



John Bruton launches Graduate Business Seminar Series

As part of this year's Graduate Seminar Series, former Taoiseach and EU Ambassador to the United States, John Bruton, addressed our Masters in Business students via a video conference link from his Washington DC office in the week before the second Lisbon referendum. He talked candidly about the EU's role in the world, Ireland's experience of and strategic position within the EU, and the Lisbon Treaty and took questions on everything from climate change, FDI in Ireland and Obama.



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.....from the Head of Graduate Business



This issue marks the third year of publication of the edge, and during that time much has changed within our economy, our business communities and for our graduates. In our School, we have responded to these challenges by providing more programmes, more places for students, and more engagement with industry, at the same time as managing a reduction in funding.

In this edition we report on a number of these initiatives where lecturers actively engage with organisations in the region and contribute in meaningful ways to their organizational activities and strategies. For example we feature a contribution from Ms Jennifer Hennessey, HR lecturer about her unique HR consultancy project from the MBS HRM Programme. The assignment involves students working with a local company on a consultancy project which is chosen by the client. The project in this case involved the students investigating the development of a diversity training program using Genzyme as a client company.

Graduate students also undertook a 'Dragons Den' assessment as part of their studies on business simulation where they presented their ideas to a live panel of lecturers and practitioners. Similarly 'live case' presentations were facilitated in their MBS entrepreneurship and innovation studies and all were required to again present to a live audience as part of their assessment. These types of experiential modules are becoming more central to how we manage learning and are shared throughout the School by the BETR research group.

Equally we update you on the success of the Graduate Seminar Series which again attracted a wide range of high profile speakers. Launched in September by the School of Business' new CEO in Residence, we have had a wide range of speakers from enterprise, government and not-for-profits. Our Executive MBA students had the opportunity to visit companies and colleges in Boston in early September. Lectures were facilitated by leading academics and practitioners to further develop commercial awareness and leadership skills of our group. Our thanks to professors at Babson College and Suffolk University and corporate partners like State Street who continue to support and contribute to our programme.

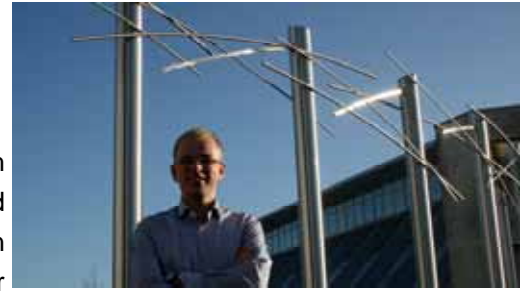
Last semester also saw the inaugural event from our Finance Research Group- a lecture by Professor William Forbes of Loughborough University visiting Waterford as part of his book tour to promote his new text on behavioural finance. After an inspiring lecture, the Finance Research Group made presentations to the best undergraduate and postgraduate research papers to be produced in the school.

Continuing with our tradition of having some of the most interesting national figures visit the school- the GBS hosted another wonderful ball in October with the George Lee as guest speaker. Congratulations to Martina Donnelly and all of the Graduate Business Society for organising a wonderful event. We were particularly heartened by the support we received from companies in the region during this difficult time.

As we commence our new semester, I wish you a prosperous and happy new year .

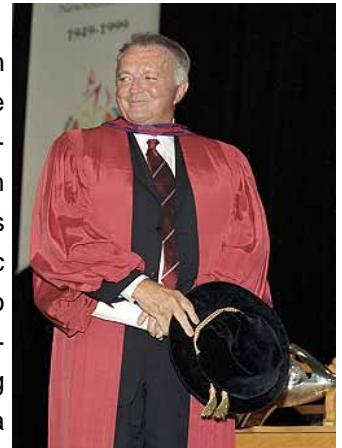
Business Education and Teaching Research (BETR) Group

Bookending the semester the Business Education and Teaching Research (BETR) group held two events, organised by Dr. Pio Fenton (pictured above). In early September the group hosted a talk by Dr Catherine Sutton Brady from the University of Sydney on teaching innovation and poster based assessment. In the final week of semester four WIT academics shared their experience and research on teaching innovation. Drawing on her doctoral work Judith Breen discussed criticality in management education highlighting the difference between critical content and critical teaching methods. On the back of the very successful completion of the first action learning cycle of the MBS in the Management of Change, Dr. Felicity Kelliher discussed the operational aspects of poster sessions. Corinne Power-O' Mahony reflected on the values and virtues of the college and community stream of the BBS flexible semester. Finally Collette Kirwan shared her insights of running simulation models of assessment from the auditing skills module on the Masters in Accounting.



