IRISH SOCIETY AND POLITICS

Description

The course covers key issues in Irish politics, society and economy and places emphasis on the role and policies of the European Union. The course is designed to support students in their placement in Dáil Éireann or Seanad Éireann. Students are expected to interact at a high level while participating in their placement and to have a strong knowledge of contemporary issues in Ireland.

The politics component progresses from a consideration of the Constitution and the political system to an analysis of political parties, elections and politicians, emphasising contemporary developments. The major political shifts of the 1990s and 2000s are analysed along with recent election outcomes.

The society component covers key issues both historical such as the effects of the Famine, and contemporary, such as immigration and inequality. Major social changes are analysed in the context of political and economic developments.

The Irish economy reached high levels of economic performance in the 1990s. The course analyses both the real and the more transient contributors to growth. The recession of 2008 is analysed by building an understanding of key problems and evaluating the actual and possible policy responses.

The EU has a major influence on Irish politics, society and economy. The course outlines the growth and the legislative processes of the EU. The policies of the EU are analysed particularly as they affect Ireland.

On completion of the course, students will have a comprehensive and integrated knowledge of the major issues in Irish politics, society and economy.

Course Outline

The Constitution of Ireland
The Oireachtas
Political Parties - Evolution and Bases of Support
The Electoral System - and its impact on the conduct of politics
The role of the elected politician
Profile of Irish Society and Social Issues
Population and Population change in Ireland
Social Division and the Irish Traveller Community
Church and State in Ireland
Irish Economic Problems; unemployment, price stability etc
Irish Economic Policies
Ireland & Globalisation
Boom and Recession: The Irish Economy 1990-2010
Origins and Development of the EC/EU
The Institutions and the legislative process
EU Policies and Policy Deficits
External Relations; European Political Cooperation

Reading

Desmond Dinan
Ever Closer Union: An Introduction to European Integration; Longman 2005

Neil Nugent

Collins, N and Cradden, T
Political Issues in Ireland Today, Manchester University Press 2004

Muiris MacCarthaigh
Government in Modern Ireland, IPA 2008

Muiris MacCarthaigh & Maurice Manning
The Houses of the Oireachtas, IPA, 2010

Constitution of Ireland,
Government Publications 2010,

Hilary Tovey & Perry Share
A Sociology of Ireland, 2nd edition, chapter 7, Inequality, Poverty and Class, Gill and Macmillan, 2003

J. McGarry & B. O'Leary

J. Coakley (Editor)
Politics in the Republic of Ireland, Routledge 2005

J. O'Hagan & C. Newman
The Economy of Ireland, Gill and MacMillan 2008

S. Healy, B. Reynolds & M. Collins

P. Fitzgerald & B. Lambkin
Migration in Irish History, Palgrave 2008