

# University Graduate College



University Graduate College Newsletter

2012/Issue 1

## Review of 2011

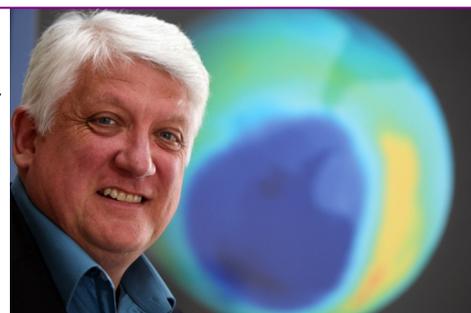
Connections group.

“*One year ago*, the University Graduate College was formally launched as a new organisation to enhance further the experience of postgraduate researchers at Cardiff University. This newsletter provides an overview of how we have been working over the past year – ranging from the report of the skills programme and the annual report of the Graduate Centre to the most recent awards for postgraduate-led initiative projects.

Throughout the transition period, much effort has been invested in developing governance structures to ensure active involvement and appropriate input into the planning, decision-making, and evaluation of our work. We are delighted that the Directors of PGR Studies have been actively engaging in our four Programme teams, each of which has a responsibility for oversight of a specific aspect of the experience, but even more pleased that postgraduate researchers themselves have become involved. Not only are PGRs members of the University Graduate College governance structure, there is also a new forum for School PGR representatives to meet regularly – a biannual meeting and an online

Looking ahead, we will be further refining our web pages and communications systems, with the assistance of our new Communications Project Officer, with the aim of ensuring that students and supervisors get the specific information they want via their preferred channels. We are also increasing our emphasis on career development activities – both to raise awareness of options and to ensure that researchers are able to articulate the transferable ‘employability’ skills gained as a result of their research degree programme.

During this year, we are also moving ahead, working with Registry & Academic Services, on the alignment of PGR quality monitoring in line with the University’s ‘Proving Excellence Model’. Furthermore, we are developing IT tools for progress monitoring which will facilitate the process for student and supervisor, as well as enable the Schools to have a comprehensive overview of their current cohort. Work continues on considering the facilities (both local and Institutional, both virtual and physical) available to doctoral researchers within the University, with a view towards developing a baseline. The pilot project to enable



PGRs to achieve Higher Education Academy recognition is also well underway.

The overall objective of the University Graduate College is to contribute to the development of a world class and collegiate research culture which postgraduate researchers and their supervisors both feel part of and, in turn, play an active part in. Through the activities of the University Graduate College, and especially the operation of its four Programme Teams, we are committed to achieving this.

We hope you feel able to contribute your ideas to its further development this year, through the various communication mechanisms, meetings, and events we have now put in place.”

**Professor Terry Marsden - Dean of the University Graduate College**

### *Programme Team Meetings*

**Assuring Quality:** 13th February  
**Training and Development:** 23rd February

**Building Capacities:** 22nd February  
**Facilities:** 13th March

[www.cardiff.ac.uk/ugc](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/ugc)  
[www.twitter.com/cardiffugc](http://www.twitter.com/cardiffugc)



## Welsh Medium Provision

*The University Graduate College* aims to be responsive to the needs of Cardiff University's postgraduate research students, including our Welsh speaking PGRs.

Having identified the need for additional skills development provided through the medium of Welsh, we are pleased to confirm that the following Welsh medium sessions will be included in the 2011-12 programme:



- **Cyrchu a Deall Archifau Cymru a'r DU**  
- Accessing Archives Wales and UK
- **Chwilio'r We a Chronfeydd Data Llyfryddol (y Dyniaethau)**  
- Web Searching and Bibliographical Databases (Humanities)
- **Catalogau Llyfrgell, Cyfnodolion Electronig, Traethodau Hir a Thraethodau Ymchwil (y Dyniaethau)**  
- Library Catalogues, Electronic Journals, Dissertations, and Theses (Humanities)

## Meet Your Reps

*Who is Representing You?* At the University Graduate College, we are dedicated to ensuring postgraduates are represented at all levels of our decision-making structure. Here, our UGC Board Reps tell us what the role means to them. Rachel and Sam are always happy to receive feedback on the UGC activities, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with them via their email addresses below.

