director of Information Services and UCC Librarian, the Director of IT, the Co-Chair of Academic Council Learning and Teaching Committee and the Head of Digital Education. The Centre for Digital Education is managing the plan development process.

As part of the UCC 2022 Pillar 1 work, DELf have committed to producing UCC's first Digital Education Plan. This will be visionary in nature, similar to our [Digital Masterplan](#). It will not go into operation detail as many components of this are being addressed under [UCC 2022](#) planning and in other established processes and projects.

ACTIVITY	DATES
Scoping of Engagement Work (including recruitment of facilitator and compilation of stakeholder list)	Jan to end Feb
Consultation with Facilitator	Feb to end May
Feedback from Colleges	Mid March to end April
Workshops	End April, start May
Consultation report	By end May
Drafting DE Plan	Jun
DE Plan out for consultation	August/September
DE Plan Finalised	Autumn 2022

### Background Research

The following documents have been considered in considering matters to be addressed in the plan:

- [Thematic Review Teaching and Assessing with Technology Final Report](#) and related Quality Enhancement Plan
- UCC's Lecture Recording policy
- UCC's Learning Analytics Lite project findings
- INDEx survey [locally](#) and [nationally](#) 2019
- [VPLT's townhall findings with staff and students March 2021](#)
- USI Survey 2021
- UCC SU Survey 2020
- UCC 2022 Delivering a Connected University
- [Next Steps report](#) from NF
- Updates from EDTL including recorded Ag Caint sessions,
- UCC [Digital Education for Teaching](#) findings
- [DFHERIS-Statement-of-Strategy-2021-2023](#)
- [Harnessing Digital The Digital Ireland Framework](#)
- IUA position paper [A Student is a Student is a Student](#)
- [EU DigiHE report](#)
- [EU DigCompEdu framework](#)
- [EC Digital Action Plan 2021 to 2027](#)
- EC Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2021

## FOR STAFF

### Consultation

There has been significant consultation with staff around inputs to the DE Plan. In total 88 individuals received a direct invitation to workshops on 5 and 16 May.



Digital Education Workshop 5th May 2022

GROUPING	CONSULTATION ROUTE
Colleges	<p>Heads of College received email on 14 March 2022 with the question</p> <p><b><i>What does your college see as the future for digital technology in education in UCC, which will remain fundamentally a campus-based university?</i></b></p>
Academic Staff	<p>Representation and feedback was directly requested from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Education Advisory Group (subcommittee of ACL&amp;T)</li> <li>Academic Staff Development Committee</li> </ul> <p>In addition, College Managers and L&amp;T committees were invited to request representation at workshops on 5 and 16 May</p>
Non-Academic Staff	<p>The following offices were invited to attend the workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CIRTL</li> <li>ACE</li> <li>Language Centre</li> <li>Skills Centre</li> <li>Information Services, specifically Digital Services, the Library, AVMS</li> <li>Academic Services</li> <li>SREO</li> <li>APAR</li> <li>Graduate Studies</li> <li>Careers Service</li> <li>Access</li> <li>EDI</li> <li>Student Experience</li> <li>HR</li> <li>All Instructional Designers across the university</li> </ul>
Students Union	President/Education Officer

## WORKSHOPS EXTERNALLY FACILITATED

The two workshops, on-campus May 5th and online May 16th, were facilitated by Dr Kevin O'Rourke from Technical University Dublin. Kevin currently works in TU Dublin as Enterprise Partnership Lead on the HCI-funded [Convene](#) project, overseeing the development and creation of enterprise-appropriate learning, accreditation and associated microcredentials. He also currently oversees the Convene Enterprise Fellowship programme. Previously he worked as Head of eLearning Support & Development with the Learning, Teaching & Technology Centre at TU Dublin (City Campus); as Digital Campus Architect; and on secondment with the National Forum where he worked on the national digital roadmap for higher education and an associated sectoral infrastructure review. He holds a PhD in intellectual history from University College London (2000) and BA/MA from UCD. Before joining DIT in May 2002, his professional career spanned online education, advertising and publishing in Dublin, New York and London.



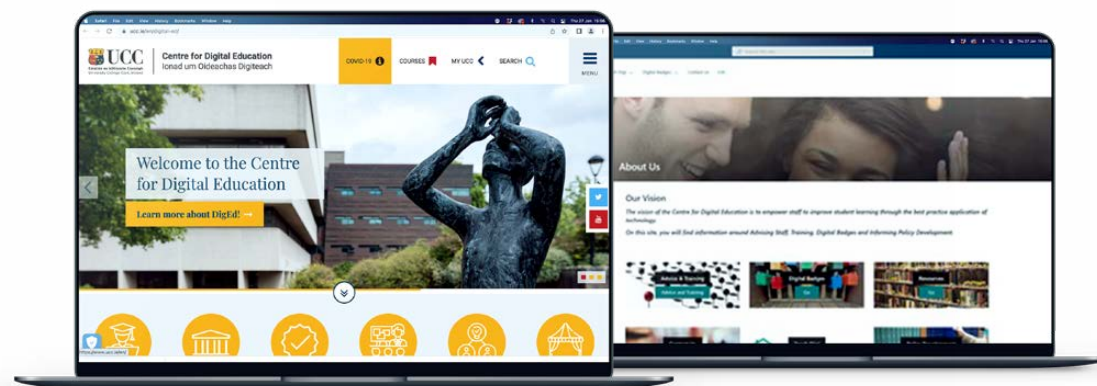
Kevin O'Rourke

## UPDATED CDE WEBSITE

Following engagement with stakeholders and consideration of the User Needs Website User Experience Survey Results, the Centre for Digital Education has redeveloped its web presence. The previous CDE website, hosted on Terminal 4 and publicly facing contained a lot of information that rightly should have been staff-facing only. As a result of the redesign undertaken by our Digital Education Support Assistant Aoife Ryan, the CDE now has two online presences:

- Our public CDE site on T4 - <https://www.ucc.ie/en/digital-ed/> - this contains simplified information written in plain English that explains to non-UCC visitors what the role and activities of the CDE are.
- Our staff-facing SharePoint Communications site - <https://uccireland.sharepoint.com/sites/CentreforDigitalEducation2> - this is where we have included additional detail that we are asked for regularly. It includes information for example on how to apply for digital badges and a new soon-to-be-released Digital Education Software and Projects Request form

We hope you find both these sites useful and remind you to update any bookmarks you may have saved from the old site. Feedback is always welcome so please email us on [cde@ucc.ie](mailto:cde@ucc.ie) if you see something we could do better.



**FOR STAFF**

## AG CAINT PODCAST NOW ON SPOTIFY

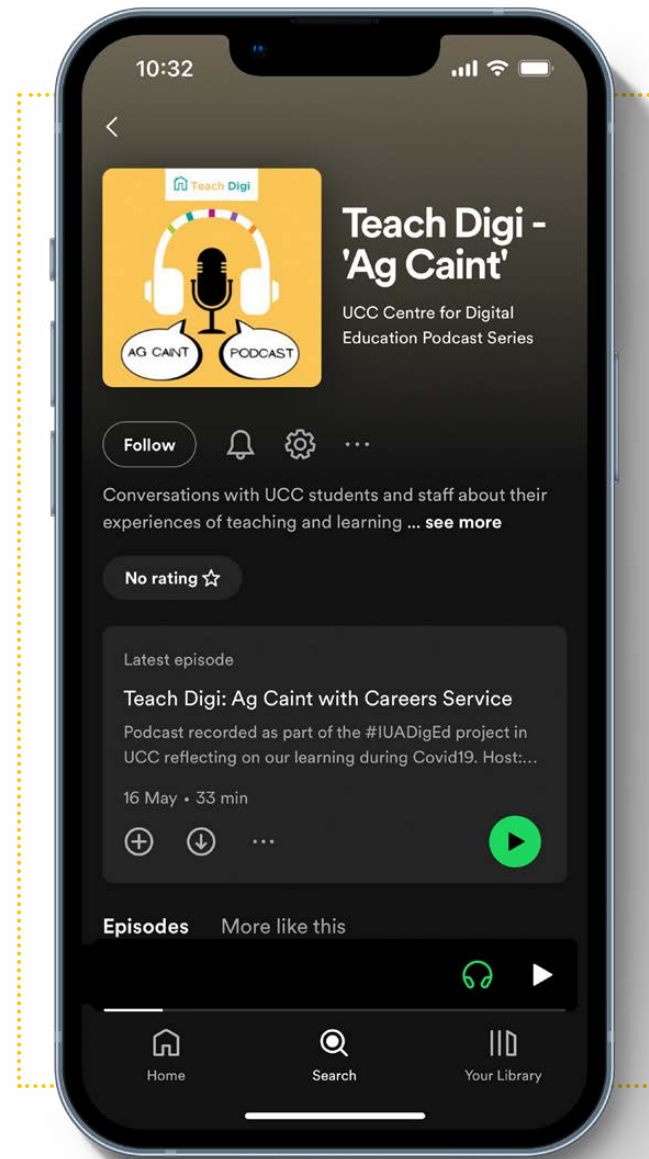
The ever popular Ag Caint series continues to grow with our most recent interviews with [James Northridge Manager, Inclusive UCC & Daisy Garde 3rd Year Biotechnology](#).

All episodes are available to watch from within the Teach Digi module on the Teaching with Technology Canvas course.

However, the series has taken a step beyond UCC and is now available to stream from Spotify! Just search for it there and listen as you walk, run, study, drive or commute.

The inimitable host, Clíodhna O’Callaghan, would love to hear your feedback so please feel free to email her on [c.ocallaghan@ucc.ie](mailto:c.ocallaghan@ucc.ie) with your views.

We hope you enjoy listening as much as we enjoy making these programmes.



## COURSES

## AN INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT LIFE IN IRELAND

In March ACE suggested the University create a short course which would provide an on-campus university experience for displaced students from Ukraine and other locations. An initial brainstorming meeting was held with the UCC Community to establish how it would be possible to deliver such a course. The UCC Community offered their knowledge, experience, skills and good will to organise something of meaning for a group who have found themselves living in an unfamiliar territory, having had their studies paused or interrupted in their home country. It was decided that the short course would run for seven weeks with an initial 'freshers' week followed by a six-week lecture series. It was important to deliver this course in a timely manner and utilise the resources across campus. As one, Pat Leahy in Applied Social Studies describes it *"There followed a frantic nine days of planning, fixing, changing, and organising. Things in academia usually occur at glacial pace - the sheer mass slowly grinds through the rock - but on occasion things can happen at lightning speed. On these occasions it doesn't matter what something was designed to do, it's what it can do that counts. So things happened very quickly."*

The course entitled "An Introduction to Student Life in Ireland" runs from April 19th to 2nd June 2022. This course, we believe, was the first of its kind worldwide and was only possible due to the swift response and close collaboration by multiple staff and offices within the University. The motivation when planning the course was to consider what practical assistance the University community could provide for Displaced Ukrainian Students. The focus of the course is on; Life in Ireland for a young adult; Ireland, politics, and society; Getting sorted: communications and services. To date the course has been a great success, with over 70 students registered on the programme.

