

# GOVERNMENT TIMES

The newsletter produced by students and staff of UCC's  
Department of Government

## ISSUE 60

Co-edited by Aodh Quinlivan, Caroline Hofman & Lorna Murphy



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## START-UP COMPANY CO-FOUNDED BY BSc GOVERNMENT GRADUATE GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH



Bsc Government 2012 graduate, Jayne Ronayne (on left) and Helen Flynn (on right) briefing Taoiseach Enda Kenny about their start-up company, KonnectAgain. See full story on pages 5 & 6.



# CONTENTS

- Page 1** Cover Story: KonnectAgain Success for BSc Government graduate
- Page 2** Contents
- Page 3** Editorial
- Page 4** Special journal issue edited by Dr. Mary Murphy
- Page 5** KonnectAgain Success for BSc Government graduate
- Page 6** KonnectAgain Success for BSc Government graduate
- Page 7** BSc Government students prominent in UCC'
- Page 8** Graduate Matt Ryan at the University of Southampton
- Page 9** A pictorial review of UACES 2014
- Page 10** A pictorial review of UACES 2014
- Page 11** Graduate Profile: Tara Higgins starts career in hedge-fund management
- Page 12** MBS Government Seminar – Decisions are made by those who show up



# EDITORIAL PAGE

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## IT'S WONDERFUL TO SEE BSc GOVERNMENT GRADUATES DOING SO WELL

Welcome to the 60<sup>th</sup> issue of *Government Times* which, as usual, gives a good indication of the activity in the Department of Government, amongst students and staff. It is especially pleasing in this issue for us to cover success stories of BSc Government graduates. Our cover story (which continues on pages 5 and 6) describes the entrepreneurial endeavours of Jayne Ronayne whose company KonnectAgain is thriving. On page 8 we catch up with Matt Ryan who is forging a career for himself in the world of academia at Southampton University while on page 11 you can read about 2014 graduate Tara Higgins who is starting her working life as a hedge-fund accountant. As we saw last week as well with Seán O'Leary and Peter O'Riordan there is no limit to your career horizons with a BSc Government!

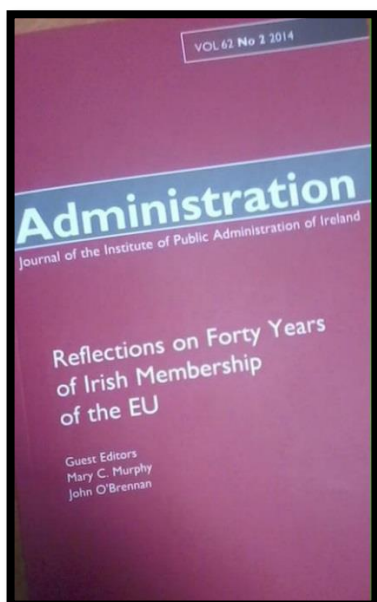
We also have lots of staff news and a pictorial report from the UACES 2014 Conference. We look forward too to a great MBS Government seminar on Friday with Art O'Leary.

Aodh Quinlivan (Staff), Caroline Hofman (BSc Government IV), and Lorna Murphy (BSc Government II), co-editors of *Government Times*, 2014/2015





## SPECIAL JOURNAL ISSUE EDITED BY DR. MARY MURPHY



Congratulations to Dr. Mary C. Murphy on the publication of the special issue of *Administration* entitled 'Reflections on Forty Years of Irish Membership of the EU.' Mary co-edited the special issue with Dr. John O'Brennan from Maynooth University.

## MORE PhD SUCCESS FOR DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT



Conrad Rein (above, centre) recently became the latest Department of Government doctoral student to successfully pass his Viva examination. Conrad's thesis is entitled 'The Emerging Strategic Partnership between the European Union and the African Union' and he was supervised by Dr Clodagh Harris and Dr Andrew Cottey. Congratulations to all concerned.



“Our mission is to tap into the power of the alumni.”

- Co-founder and CEO of KonnectAgain, Jayne Ronayne



Jayne Ronayne (on right) promoting *Dragon's Den* outside Cork City Hall with Gavin Duffy.