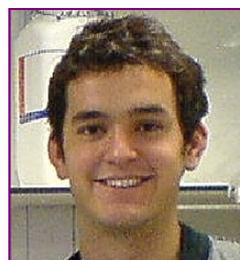


**Rachel Cahill-O'Callaghan**  
2nd Year PhD student in Law

"As a student representative of the

UGC Board, I have been afforded the opportunity to make a real difference to the postgraduate research experience. Sam and I join forces to highlight the key issues for the postgraduate student, including facilities, opportunities and work environment. We have frank and open discussions on the Board about issues that matter to us as students, and we liaise with the other student representatives prior to Board meetings to identify the issues we, as students, want to raise. I would encourage you to contact your representative if you have any issues or concerns you want addressed. We are always happy to bring them to the Board's attention."

[Cahill-OcallaghanRJ@cf.ac.uk](mailto:Cahill-OcallaghanRJ@cf.ac.uk)



**Sam Durley**  
3rd Year PhD student in Bioscience

"My main objective when sitting on the UGC Board is to give the staff members a real feel for

what it is like to be a postgraduate research student, whether it's the space you have to work in, or the relationship you have with your supervisor. I am very open and honest with feedback to the Board, which I gather from as many people as I can, especially from the PGR Student Rep meetings that we now run twice a year. The UGC has a crucial role in determining University-wide standards for every postgraduate, so I feel it is very important that they are fully aware of the real experiences that we all have. With the other Board members, I hope we can carry on working together to ensure that every Cardiff University postgraduate student has the same quality experience, whatever they study."

[DurleySC@cf.ac.uk](mailto:DurleySC@cf.ac.uk)

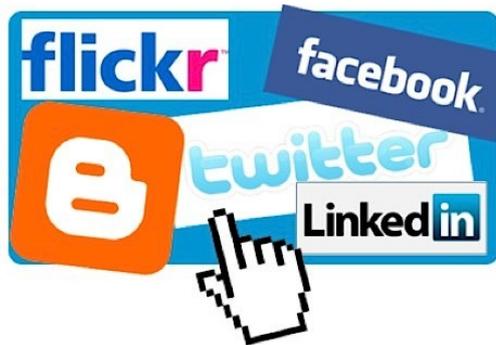
## Get Connected

### How Social Media can work for you

Whether you are an avid fan, a reluctant user or a staunch avoider, social media is a growing area, and one which can be utilised to a researcher's advantage. Social media takes many forms, and the following are just a few of the networks which can prove useful in a research environment.

**Twitter.** Increasingly popular, Twitter allows researchers to 'follow' one another, and keep updated with what is going on within their chosen networks. Using the 'search' function, a Twitter user can search for a word or phrase (for instance a specific research interest) and find out who is saying what about it, at any given time.

**LinkedIn.** LinkedIn offers researchers the chance to build a professional profile which details their key interests, qualifications and skills. This is helpful in creating a professional online identity.



**Lotus Connections.** This bespoke software was created specifically for use by Cardiff University staff and students. Researchers can build their own profiles, and use 'tags' to find other students with similar research interests. The

Communities function can be used to invite others to join a private or open group, within which members can share discussion and ideas. Unlike most social networks, there is a section for sharing and downloading important documents. Another of Connections' key benefits is that this version is available only to Cardiff University staff and students. This makes it easy to separate your research interests from your personal social networks, and securely share content with as many or as few people within the network as you choose.

*Want to be* the first to find out about the latest news, events and training & development opportunities for PGRs? Follow us on Twitter to receive realtime updates and announcements on the things that matter to **you**.

[www.twitter.com/cardiffugc](http://www.twitter.com/cardiffugc)  
@cardiffugc

## Graduate Centre

### Summary of findings from the annual Graduate Centre Report

The Academic year of 2010/11 saw an extremely successful programme of events and activities at the Graduate Centre. New postgraduates were welcomed with a fortnight of events which proved incredibly popular. Over 500 attended the Vice Chancellor's Welcome Address, with around 300 at the first Meet and Mingle event and over 200 at the first quiz night. The Pub Crawl was also well attended, with 120 students joining in the fun.