Word spread very quickly and within 24 hours we were receiving significant interest from various agencies including the Social Welfare office, charity organisations and host families. In addition, media organisations were in contact with us to talk about the course which helped to spread the word. Already we could see that the course was having an impact in the wider community, with many from outside the University eager to contribute what they could to ensure the success of the programme.

The feedback from the students has been very positive and lecturers have commented that the students are very engaged in each session. We also received feedback from host families that the course is having a very positive impact on their guests. The course is having a significant ripple effect of positivity, togetherness, and collaboration.



## COURSES

### ADDICTION STUDIES

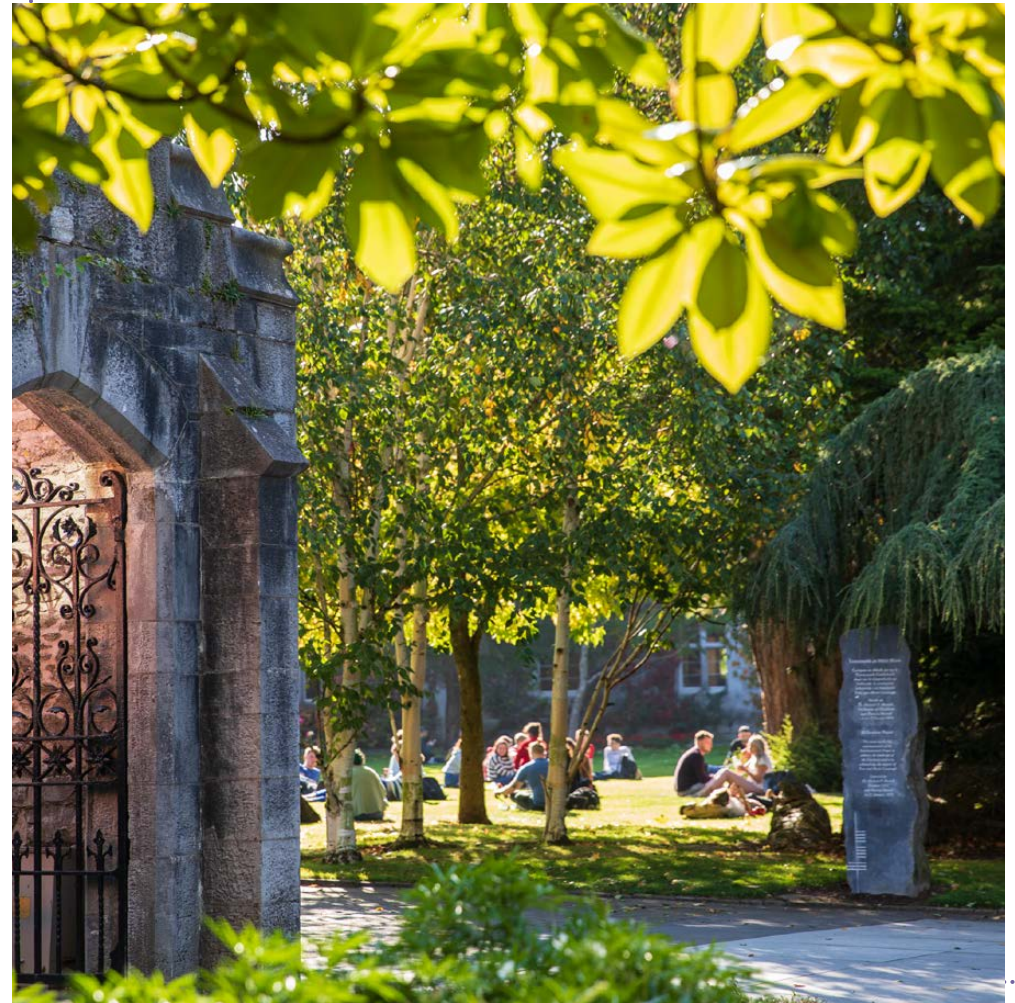
March 13th saw the completion of the first delivery of ACE’s new programme on Addiction Studies at Cork Prison. This course is a great example of how Coolmine, the HSE, Cork Prison Education Unit, and UCC collaborated to deliver a meaningful short course to a difficult to reach group of non-traditional learners/students. It was an enriching experience for the lecturers and the aim was to deliver 3 key messages to students:

- Engage students with and to allow students to experience the idea that adult education has a role in addressing substance use and addiction and there are various pathways into education through addiction studies.
- That prisoners are at high risk of overdose on release and the role of Naloxone in responding to and preventing fatality from overdose.
- Introducing to the various treatment models and pathways available through Coolmine and the HSE Addiction Services should they consider seeking support and help on release and the supports available while in prison and how they might access those.

Despite interruptions from lockdowns due to COVID-19, the course was very well received by the students, with 13 being presented with certificates of completion. The course was 8 weeks long, and lectures included the Psychology of Addiction, Drug Policy, and opportunities for student reflection. The programme team carefully considered the best ways to engage the students in the learning, as ensuring it was a positive experience for the group was a key goal. Lecturers came from the HSE and UCC and included UCC graduate and co-host of The Two Norries podcast, James Leonard, who said ‘It was a real privilege to deliver classes to men in Cork Prison and inspiring to see their engagement, interest and enthusiasm. It’s brilliant that we can make courses like this accessible to the most marginalise groups, and this has the potential to spark an interest in men who may have never had the opportunity to learn about addiction before. It was an honour to be part of this pilot and hopefully we can deliver it to more men and women in prison in the future.’

Indeed, the team look forward to future deliveries of the programme, with lecturer, Dr Joanne Rolfe, describing the most recent group as “insightful, interested and enthusiastic students who really engaged with the course and bought an exciting dynamic.”

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL STUDENTS WHO TOOK PART!





## LEADERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY



In March the UCC community was thrilled when 21 women from the Travelling Community graduated having completed a 'life-changing' course designed to empower leadership in their community. The programme was designed to reflect the educational needs of the Traveller women who were included in the development stages, ensuring their needs and aspirations were implemented in the course design. The course was designed by Travellers for Travellers, and lectures were delivered at an outreach centre, by Travellers, and by lecturers previously known to

the women through their engagement with Traveller organisations. All programme team members are acutely aware of the challenges that women of the Traveller community face. This led to a safe environment, giving the women a sense of belonging and acceptance, ensuring they did not feel alienated. This was important as some of the women reported that the UCC campus was a 'foreign place' to them. Traveller customs and traditions were always at the forefront of discussions relating to programme committee decision making. Traveller women are responsible for the domestic sphere of life, looking after the needs of the family. The programme was designed with this in mind, and classes were facilitated at a time when children were in school to ensure disruption to family life was minimal. Lectures were delivered on a part-time basis two mornings a week, in the community setting. The course is modularised with continuous assessment comprising of project work, presentations, reflections, practical assignments, essays and community-based practice placement.

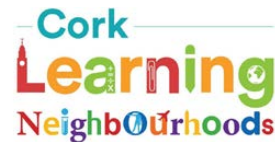
According to Séamus O'Tuama, Director of Adult Continuing Education, UCC, ACE has a long history of bringing 'university to communities that did not have access to third-level education'. The Traveller Community is one of the most marginalised in Ireland. For Adult learners, particularly Travellers returning to education who have had previously bad, if not traumatic, experiences within the education system, returning to education can be a daunting experience.

This programme goes beyond current practice to combat some of the structural inequalities that impact the lives of Irish Travellers in education, employment, and all spheres of life. It has already had an enormous impact on the women and their families, changing what was a negative experience of education into a positive one. The *Pavee-Beoir* (2019) report illustrates this in the feedback from the women, noting that it 'has had a transformative effect on their everyday lives', and 'they felt a sense of empowerment'. The women believe that 'their engagement in the course was having a positive effect in their children's engagement in school and their future aspirations and the opportunity for the women to study and achieve the Diploma is having a wider impact on families and the community. One woman said 'I think you're bringing back what you have learnt, it helps you with your children then as well. You know if they see you going out in the morning, they're saying if mommy can do it, why can't I do it'

## COURSES

### NEIGHBOURHOOD UNIVERSITY

A new ACE course has recently commenced that is being delivered by the Mayfield Learning Neighbourhood group. The ‘Neighbourhood University’ programme is an 8-week taster course covering a variety of third level subjects which will be run in the Mayfield community. The subjects of the course were chosen as a result of feedback collected from a survey completed within the community and include Local History, Drama, Sustainability and Psychology. The lecturers on this programme are made up of volunteers from various UCC and MTU departments. The course has been developed to encourage local people to sample third level subjects in an easily accessible, non-threatening environment. This course is not assessed to encourage participation of those who may be anxious about the pressure of exams etc.



Best of luck to all involved!

### DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH STUDIES 21-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

This year, the Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies celebrates 21 years of a unique collaboration between Adult Continuing Education (UCC) and The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP). SHEP is a community education and development project established in 1974, with the Cork branch established in 1986. SHEP is synonymous with participative and experiential approaches to education. SHEP’s approach to education aligns strongly with the principles of Adult Continuing Education in supporting adults from all backgrounds to develop personal awareness, confidence, and capacity to contribute to family, community, and society. This programme supports Adult Continuing Education’s purpose in providing opportunities in lifelong learning for all adults irrespective of age and previous educational achievements.

The program offers a very supportive space to study at third level. It provides an academic orientation to the key concepts and theoretical frameworks relevant to personal social and health education. The programme is open to all but will be a particular interest to those who work as professionals or volunteers in the facilitation of personal and social development in the community.

The Diploma is a two-year Level 6/Level 7 programme under the academic leadership of the School of Applied Social Studies and the School of Psychology. It draws on the ethos and work of The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP). The first intake of students began their studies in 2001 and graduated in 2003 (see photo).

Many students who have completed this programme have undergone experiential training in SHEP, are practitioners in the facilitation of personal and social development in the community and/or are values-driven activists working for individual and community health and well-being. Over the past 21 years this unique programme has offered students the opportunity to develop understanding of the main theories that shape contemporary academic discourses that underpin their practice.

This is a unique time in the history of this programme. It is a shining example of an established successful collaborative that has served adult learners for 21 years and continuing to do so going forward.

Further details are available at: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ace-dsphs/#>



Written by Dr Maria Lotty, Senior Coordinator and Lecturer, ACE, UCC



Graduates of the Diploma in Social and Psychological Health Studies 2003

## COURSES

## UCC LANGUAGE CENTRE LAUNCHES NEW PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH SUITE

The Language Centre is delighted to launch its new Professional English Suite (PES), which offers bespoke language coaching offered for professionals who work or aspire to work at a high level in an English-speaking environment. Targeted at international companies and staff, the PES focuses on identifying profession-specific communicative and linguistic needs and delivering highly practical, engaging and personalised content to meet the high expectations of clients. The courses are open to individuals and company groups, with lessons being delivered on campus, on site, or online by the Centre's team of teachers.

Clients can use Canvas Catalog as an entry portal and complete an initial language level check, needs analysis and learning preference questionnaire. These serve as a springboard for consultation with their language coach to collaboratively outline a course plan and set of learning outcomes. A Negotiated Curriculum approach is taken, with clients being encouraged to engage in dialogue and reflection about the situations and types of communication they need to develop confidence in. Focus can be given to particular skills, such as report writing or effective emails, or functional areas such as dealing with a difficult customer or using language effectively to negotiate or when giving presentations. With ongoing guidance and personalised feedback on tasks from a university language coach, PES courses ensure individual learners and teams establish and achieve their real-life learning goals.