Craig Dobbin Memorial Scholarship

Meaghan Ludlow, a MBA student at Memorial University of Newfoundland, has been awarded the inaugural Craig Dobbin Memorial Scholarship to undertake research on the effective use of branding in the fish trade, comparing the Irish and Newfoundland & Labrador experiences. The research is seen as especially relevant to the coastal communities in southeast Ireland as well as in her home province where it will interest both fish producers and consumers. Meaghan a full-time Memorial MBA student, just finished an academic exchange semester on WIT's MBS in Internationalisation. The scholarship designed to build on historic links between the southeast of Ireland and the Canadian province of Newfoundland & Labrador and named in honour of the late Canadian business leader Dr Craig Dobbin (pictured), who counted three Waterford Mayors amongst his ancestors. In 2010, a Waterford graduate will be supported on the Memorial MBA programme.



MBS HRM applied learning consulting project with Genzyme

WIT MBS HRM students had the opportunity to prepare a HR consultancy project that developed a diversity training course for Genzyme Ireland, presenting it to Patrick Doyle, HR Manager. Organised by Jennifer Hennessy, Lecturer in Human Resource Management, this unique learning experience allows students to apply the theoretical concepts from the classroom in a practical business context. In doing so, they get to experience the coalface of consulting-managing a client, interpreting a brief, preparing documents and presentations to commercial standards in a challenging but sympathetic environment.



In the Dragon's Den

On Wednesday 4th November the Masters in Business Studies students took part in a very exciting event at the Ramada Hotel. Their Business Simulation module uses a computer-centred business training tool, which offers the students a great opportunity to apply their theoretical learning. This experience allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge in many areas such as company management, cross-functional teams and environmental scanning in a real environment. The class is split into teams comprising of students from each stream of the MBS and their task is to set-up and run a company in a newly established micro-computer industry.

Each team competes for a venture capital fund of a maximum of €4 million per team. The teams are tasked with creating a growth strategy for their firm (based on their current performance in the simulation exercise) and to present their business plan to a Venture Capitalist panel. This 3-person panel consisted of Mai Walsh, Senior Manager with AIB in Waterford, Dr. Felicity Kelliher, Senior Lecturer in Management in WIT and the Business Simulation lecturer Jennifer Mullally.

GBS Christmas Social

On the 10th of December the Graduate Business Society held its annual Christmas Social and appropriate to the season Michael Connolly, founder of Animatazz as our guest speaker. He spoke about his journey from a fine arts degree, through multimedia and computer animation postgrad work to arriving on RTE's Dragon's Den. Having won an €80,000 investment from Gavin

Duffy, his toy produced by Hasbro Waterford is one of the hit products of this Christmas, having featured on the Late Late Toy Show.



The event was kindly sponsored by Hasbro.



Catherine Gannon (GBS), Michael Connolly (Animatazz) & Dr. Denis Harrington

Finance Research Group



The Finance Research Group recently held its inaugural event, which commenced with a guest lecture by the internationally renowned Professor William Forbes of Loughborough University who spoke with great passion about the newly emerging field of behavioural finance in a most interesting and entertaining format. His talk stimulated considerable debate and interest among the audience, which consisted of a large number of students and faculty. This was followed by the presentation of the best Finance paper awards to undergraduates and postgraduates, an initiative from the Finance Research group to recognise excellence based on the Research Papers at undergraduate level and on the dissertations written by the postgraduates.

New Opportunities in Tourism Fáilte Ireland Tourism Learning Network Conference

A total of 200 tourism businesses from across Ireland met in Athlone on 14th and 15th October to share business intelligence with a view to helping them to remain competitive, prepare for new opportunities and contribute to increased performance both within their own business and their region.

The two-day residential networking event is part the Fáilte Ireland Tourism Learning Networks which is designed and delivered by the Waterford Institute of Technology School of Business in the south east and south west. Now in its fourth year, a total of 554 businesses across both regions have participated to date.

Speaking prior to the event, Dr Denis Harrington, Head of Graduate Business stressed that the panel of guest speakers and presenters reflects the requirements identified by network participants. "This is definitely not an imposed programme. Rather, it reflects the interests and requirements brought forward by those who actively participate in their own region's tourism learning network'.

Anne-Marie Frampton who manages the Networks in the southeast and southwest said that "As well as the scheduled sessions, there was time set aside for more informal contacts and – to facilitate connections being made – we introduced a networking board through which companies could link with potential customers, collaborators and business partners. One of the clear trends in progressive and successful tourism and hospitality businesses in Ireland and overseas is a willingness to work together to achieve shared targets. This recognises that our first task is to attract more domestic and overseas visitors – the share-out of business can only follow from that starting point."

