



UCD SCHOOL OF HISTORY & ARCHIVES

MA IN HISTORY - MODERN IRISH HISTORY

Modern Irish History

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What will I study?

Module One: Reading and Writing Twentieth century Ireland [Professor Diarmaid Ferriter]

This module introduces students to the evolution of writings on twentieth century Irish history, using works by J J Lee, Diarmaid Ferriter, Terence Brown, Dermot Keogh and others. It will also examine different trends and themes associated with the writing of twentieth century Irish history, covering the Irish Revolution (1918-23), political parties, religious history, social history, labour history, women's history, cultural history and the distribution of power. During the semester, students will prepare and present a class paper on a theme of their choice and submit an extended paper.

Module Two: Case Studies [Dr Susannah Riordan]

This module introduces students to some of the main controversies and seminal events of twentieth century Ireland through the use of primary sources. Students are encouraged to seek out primary sources relevant to the selected themes and each student presents a seminar paper on one theme. The seminar is run on a peer-review basis whereby students provide constructive criticism of each other's presentations. This peer response is a central element of the module as it enables students to engage in intellectual debates regarding the construction of history and the use of source material.

Students will take one other optional module from a range on offer in the School, together with two research training modules. The culmination of the course is a 15,000 word dissertation, which is based on original research and due at the end of July.

Why do this MA?

The rationale behind these modules is to provide students with a sound basis in methodological and theoretical approaches to the study of modern Irish history. By examining specific issues in the second module, for example, whether or not the Casement Diaries were real or fake or why the Kilmichael ambush was so controversial, students are able to apply the critical skills they have acquired in the first module Readings. Combined, both modules provide students with the skills and confidence required to research and write their MA thesis.

The MA thesis is of crucial importance as it allows students to select their own area of research and, by undertaking original research, contribute to the writing of history. Each student is allocated a supervisor with whom they meet regularly throughout the year to discuss their work and progress. The MA allows students to manage their own project and develop invaluable skills of timemanagement, co-ordination, research, analysis and writing.

The skills developed during this MA by writing a thesis, presenting a paper to a peer-group, receiving and giving peer criticism will provide students with vital training for all perspective careers. Many of our students have gone on to work in media (both television, radio and print), others have entered politics, the civil service and teaching. The MA in modern Irish history is a gateway to a creative and fulfilling career.