Canvas Catalog is used to deliver language support and authentic materials specific to the client's profession and role within their organisation. End-of-course tasks involve the learner completing performance-based tasks which simulate workplace communication, and these in turn inform personalised post-course learning plans and self-study materials.

Brendan Ó Sé and David Moran worked on establishing the course design and teaching approaches for the PES and ran a successful pilot course for a locally based client. This proved highly useful in establishing procedures and stages that can best facilitate success and support non-native speaking professionals who engage in this exciting new iterative and learner-driven programme.

Further information about the PES can be accessed on:  
<https://open.ucc.ie/browse/all/lac/courses/ulc700-professional-english-suite-information>



## COURSES

### UCC SKILLS CENTRE | DIGITAL PASSPORT AND DIGITAL SKILLS SUMMER SCHOOL 2022

- What:** Digital Skills Course for all enrolled UCC students
- When:** Monday, 20th of June 2022 to Friday, 24th of June 2022
- Where:** Online and in-person sessions (hybrid format)
- How:** Sign up or express your interest here: <https://forms.gle/Mxmo8ptmRwFR5xQG7>
- Who:** Any enrolled UCC student
- Why:** Improve your digital skills for your journey through higher education

*We cordially invite you to sign up for our Digital Skills Summer School 2022!*

In June 2022, the UCC Skills Centre team with support from Access UCC will be offering a 1-week summer school for enrolled UCC students to learn more about using digital technology and tech skills in academia.

Between the 20th-24th of June 2022, this free, week-long summer school will focus on how technology can make students' learning journey easier and introduce participants to different web tools or technology (including smartphones) within a list of recommended tools that can be used in such a way to support their everyday workload.

Having the digital competencies to use these digital tools will ease the assignment process and prepare students for future projects. For example, participants will learn about useful skills like solid file management principles, touch-typing and general assignment related skills (e.g., Office 365 or Google workplace), formatting an assignment through Microsoft Word, or recording a PowerPoint presentation.

Our programme will also cover topics such as digital file management, Google



calendar, the main components of Office 365, netiquette, mind-mapping, sound file production and other important digital skills. By taking part in our summer school, UCC students can increase their skills in digital literacy, which will help them manage their academic work in college.

Please express your interest or register for the UCC Digital Skills Summer School [HERE](#).

We look forward to hearing from you and if you have any questions or queries, feel free to get in touch at any time.

We are here to help you reach your full potential!

Our very best wishes, The Skills Centre team

#### Check out our website for more information:

-  **UCC Skills Centre website:** <https://www.ucc.ie/en/skillscentre/>
-  **UCC Digital Passport project:** <https://www.ucc.ie/en/skillscentre/news-and-workshops/digital-passport/>
-  **UCC IT Services:** <https://www.ucc.ie/en/sit/>

## COURSES

### POSTGRAD PUSH-THROUGH WRITING RETREAT

The Postgrad Push-Through is a weeklong writing retreat hosted by the UCC Skills Centre. It is specifically designed to address the needs of PhD and MA students coming to the end of their respective research projects. This writer's retreat offers a chance for postgrad students from all disciplines to meet, motivate, and exchange ideas and resources with one another.

The five-day event involves writing time blocks to encourage accountability, five guest speakers who discuss motivational and practical tools for project completion, and a networking space between the postgrads. We are delighted to announce that we will be offering a **blended event to take place from 13th - 17th June 2022**. Places for on-campus sessions will be allocated on a first come first serve basis.

Sign up here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNnqBy69jxpUNVKkEfnAyt4Izdk7Es\\_tiduGdNniNEcue8dA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNnqBy69jxpUNVKkEfnAyt4Izdk7Es_tiduGdNniNEcue8dA/viewform?usp=sf_link)



### ACE CERTIFICATE IN CLIMATE CRISIS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Certificate in CPD Climate Crisis and Local Government which launched in January 2022 has just concluded. The 16-week course was developed to equip Irish city and county councillors with practical and up-to-date knowledge on key issues in the areas of environment and sustainability. Throughout their time on the course the 26 councillors engaged with the subject matter in a blended environment. The met on two occasions for in-person workshops: once on UCC campus and the second time in Meath County Council. Both days were filled with excellent talks and great debate. At these workshops as well as throughout the 16 weeks the team were lucky to be joined by a number of well-recognised people in the field of sustainability and climate action. Students also undertook three assignments, all connected to the work they do in the local authority and involving practical skills. Whilst for some, it had been a while since they had done an assignment, some wonderful work was turned in. The team is very proud that the group feels they are leaving more confident and knowledgeable on the topics and ready to use what they have learnt in their workplace. ACE's purpose is to provide opportunities in lifelong learning for all adults and we are delighted that everything learnt on the course will be carried forward and used on a wider scale in our communities.



