



HUMANITIES

The School of Humanities comprises three Departments: the Department of Applied Arts, the Department of Creative and Performing Arts and the Department of Languages, Tourism and Hospitality.

The School has established an excellent research ethos and a distinguished, growing research record through the dedicated efforts of individual staff members, research groups and research students, as well as through the long-term support of management at Departmental, School and Institutional levels.

Early in the 1980s, Humanities espoused the importance of scholarship and research among its teaching staff. The School was also the first in the mid-1990s to pioneer developmental centres of excellence in the Institute for research and consultancy purposes. Its centres include for instance locations for Historical Research, Social Studies Research, Legal Research and Music Research. The School is proactive in promoting the diversity of disciplines and creativity and the generation of new ideas and knowledge through academic conferences and publications, creative compositions, exhibitions and performances.

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"My research study stretches my mind and the postgraduate generic skills training in WIT gives me the chance to meet with other students."

Oritsegbemi Jakpa, Research Masters in Creative Writing



RESEARCH GROUPS/CENTRES

Centre for Social and Family Research

Mr. Fergus Hogan E: fhogan@wit.ie

Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies

Dr. John Ennis E: jennis@wit.ie

Content and Language Integrated Learning Research Group - CLIL

Dr. Áine Furlong E: afurlong@wit.ie

Centre for Research, Creativity and Innovation in Tourism

Ms. Ann Marie Lally E: amlally@wit.ie

Creativity and Culture Research Group

Dr. Michael Howlett E: mhowlett@wit.ie

Centre for New Music

Dr. Eric Sweeney E: esweeney@wit.ie

Research in Art and Design Theory and Practice

Dr. Peter Jordan E: pjordan@wit.ie

FURTHER RESEARCH AREAS/TOPICS

Irish Music; Traditional Music; Manuscript and Printed Sources

Dr. Colette Moloney E: cmoloney@wit.ie

Historical Musicology; Critical Music Editing; and Music Performance

Dr. David Rhodes E: drhodes@wit.ie

The Relation of Creativity to Plurilingualism Second Language Acquisition

Dr. Aine Furlong E: afurlong@wit.ie

Intercultural Studies (Self)-Assessment of Intercultural Competence

European Language Portfolio

Dr. Fionnuala Kennedy E: fkennedy@wit.ie

Post-war German Literature; Literature of the Former German Democratic Republic; German Film

Ms. Rosanna Molloy E: rmolloy@wit.ie

Colonial and Post-Colonial Studies, World Literatures in French and Women's Writing

Dr. Christine O'Dowd-Smyth

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Centre for Social and Family Research

The Centre for Social and Family Research, established in 2003 in the Department of Applied Arts, is a practice minded research centre, committed to the pursuit of social care and social justice. The Centre brings together the teaching and research strengths of a strong multi-disciplinary team and benefits from a range of disciplines including; Sociology; Social Policy, Theology, Social Work, Early Childhood Studies and Psychology. The Centre draws on the Mission Statement of Waterford Institute of Technology which recognises the need to engage in research for the advancement of knowledge, the support of society and the enhancement of teaching. The Centre's core objective is to conduct applied social research which will critically address current debates in Irish social policy and make a contribution to the development of policy.

The Centre has developed very strong research links with key commissioning bodies and has real expertise in winning and publishing nationally commissioned research contributing to the development of public policy and practice. It is committed to enhancing good working relationships between the Institute and a variety of state and voluntary agencies and cultivating links with international academic partners.

The Centre has been very successful in attracting funding for postgraduate research, mainly through the Strand 1 process, and have a significant record in the development in winning national recognition. Dissemination of research through the presentation of postgraduate work at key national conferences has been central to this. Staff have displayed a strong commitment to securing postgraduate funding in key areas of strategic research interest and expertise which include racism and ethnicity; changing nature of Irish families, child-centred research, religion, fathering, men and masculinities, parenting and fostering.

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Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies

The Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies was established in 2002 to initiate and sustain a robust and vibrant learning community between Newfoundland, Labrador and Ireland, with particular emphasis on cultural, social, commercial, technological and scientific research projects, publications and exchanges. It assists and advises on all areas of collaborate research across all college disciplines, throughout southeast communities, and nationally.

The Centre acts as a gateway and network for linkages between cultural and community groups, businesses and WIT with respect to their counterparts in Newfoundland and Labrador; it develops research and research programmes between Memorial University Newfoundland and WIT; it arranges student and staff exchanges between these institutions; it builds linkages between academic programmes and facilities in the two institutions; and it facilitates publications on Ireland-Newfoundland related topics.

Current projects include: advance planning for the ACSI (Association of Canadian Studies in Ireland) Conference, as well as the publication of its proceedings, the Irish dimension of a forthcoming Festival of the Sea Conference and the publication of a major seven-hundred page scholarly project involving the Centre and two North American Universities.

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"My postgraduate experience gave me excellent grounding, equipping me with a variety of skills and related expertise that have prepared me to meet any future challenges in a number of disciplines with confidence."



Tony Quinlan
Research Masters
Tourism and Hospitality

Content and Language Integrated Learning Group - CLIL

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) enables students to learn language(s) in and through other disciplines, e.g. learning a science subject through French/Italian/German/Spanish/ESL. The Content and Language Integrated Learning group at WIT aims to research learning experiences and to develop teaching and learning materials for the approach.

Application of research in an industrial/societal context

CLIL has been identified as the approach most likely to create immediate relevance for language learners: students are learning content which corresponds to their academic interests through another language and in a different perspective. Within the context of the European Union, CLIL as well as languages in higher education have been identified as key areas for action (European Commission, November 2005, Framework Strategy for Multilingualism).