Expert guest speakers included John Brennan, Managing Director of the Park Hotel Kenmare and co-presenter of the 'At Your Service' television programme on RTÉ. Paul Easto from Wilderness Scotland an international award winning adventure tourism specialist, spoke about innovation and marketing in the outdoor adventure product. Carole Fitzgerald from the Scottish Seafood Trail focused on food events as a catalyst for bringing new visitors to regions, and food historian and writer Regina Sexton discussed the importance of maintaining the traditional Irish food offering within the visitor experience. Jane Magnier, MD, of Abbey Tours encouraged businesses to network together to offer unique heritage and culture experiences and supported the participants on ways to work with and gain from Ireland's leading tour operators. Brendan Dunford from the Burrenbeo Trust stressed the importance of working together to deliver a strong intangible heritage and culture/eco tourism theme.



7th GBS Ball

George Lee TD, former economics editor with RTE and newly elected Fine Gael representative of Dublin South, delivered the keynote address at the 2009 Graduate Business Society Ball. The high point of the GBS calendar, the ball brings together industry, alumni and the cream of WIT's graduates; to celebrate the achievements of students as they complete their studies. Mr Lee took the opportunity to revisit the causes of the economic crisis, drawing from an unpublished book that he was preparing to publish just as extend of the crisis was becoming widely known. In his interesting analysis of the current economic woes, he offered a bleak assessment of the public finances, highlighting the burden our national debt and deficits would have on graduating students. He took the opportunity to encourage them to stay in Ireland and to take their part in rebuilding the economy. He also reaffirmed the need to continue strategic investment in third level education even whilst making cuts in other areas of government expenditure.

Cllr. Cha O'Neill, representing the Waterford City Mayor, also said some kind words about the contribution WIT is making to rebuilding the city's economy. The event marked the handing over of the GBS presidency from Martina Donnelly to Catherine Gannon. A raffle in aid of the Solas cancer care centre was kindly supported by prizes from local businesses.



Dr Tom O'Toole, George Lee TD, Cllr. Cha O'Neill & Dr. Denis Harrington



David Power, Martina Donnelly, Josephine Matthews, Catherine Keating, Tara Sherlock and Philip



Dr Pat Lynch and Dr Fiona Murphy.



Paul Morrissey, Bernie McKeown, Joan McDonald,



Richard Hurley, Amanda Walsh, Stephen Hooper & Niall Skedd



The MBA International Study Trip to Boston took place in September, and again this exciting week of talks, lectures and company visits was kindly hosted by Prof. Neil Hunt of Suffolk University, and facilitated by our friends at Babson College, Boston College and State Street Bank, amongst others. Everything from International cyber crime, managing government cutbacks, supply chain management, futures studies, leadership and governance were on the agenda in three days of lectures. Following that intensive series of keynote lectures from the faculty at Suffolk and Babson, the class were warmly received at the Massachusetts State House by Senator Tom Kennedy. As a surprise for the student group, the Senator kindly organised for the group to attend a Boston Red Sox game.

The final days were spent on company visits- taking in talks from State Street, the Gentle Giant Co., and the Federal Reserve Bank. The study trip is an important element of the executive MBA- giving these busy students real time to get to know one another, whilst also taking part in a challenging series of lectures and workshops from some of the finest professor's Boston has to offer.



Prof. Liam Fahey (Babson), Dr. Denis Harrington,, Prof. James Post (Boston University) and Tom Egan



MBA class with Senator Tom Kennedy of Massachusetts State House, Prof. Neil Hunt (Suffolk)



Members of the EMBA 2009 class at State Street bank; with Dr. Denis Harrington & Tom Egan .



Tom Egan, Chris Probyn, State Street and Dr. Denis Harrington

Notes from the GB Seminar Series

The price of a litre of milk; the pros and cons of paying convicted killers for interviews in our tabloid newspapers; abuse of human rights across the globe as well as in Ireland; the intricacies of the Lisbon Treaty and Ireland's relationship with the European and global economies: all have been the subject of informed debate and analysis during this semester's Graduate Business Seminar Series. The Series, which provides a platform for expert, external speakers to engage with our more than one hundred Masters in Business students, has again proven popular, provocative and informative.

The Series was launched in September by the School of Business' new CEO in Residence, venture capitalist and entrepreneur Mr Pierce Casey, who emphasised the place of ethics and responsibility among the business community, linking the academic pursuits of the students to their likely career paths in the current economic climate.