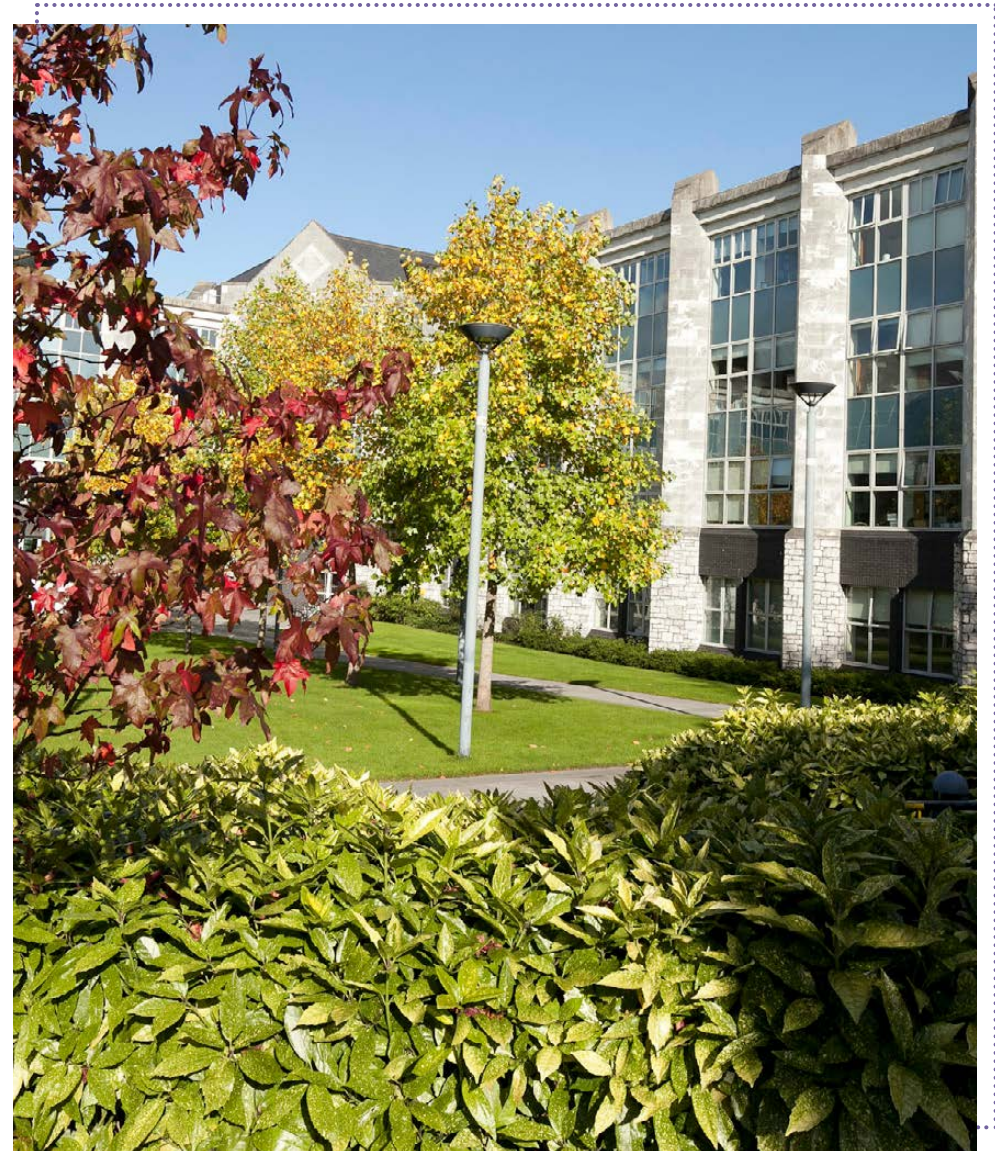
## COURSES

## LANGUAGE CENTRE ACADEMIC ENGLISH COURSE FOR LAW STUDENTS AT HUNAN UNIVERSITY

The Language Centre is delighted with the development of a new course for undergraduate students of Law at Hunan University to support their academic writing in English. This will aid these students in their applications to continue their law studies at UCC. The first course will run in May and June 2022 with 15 students already enrolled. This programme forms part of the Language Centre's continued development of partnership programmes with other universities to develop the language requirements of students considering applying to UCC. The inclusion of Legal English discipline-specific materials is important in developing students' knowledge of the academic culture at UCC.

## LANGUAGE CENTRE SANCTUARY SCHOLARSHIPS UPDATE

Since 2019, UCC Language Centre has offered four one-year full-time sanctuary scholarships each year in order to support asylum seekers and refugees in the Cork area. The Language Centre has now increased its offer to sanctuary applicants by 50% following the Ukrainian crisis and six full-time places are now available on our full-time courses. Scholarships are awarded on the basis that in order for an applicant to achieve their goals in Ireland, either professional or academic, there is a recognisable English language need. The Language Centre delivers bespoke courses for refugees who have been sponsored by local communities who often have very specific English language needs and goals, and we are working with the University of Sanctuary Working Group to establish if funding can be allocated to allow further development in this area.



## PEOPLE

## TOM O'MARA, HEAD OF DIGITAL EDUCATION IN CONVERSATION WITH JACQUI



Tom has just received the Impact Award so I caught up with him to see what makes him tick.

### Q: Tom, What is your role in UCC?

Hi Jacqui, I'm the Head of digital Education, so I run the Centre for Digital Education in the Office of Vice President for Learning and Teaching. Our vision is 'to empower staff to improve student learning through the best practice application of technology'.

So, we do this by helping staff with their questions around how to use technology to enrich the learning experience of our students.

A lot of my work is around keeping management and committees informed of what we're doing, how we're supporting staff and advising on educational technology. One of my main tasks at the moment is to help develop UCC's first Digital Education plan.

People can read more about what we do on <https://uccireland.sharepoint.com/sites/CentreforDigitalEducation2>.

### Q: What is Digital Education?

A: We define digital education from two perspectives – the use of technology to deliver education, but also the digital skills that staff need to achieve that.