Other popular events throughout the year have included twice weekly film nights, Mulled Wine and Mince Pies, a Summer BBQ, and a Charity Book Sale, with proceeds going to Book Aid International. The Centre organised 18 coach trips during the year, to destinations such as Oxford and Stonehenge. These were attended by 1,399 students, making this one of our busiest year ever.

The Graduate Centre also hosted a series of career



management skills workshops for masters students, with 206 students attending in 2010/11; a pleasing increase from 124 in 2009/10.

We refurbished our space in summer 2010, resulting in three more meeting rooms for students, which were immediately occupied, increasing our usage by 133%.

We look forward to an equally successful programme of activities, events and development at the Graduate Centre in 2012.

## Library Services

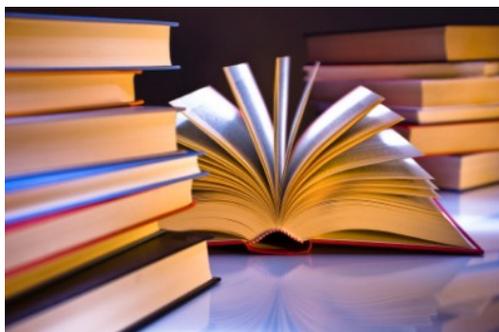
### Are you getting the most from your library?

Most, if not all, students at Cardiff University will have visited one or more of the 15 libraries available to them, but are they making the most of all the services on offer?

The Cardiff University Libraries offer a wide range of services and support, including subject librarians who are available for every School and provide specialist subject support. These librarians offer advice on a range of topics such as finding information in literature databases, financial databases and statistical sources.

Subject librarians also provide

advice on EndNote, keeping up to date with research in your subject and bibliometrics e.g. Journal impact factors, and tracing citations.



Another invaluable resource for researchers is the Special Collections and Archives (SCOLAR), which gives convenient access to archive material and rare books.

There is a wide variety of material available through SCOLAR, and the acquisition of Cardiff Council's rare book collection in 2010 expanded the collection, adding 14,000 books ranging from 15th century incunabula to 20th century fine press. In addition to print resources, there is a strong digital collection.

A list of subject librarians by subject is available at:

<http://cardiff.ac.uk/insrv/libraries/contacts/subjectlibrarians.html>

For further details, please visit:

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/insrv/libraries/scolar>

### The University Graduate College Programme

(previously known as the RSSDP) offers postgraduate research students the opportunity to develop the skills they need to complete their research degree on time, and to enhance their employability. We pride ourselves on delivering a Programme which is responsive to student needs, and each year the Programme is reviewed in order to allow for continuous improvement.



The most recent Programme Report has showed that, in the period September 2010 to August 2011, the University Graduate College offered **208 different**

## Programme Report

**workshop topics, over 376 sessions.** This compares with 195 topics and 385 sessions in 2009-10.

**6,971 workshop bookings** were received altogether, with 4,479 of these students attending. The most popular workshops were in the areas of IT Skills and Personal Effectiveness.

The latest Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) indicates that **76% agree or strongly agree that there are adequate opportunities to develop their research skills** and **72% agree or strongly agree that there are adequate opportunities to develop their transferable skills.** Both of these are increases from the previous administration of PRES in 2008.

We are very pleased with the development of the Programme this year, and look forward to seeing even more improvements in future.

USE YOUR SMARTPHONE TO SCAN THIS CODE AND IT WILL TAKE YOU STRAIGHT TO OUR WEBPAGES



[www.cardiff.ac.uk/ugc](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/ugc)

## Careers Outside Academia

**Doctoral research training** provides an excellent foundation for a wide variety of occupations both within and outside of academia. Several events are organised by the University Graduate College each year to give postgraduate researchers insight into some of the options available.

The Exploring Career Options Beyond Academia events include guest speakers from a range of employers, both public and private, who are invited to talk about their own career journeys and careers within their areas.

More often than not, they are PhD graduates themselves and can speak first-hand from their experience of moving outside academia. The opportunity to speak directly with the speakers is highly valued by the researchers who attend, and provides reassurance about the transferability of skills.

At the University Graduate College, we are also developing a second stream of events and talks on work outside academia in light of the popularity of the talk on 'Working for NGOs' that was given by Dr Jane Cocking, Humanitarian Director of Oxfam, in 2010.