The strengths of this approach are associated with the reconsideration of how and when certain types of subject matter and language are taught. In this manner: an inter-disciplinary mindset is applied at learner level and at teacher level.

Key thematic areas for postgraduate students

Research in Content and Language Integrated Learning is needed in light of the variety of CLIL models as well as learning and teaching experiences that exist in Europe. Consequently, research questions should focus on:

- Teachers' experiences with CLIL
- Students' experiences with CLIL
- Learners' cognitive development through CLIL
- How CLIL affects student motivation and/or achievement
- Teacher motivation
- Delivery models and quality of input
- Programme models, choice of subjects, choice of language/s
- Duration of the experience
- Continuity (particularly in light of a modular approach to learning)

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Centre for Research, Creativity and Innovation in Tourism

The Centre for Research, Creativity and Innovation in Tourism was established in 2007 and was developed in response to a need to redefine and refocus the activities of the pre-existing Tourism and Hospitality Research Group. The Centre seeks to develop and foster collaborative and multidisciplinary scholarly activity in order to contribute towards the strengthening of management capability, creativity and innovation within the tourism sector.

Activities

The objective of the Centre is to actively support and promote any research or scholarly activity that contributes towards the building of capability, creativity and innovation within the broad tourism sector. The focus of the research activity is interdisciplinary in nature drawing upon existing research activities and expertise in the department it includes, but is not limited to, the following key areas;

- Food Product Development & Culinary Creativity
- Tourism Market Analysis
- Tourism Innovation and New Product Development
- Tourism Destination Management
- Tourism Experience Management
- Fostering Innovation & Organisational Creativity
- Human Resource Development for Hospitality & Tourism
- Cultural and Heritage Tourism
- Strategic planning and Change management
- Tourism & Hospitality Legislation
- Festival & Event Tourism
- Eighteenth-Century Travel in Ireland
- Grand Tour Studies
- Eco Tourism

Through the definition of these key research areas, the centre is well positioned to contribute to the tourism sector through the full spectrum of research activities from applied and strategic research through to creative projects and consultancy work.

Key Thematic Areas for Postgraduate Students

The centre welcomes research proposals in any of the broad thematic areas outlined. Examples of Postgraduate projects currently underway include:

- Developing Innovative Capability through Enhanced Supply Chain Management
- A Framework for Tourism Experience Concept Development
- A Stakeholder Approach to the Branding of Urban Tourism Destinations

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Creativity and Culture Research Group

This research group facilitates collaboration between researchers in various areas of the Humanities to investigate the concepts of creativity and culture. The group members examine the theoretical maxims of these concepts and then apply these to the individual disciplines, to provide a more in-depth insight into the nature of creativity and culture. In addition, the group considers the interrelationship between creativity in the different disciplines to give a better understanding of how to encourage creative thinking and innovation. It also looks at the role of creativity throughout history and how it helped to shape culture.

The group provides a unique opportunity for a trans-disciplinary view of creativity and culture, and it also allows for collaboration between different areas. It therefore has the potential for a particular impact on educational training and society due to its distinctive constitution. Interdisciplinary research between the areas of Literature, Philosophy and Theology, Design, Film Studies, Music and Cultural Studies, though uncommon, propels this group to pursue original and innovative research in a hereto unexplored context. Central to the research initiative is how a more in-depth understanding of creativity and culture in humanity can make for a more fulfilled human life in a better world.

Thematic Areas for Postgraduate Students:

Religious Studies, Theology, and Spirituality; Religion and Society (especially in relation to Information and Communicative Technologies), Spirituality and Social Transformation, Theology and Literature, Religion and Identity, Philosophy and Religion, Literature and Film, Design and Identity, and Music Research (centred on traditional music, palaeography and cultural studies).

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Centre for New Music

Music Composition/20th and 21st Century Music History and Analysis/Music Technology. The research group consists of the following members of staff in the Department of Creative and Performing Arts (Music): Dr. Eric Sweeney, Dr. Marian Ingoldsby, Dr. Hazel Farrell and Mark Graham

Key Research Interests Include:

Composition, Twentieth century music history and analysis, Contemporary music history and analysis, Contemporary Irish music, Creative Music Technology, Electronic and Electroacoustic music, Sound recording.

The group's expertise centres around music from the beginning of the 20th century to the present day. Special attention is given to technological developments from the 1950's onwards and the impact of those developments on composers of today. The position of Irish composers is examined in the context of international developments.

The annual Waterford New Music Week provides a platform for the group's work with the highlighting of performances of postgraduate compositions, analysis of new music, and interdisciplinary projects such as science, film, drama and art with music. 'Teaching the Unteachable', proceedings of a conference which focused on the place of composition in education, is published by the Department of Creative and Performing Arts.

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Research in Art and Design Theory and Practice

The Group was established by Dr. Peter Jordan in 2004 to encourage research activity in the related fields of art and design. Dr. Jordan was subsequently joined by Dr. Cordula Hansen and Mary Ann Bolger, both of whom have made a significant contribution towards developing research in this domain.

Key research interests include:

- art and design history and theory
- art and design education
- inter-disciplinary research in the fields of arts for health and art and archaeology
- practice-based research in art and design.

A number of postgraduate students have qualified to M.A. and Ph.D level in the above fields, most notably in the area of practice-based research, in which there is a significant practical component to the work.

Dr. Jordan is an art historian with a particular research expertise in the field of Art Collecting. He is also interested in the developing field of Arts for Health, and is currently involved in a research project to design a teaching module on arts and humanities for Irish medical courses. Dr. Hansen is a practitioner researcher with interests in art education and art and science.

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"Some of the best things about postgraduate research are; working on a topic that you are really interested in; presenting your findings at conferences and presentations; working with other postgraduates and improving your writing skills."

Angela Buckley, PhD in Music