### Q: Can you describe your journey to get to this point?

Sure, I've been involved in education since 1994 really. I did a degree here in

English and Maths then a TEFL qualification. I taught English in Cairo on an exchange programme with 10 other Irish people after I finished my degree. I then came back and got my TEFL qualification in the UCC Language Centre and ended up teaching English in Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok for three years. I got dragged into teaching English language debating and ended up coaching the first ever Thai English language debating team in Stellenbosch university in South Africa at the world university debating championships in 96. Myself and my wife Susan came back to Ireland in 98, I worked in the language centre in UCD for a year before realising it was getting hard to pay the rent. I moved into an elearning company called Educational Multimedia Group as an Instructional Designer until 2002, then became a TV Series Producer/ Instructional Designer with a small TV production company called AV Edge. I ended up producing a literacy series for RTÉ on behalf of the National Adult Literacy Agency, which became my niche. Literacy really was what I wanted to do, so I joined NALA as their Distance Learning Co-ordinator in 2006 and stayed there until 2015 at which point I left to join UCC. Along the way, I picked up various qualifications in Instructional Design, Multimedia Production and finally a Masters in Online and Distance Education.

I have to be honest and say I wasn't looking to leave NALA and applied for the UCC role out of curiosity. But the interview was intriguing, and I was impressed by what I heard by the then VP for Teaching and Learning, Professor John O'Halloran. So, I figured I had left NALA in good shape and I had some skills and knowledge to offer UCC.

### Q: Outside of work, what's life like?

Busy! I'm married with a 15-year old daughter and 12-year old son. My wife and I both coach, train or manage a bunch of different things so every day after work is taken up with GAA, rowing, athletics or scouting.

Scouting is my main occupation outside of work and I was the Group Leader for the 18/19th Fermoy Scout Group for four years. I now run the Cub section, more or less run the Beaver section and get involved with Scouts and Venturers as well.

## PEOPLE

Fly fishing is my passion but I unfortunately get little time to indulge in that these days. These are the busy years though so I'm hoping for a bit more space in a few years time to get back on the river.

**Q: Where do you think we're going in terms of technology, work and home?**

Technology is ubiquitous – you will be severely disadvantaged if you can't use technology to participate in society. It's hard for me to conceive of any aspect of our lives that doesn't benefit from the application of technology, but of course I think it's important for people not to be deskilled by technology either. Think of the news reports we hear about people not being able to read maps and getting lost following sat nav. Our critical skills are more important than ever in the era of vast and fake news. Resilience is key in the face of online harassment, scamming and general anonymous nastiness. In an ideal world, we would be able to balance working online versus working in the office and manage the boundaries between work and personal and family lives, but I think most people are the beginning of this so there will be some stress and learning over the coming years.

But overall, I think technology will help us live fuller, more balanced, more sustainable and more equitable lives. We just have to make sure the tail doesn't wag the dog.

**Q: What advice would you give to the 18 year old Tom?**

Trust in the values you learned in scouting – loyalty, trustworthiness, helpfulness, friendliness, courtesy, kindness, cheerfulness – they'll guide you through the tough times.

**Q: Seeing as it was on one of your recent out of office messages, is Die Hard a Christmas movie?**

A: 100% it is and most people who replied agreed.

**Q: A controversial one – Barry's or Lyon's**

A: I'm from Thurles not Cork, has to be Lyon's!

**Q: Seeing as you're from Tipp, favourite hurler?**

A: At the moment, my nephew Bryan O'Mara, minor, U20 All Ireland winner with Tipp, UL captain winning Fitzgibbon Cup this year.

**Q: Your perfect moment?**

A: Dry fly fishing the Suir on a summer's evening

**Q: Do you have any heroes?**

A: Too many maybe – Robert Baden Powell for starting scouting; Richard Burton for his exploring lands, cultures and languages;

**Q: Hogwarts' House?**

A: eek.... I should know this, the kids will kill me, Ravenclaw?

**Q: Favourite movie?**

A: Life of Brian

**Q: You studied English, so what's your favourite book?**

A: Tough one.... Name of the Rose by Umberto Eco, Catch 22 by Joseph Heller maybe.

**Q: Favourite poet**

A: Easy, has to be Séamus Heaney

**Q: You're heading on a drive on your own for two hours on a summer's evening. What's on the car stereo?**

A: Hmm... could be anything from Faithless to the Doors to London Grammar to REM to the Pogues to Pink Flyod... I have eclectic musical tastes, so whatever mood takes me.



## PEOPLE

## NEW ADDITION TO THE CIRTL TEAM

### ANNA SANTUCCI



Anna Santucci, PhD (she/lei/sie/ella) joins University College Cork in 2022 as Senior Lecturer in Teaching and Learning Enhancement in CIRTL. She brings to UCC her fervent vocation for Educational Development, her strong commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, her international experience within diverse Higher Education settings, and her dedication to promoting intentional, learning-centred, and evidence-based teaching across the disciplines.

Anna's transdisciplinary scholarship, teaching practice, and international collaborations focus on critically inclusive pedagogies informed by applied theatre, performance activism, language

education, and intercultural teaching and learning. Recent highlights include her work on [Democratic Belonging as Informed Citizenry](#) (POD session at AAC&U 2022); on [Intercultural Educators' Ethical Practice Across Disciplines](#) (*Scenario Journal*); on [the role of acknowledgement in transformative Faculty Development programs for Inclusive Teaching](#) that center truth and racial healing (*Journal of Faculty Development*); on exploring discomfort, co-creation, trust, self-awareness, and empathy in teaching in her contribution to the [Deep Teaching Residency](#) (DTR) project curriculum and facilitators' team; and on [Listening to the Sound of Silence in Supporting Instructors' Transitions to Remote Teaching During COVID-19](#).