Jayne Ronayne graduated with a BSc Government degree in 2012 and she certainly has not been resting on her laurels since then! While an undergraduate student at the Department of Government, Jayne worked on the EY Entrepreneur of the Year programme before taking on the role of UCC's first female Auditor of the Entrepreneurial Society, Ireland's largest student society with more than 8,000 active members. Following graduation, Jayne joined the university's Ignite programme and started the successful UrYearBook company. Her second start-up company is KonnectAgain which she co-founded with Helen Flynn, also a UCC graduate. Jayne is the CEO of KonnectAgain and the mission of the company is to provide a new online platform to help both institutions and alumni. According to Jayne, 'KonnectAgain exposes the hidden value of your alumni base by providing your institution, club, alumni chapter or association with up-to-date, real-time and relevant statistics, contact and career information.' The company, which was the Silicon Republic start-up of the week in August, has already established a presence in Ireland, the UK and the US.

Jayne was recently accepted by the prestigious Sandbox community, which is a mobile society of the world's most extraordinary millennial game changers. She is also a co-founder of BuiltInCork, alongside Datahug co-founder Connor Murphy.

[STORY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE]



‘Universities need to take the time to identify with this new approach. We like to compare this situation to convincing someone from switching to an old Nokia phone to a brand new iPhone, it’s daunting at first, but soon after you make the decision to switch you’ll realise it’s the best decision you ever made.’

‘The Irish start-up scene is continuing to grow and thrive, with the community always available to lend a helping hand or share advice. The Irish start-up scene is an exceptional gathering of like-minded people that are always there if you need to call on them.’

Money will come to you if the product is good enough. You need to gain validation first and it is vital to assemble a good advisory board. In recent months, we’ve brought in Connor Murphy from Datahug as our chairman, as well as one of the top executives from Google, and Mark Roberts, the alumni director in Durham

We look forward to following the continued success of Jayne and KonnectAgain. For more information on the company, check out its web site at <https://www.konnectagain.com/#/home>.

The following YouTube clip of the company is also useful – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e99JWsJVgdM>

Additionally, you can keep up with the company’s developments on Twitter - @KonnectAgain.

Last week, KonnectAgain was shortlisted for the Tech Start-Up Company of the Year Award.

## Department of Government students prominent as clubs and societies take centre stage on campus



Department of Government students have a proud tradition of active involvement in clubs and societies in UCC and we are happy to say that the tradition continues! Last week saw clubs and societies take centre stage on campus during Fáilte Fest and our students were to the fore. On the top left you will see committee members of UCC Sinn Féin pictured with Councillors Stephen Cunningham (BSc Gov II), Lisa Marie Sheehy (BSc Gov III) and Jonathan O'Brien TD who spoke at the society's 'Youth in Politics' event. On the top right we have members of the Europa Society including James Sheehy, Michael McCarthy and Rebecca Pardy (all BSc Government III). In the picture on the middle left we again have the Europa Society's James Sheehy and Michael McCarthy joined by Alison O'Connell and Deirdre Clune MEP. Councillors Mary Desmond (who assisted with the BSc Government placement programme last year) and Nicholas O' Keefe helped out at UCC Fianna Fáil's stand (middle right) while BSc Government III student, Shannon Sweeney, did a sterling promotional job at the stand for the

# CATCHING UP WITH GRADUATES



BSc Government and Public Policy graduate, Matt Ryan, recently met Dr. Theresa Reidy at the annual conference of the American Political Science Association in Washington DC.

Since July 2014 Matt has been a Lecturer in Governance and Public Policy at the University of Southampton. He joined the PAIR staff in September 2012 and previously held roles as Senior Research assistant and Teaching Fellow. His teaching reflects his research interests, crossing the boundaries between political theory and comparative politics, with a strong focus on innovative research methods. Matt first came to Southampton in 2008 and began doctoral research as a School of Social Sciences PhD Fellow in 2009.

## Publications:

Ryan, M., Saunders, C., Rainsford, E. and Thompson, E. (2014) *Improving research methods teaching and learning in politics and international relations: a 'Reality Show' approach*. *Politics*, 34, (1), 85-97. (doi:10.1111/1467-9256.12020).

Ryan, M. and Smith, G. (2012) *Towards a comparative analysis of democratic innovations: lessons from a small-N fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis*. *Revista Internacional de Sociologia*, 70, (Extra 2), 89-120. (doi:10.3989/ris.2012.01.28).

## Ongoing Research:

Matt is the project collaborator with *Participedia.net*, an SSHRC funded partnership development project. *Participedia* is an innovative online collaboration initially developed by Archon Fung (Harvard) and Mark Warren (UBC) and now involving a range of universities and public engagement organisations around the world in an attempt to systematically collect data on participatory processes for researchers and practitioners alike.