The Careers in Focus series will focus on particular professional sectors, for example media, publishing, or government, and PGR representatives have been consulted to help decide on the areas of focus for this year.

The event is likely to take place after Easter, and it is hoped that from 2012-13, there will be a couple of such events each year.

For our full Programme of careers events, please visit:

<http://cardiff.ac.uk/ugcp> and select 'Careers Events'.

**The University Graduate College Programme** offers a wide variety of workshops and courses in research skills and techniques, as well as broader areas of research management and professional development.

For the full schedule, please visit: <http://cardiff.ac.uk/ugcp>

A selection of upcoming events from the University Graduate College Programme and beyond can be found below. Please note that advance bookings must be made for all events.

## Upcoming Events

### FEBRUARY

**Dr... Who?**  
20th @ 10:00 - 13:00

**The Enterprising Researcher**  
21st @ 10:00-17:00

**Academic Jobs in the EU**  
24th @ 14:00-16:00

**Vitae SWW Hub Annual Good Practice Conference (for research supervisors and support staff)**  
29th @ 10.00-16.00  
[www.vitae.ac.uk/swwhubgp2012](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/swwhubgp2012)

### MARCH

**Organising a Conference**  
5th @ 10:00-13:00

**I Love Science—A Guide to Engaging the Public with your Science**  
7th @ 14:00-15:30

**Exploring Career Options Beyond Academia (Biological & Health Sciences)**  
8th @ 13:30-17:00

**Developing an Academic Career in the Humanities/Social Sciences**  
14th @ 09:30-12:30

**TV Documentary Making and Knowledge Transfer**  
21st @ 13:30-16:30

**Voice of Humanities: Interdisciplinary Conference**  
22nd @ 09:00-17:00

**Spotlight on Social Sciences: Interdisciplinary Conference**  
30th @ 09:00-17:00

### APRIL

**Vitae Workshop: reSEARCH careers: ideas, information, inspiration**  
18th @ 10:00-16:00

## PGR Initiatives

### Funding Initiatives For PGR Students

Twice annually, the University Graduate College invites postgraduate research students to submit applications for PGR initiative funding.

This funding is a great opportunity for researchers from different disciplines to come together to discuss shared research interests, and helps students to develop transferable skills by giving them an opportunity to work collaboratively to organise events.



We are pleased to announce that successful applicants from the most recent funding round are as follows:

Applicants	Project Title
Jennifer Lyttleton-Smith (SOCSI), Helen Sivey (ENCAP)	Young Sexualities: An Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Conference
Christopher Higgins (SOCSI), Robert Crich (EUROS)	Inter-disciplinary Workshops & Conference
Ludivine Breger (PHRMY), Ellen Murphy (BIOSI)	Creation of an interdisciplinary network for pg students doing research on, or related to, movement disorders (such as Parkinson's Disease)
Francesca Dickson (EUROS), Lindsay Powell-Jones (EUROS)	'Integrate' Conference
Geraint Whittaker (WELSH), Mustafa Hameed (SHARE)	Multiculturalism in Practice: Understanding the Lived Experience in Wales (forum)
Heather Crowley (SHARE), Mark Truesdale (ENCAP)	Postgraduate Symposium: Medieval Identities

The University Graduate College has also been able to support an additional three projects, which foster skills related to enterprise via a special EPSRC fund:

Applicants	Project Title
Rebecca Hemming (SOHCS), Daniel Watling (ENGIN)	Clinical Outcomes & Development in Imaging Techniques for the Biomechanical Assessment of Patients with Osteoarthritis (a one-day networking meeting)
Virginia Marques (CARBS), Daniel Evers (CARBS)	Understanding Complex Systems: A one day conference bridging the gap between Engineering & Business Systems Research
Jana Witt (MEDIC), John McCrory (ENGIN)	Dare to Share: Public Engagement in Science (2 one-day workshops)

The application submission deadline for the second round of 2012 funding is: **5pm, Friday 8th June 2012**

For further information, please contact Dr Afia Ahmed in the University Graduate College:

**UGC@cf.ac.uk, 029 2087 9408**

*We hope you have enjoyed this issue of the University Graduate College Newsletter. If you have any feedback or queries, please contact **Jadine Wringe** at:*

**WringeJ@cf.ac.uk** or **www.twitter.com/cardiffugc**