Before joining UCC, Anna was Faculty Development Specialist in the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning at University of Rhode Island (USA), where she led an array of consultation services, [Justice & Equity](#) educational resources, [Inclusive Excellence](#) initiatives, and [High Impact Teaching](#) programs to foster educators' agency as reflexive practitioners and engagement with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Anna holds a BA in Modern Languages (Padova, Italy), an MA in English (Nottingham, UK), and a PhD combining Italian Studies and Theatre Arts & Performance Studies (Brown University, USA). During her doctoral studies, she was invited to teach as Visiting Scholar at Dickinson College, and she served for several years as Graduate Teaching Consultant within Brown's [Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning](#). Her transdisciplinary scholarship, teaching practice, and international collaborations focus on critically inclusive pedagogies informed by applied theatre, performance activism, language education, and intercultural teaching and learning.

Anna believes in education for liberation, and in the powerful ways in which creativity and authentic relationships shape our collective journeys towards positive change. She interrogates power with honesty, values co-creation and shared knowledge, and advocates for systemically supporting equitable success for all teachers and learners. She is excited to join the CIRTL team and contribute her passion and expertise to UCC's growth and success, especially in relation to:

- 1 nurturing an evidence-based and intellectually-engaged teaching and learning community;
- 2 sustaining learning-centred teaching strategies that consider motivation, growth mindset, self-realization, empathy, embodiment, sense of belonging, and affectivity;
- 3 facilitating multidisciplinary conversations that integrate culturally aware teaching and mentoring, with particular attention to the role played by educators' own values and identities;
- 4 directing programmes that address holistic student success as well as the needs of educators as learners themselves;
- 5 supporting and maintaining local and global partnerships to pursue meaningful organizational change and advance Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

PEOPLE

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER OF THE SKILLS CENTRE TEAM



Welcome to Evan Scanlan, who has recently joined the Skills Centre as an Intern. Evan is an award-winning Digital Humanities student and Martial Arts enthusiast.

### What is your role in UCC?

Since January of this year, I have been working as a Digital Intern at the UCC Skills Centre. My role involves the design and upkeep of the UCC Skills Centre website. I also design and curate the Skills Centre social media accounts across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

### What was your route to your current role?

After my Leaving Certificate in 2019, I was lucky enough to be accepted into UCC where I am currently in my 3rd year of Digital Humanities and IT. I was awarded the title of college scholar for my work academically during the 2019/2020 year. More recently, I was also awarded the title of Quercus College Scholar for the 2020/2021 year after placing top of my class.

Instead of heading straight to final year, I opted to participate in the Work Placement programme for Digital Humanities and IT. In November of 2021, I was informed that I had been selected for the role of Digital Intern at the Skills Centre.

### What are your favourite parts of your job?

One of my favourite parts of the job is the design aspect when creating graphics and posters. Graphic design is one area in which I was eager to explore over the course of my placement. Throughout my brief time in the Skills Centre, I have created numerous posters for our social media campaign as well as custom bookmarks for students. Designing posters and working with the UCC Visual

Identity Guidelines is great for developing my own creativity while ensuring the brand identity is being respected.

Throughout my academic studies, I was also very interested in web design. Applying the skills I have acquired throughout college into a real-life setting has been one of my favourite parts of the job. Although I attained web design experience while studying in UCC, it was challenging putting these skills to use, which was quite appealing to me. When editing the Skills Centre website, I make sure to write in plain English in order to be inclusive to the 74 countries which have visited our site this past year. Curating and designing a website which had 179,000 URL clicks last term can be quite daunting, but that is yet another aspect of the job that I love.

### What are your interests/hobbies outside of work?

For as long as I can remember, I have always had a fascination with Martial Arts. For years, I practiced Taekwondo, eventually receiving my 1st Dan. More recently, I have explored the world of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) and recently competed at the Cork International Open, where I won a bronze medal fighting in the lightweight division.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu serves as a form of meditation for me and others alike. I have found it extremely beneficial for my own well-being as well as overall fitness. The community is also incredibly welcoming and friendly, allowing me to make lifelong friends.

### Where do you think we're going in terms of technology, work and home?

I think Covid has taught us a lot about the balance between work and home life. Previously, work was left at the office and home was a place to switch off. Now, work seems to have bled into the home and the difference between the two now appears somewhat muddled. Over the last two years, we learned how practical working remotely really is. Even though the government are implementing their plan for people to return to the office, I still think we will see more forms of technology being developed for use working at home. This will make working online easier and lead to the growth and sustainability of the blended work environment.



## PEOPLE

WELCOME TO DR KATY DINEEN  
WHO JOINS CIRTL

Dr Katy Dineen joined the centre in February 2022 as a Lecturer in Teaching and Learning Enhancement. Katy will be responsible for developing a module on inclusive academic practice, which will be offered through CIRTL to all academic staff. Katy is interested in the inclusion of women and children in society, as a focus of interdisciplinary research and teaching. She has published on inclusion in the areas of health, education and politics. Since joining CIRTL, Katy has published in *The Lancet* ([https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(22\)00174-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(22)00174-X/fulltext)), *Educational Theory* (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/edth.12504>) and *The Conversation* (<https://theconversation.com/stopping-violence-against-women-starts-with-learning-what-misogyny-really-is-175411>).

The CDE would like to say a big thank you to Aoife Ryan who is leaving the CDE to travel the globe with her husband Steve. Aoife joined UCC and the CDE only recently but made a huge impact on us and a massive contribution to our work. Aoife led the kickstarting of digital badging for us and redesigned our two web sites as well as contributed in so many other ways to the support of digital education. Aoife, you will be missed but we're also very envious of you and wish you all the best.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO TWO CDE STAFF MEMBERS WHO GOT MARRIED IN MAY

- Michelle O'Donovan
- Aoife Ryan

We wish them long and happy lives with their partners Ian and Steve.



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