# UACES 2014 IN PICTURES



Addresses by President of UCC, Dr. Michael Murphy, and former President of the European Parliament, Pat Cox.



The Aula Maxima was packed for the conference drinks reception.



Professor Charlie Jeffrey and Minister Dara Murphy speaking at the conference.

# UACES 2014 IN PICTURES



Best PhD and Best Book award winners;  
Professor Brigid Laffan received a Lifetime Achievement award.



There were some excellent panels and papers during the conference.

## Tara Higgins, BSc Government graduation class of 2014, explains why the BSc Government was a perfect fit for her



I am about to graduate from the Bsc Government course with a 2.1 degree. When people asked me why I chose the degree at dreaded CAO time over four years ago, my answer was always that I loved history- especially the history of Irish politics and I also loved writing. These, my guidance councillor told me, meant that the Bsc Government course would be perfect for me. Having completed the course now, I would tell people to do this course because it allows for great diversification and provides you with knowledge and skills which can be easily adapted and transferred to a wide variety of different industries. I am proof of this, having recently acquired a job (from my first interview) as a Hedge-fund Accountant with HedgeServ.

The Bsc Government degree provides a solid foundation in the three main subject areas - politics, business and law. The core modules ensure that students have a solid foundation on which they can build and are suitably equipped with all the necessary research skills. Like what happens with many students, when I was out of the Leaving Certificate bubble my interests began to change. What I like most about the degree is that it factors in that students will have different and changing interests. Interests grow as knowledge is consumed and digested. The Department of Government knows and facilitates this through allowing students (to some extent) forge their own path through the comprehensive and far-reaching subject choices they make available to all who study Bsc Government. When I was in first year I was choosing as many politics modules as I could but by fourth year, I was taking half business and marketing related modules and half politics because my interests shifted towards business. Another excellent feature of the Bsc Government degree, one which I certainly took advantage of was the opportunity to study languages. I elected to study German and Chinese but there is also the option to study French, Italian and Spanish at any level (absolute beginners to advanced). There are also economics and accounting options available.

One final great thing about the degree that I will mention is the Placement Programme in 3<sup>rd</sup> year. This work experience is invaluable and once again can be chosen by the student to match their own interests. For example, with my interest in business, I did my placement in an Insurance Loss Adjusters office and sat some of my CIP Professional exams while gaining experience in a busy office environment. The fact that students of the Bsc Government degree have worked in a professional environment for six months means that as Graduates we are already prepared for this and used to working a full business day. Having an impressive work experience record definitely stood to me in my interview for HedgeServ. Whether you know you want a career in Politics or are interested in Politics, Business and Law and want to get a good grounding in all three with the option of focusing your studies more so later then the Bsc Government degree is for you.

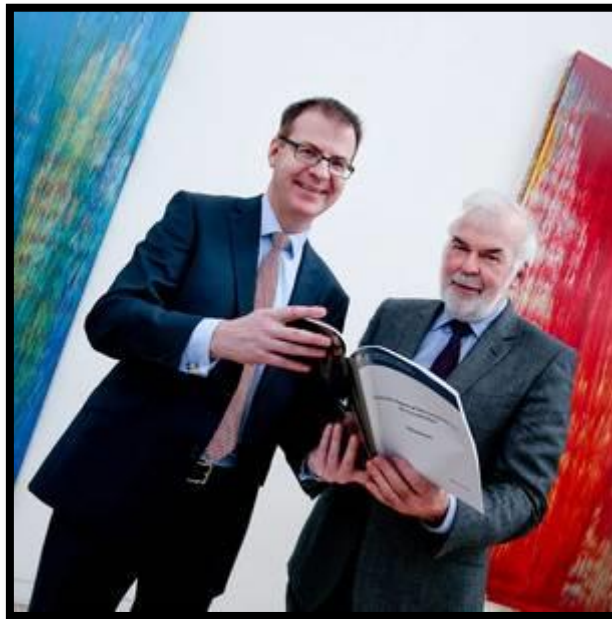


# 'Decisions are made by those who show up'

MBS Government seminar

by

Art O'Leary



Tom Arnold, chairman of the Convention on the Constitution, with convention secretary Art O'Leary at the launch of the report

Secretary General to President Michael D. Higgins and former secretary of the Irish Convention on the Constitution.

Friday 26 September, 1:30-3:00pm in ORB123.

**All Welcome**