Successive presentations from the MD of the Irish Star, Mr Paul Cooke, and former WIT graduate and HR executive, Annabelle Kehoe, were similarly warmly welcomed by the students.

The strength and profile of the speakers was emphasised again by the most recent contributors: Mr Colm O'Gorman, Executive Director of Amnesty International and founder of the One in Four organisation, and Mr Padraig Walshe, President of the Irish Farmers' Association. Mr O'Gorman spoke inspiringly of his own personal journey as well as the plight of so many who still suffer various strands of abuse in our global society. Mr Walshe was particularly timely in addressing the economic and social importance of Ireland's most successful indigenous industry and the difficulties farmers face in the current climate.

The Series concluded in early December and also acts as a preparatory programme for the students who embark on an intensive International Study Tour to Brussels in February, to meet with a variety of Irish and European interest groups and politicians, visit the European Commission and Parliament as well as partaking in seminars at the Irish College and Katholieke Univeristy, both in Louvain.

The Series is coordinated by Dr Sheila O'Donohue and Mr Gerard Arthurs.



RESEARCH JOURNEYS

Dr Jamie Power
Post-Doctoral Researcher
RIKON



I have had a brisk rise through the ranks, having started in BBS in 2001, to being recently appointed as a post-doctoral researcher in the RIKON centre (Research in: Innovation, Knowledge Transfer & Organisational Networks). Taking the Irish business landscape as a laboratory, at RIKON we carry out pioneering research and consultancy into small business innovation and knowledge management. We help SMEs to compete against larger rivals by helping them to build collaborative networks and access R&D in fourth level education.

I surprised myself with a first class honours degree from WIT's BBS programme in 2005 having taken the HRM stream. While doing the degree I worked for Waterford Crystal and did my undergrad thesis on absenteeism in SMEs. It was a natural extension to take a research masters, which I quickly converted into a PhD under Dr. Brigid Milner at WIT and Professor Thomas Garavan. I wrapped up my work on the strategic aspects of devolving HRM to line managers last year and hope to get my hat this month. Along the way I was fortunate to pick up the WIT Advanced Scholar Award and a prestigious IRCHSS Scholarship.

At RIKON I am working on putting together an innovation lab, a place where researchers, students and companies can come together to build and improve products. We are thinking about making available, in one place- rapid prototyping technologies, 3D visualisation, reverse engineering, mixed with marketing and consumer behavior research capabilities, all of which will allow quick realisation of products, services, customer experiences and ideas from concept through prototype and market testing. Often small companies do not have the budgets, space or time to undertake this type of R&D on their own; many do not know even where to start. So by putting together these resources we can offer them a chance to compete through innovation. For the Institute it gives us and our students an amazing opportunity to access a live learning lab-dealing with real companies, consumers and markets. We are the very early stages of working out what the innovation lab should look like, but it is not really a new departure for the RIKON group, it is a really natural extension of what we are doing with companies. The lab will allow us to capture that activity and bring more students and researchers in WIT into the process.

New Programmes for 2010

Two new programmes have worked their way through the rigorous validation process at WIT and should be launched in the coming months. The Doctorate in Business Administration, the DBA, led by Dr. Felicity Kelliher underwent the CE2 approval procedure in June and the MSc in Business, Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship, the mBITE programme led by Dr. Ray Griffin was validated this November.

The DBA is a professional doctoral award at level 10 and is equivalent to a PhD. As a distinctive, research-issue driven programme orientated towards senior executives in managerial roles, it combines workplace and professional engagement with the scholarly rigour of the academic institution. This qualification is increasingly recognised by international business and management schools as the most appropriate post-MBA (or equivalent Master degree) route to combining academic research on management and business with further personal and professional development.

The mBITE is a one-year full-time postgraduate programme dedicated to transforming Science, Engineering, Social Science and Technology graduates into leaders who will guide and create tomorrow's businesses. It aims to achieve this through providing participants with the acumen and knowledge to successfully move ideas and innovations into commercial practice. In doing so, it addresses Ireland's need to maintain competitiveness by cultivating cross-functional, entrepreneurial graduates. This course draws on the unique capability and reputation of the Waterford Institute of Technology, which was founded on enterprise, skills, science and technology.



EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

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Waterford Institute of Technology

WHAT'S ON OFFER:

- DBA
- PhD & Research Masters
- Executive MBA
- Executive MBS: Management of Change
- Executive MBS: Branding & Corporate Reputation
- Graduate Diploma: Enterprise Development
- Higher Diploma in Management