Programme Specification

Programme award and title: MSc in Revolution and Counter-Revolution

SCQF Level: 11  SCQF Credit Value: 180

Educational aims of the programme:
Concise (e.g. a few sentences), general statement of aims and broad purposes of the programme

- The aim of the programme is to offer students an opportunity to study revolution and counter-revolution in a variety of geographical areas and historical periods, in order for them to develop a deeper understanding of revolution and counter-revolution as transformative processes. This is a new programme, drawing on the research and teaching expertise of a number of history staff, and it will also include an important contribution from colleagues in the Department of Politics.

Intended programme learning outcomes:
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) of what the student will know, understand and be able to do as a result of their learning, expressed in the categories below. Please consider the contribution made to the student’s personal development planning (PDP) and future employability.

Knowledge and understanding

- The students will gain a broad understanding of the processes of revolution and counter-revolution in history. The two modules will cover the nature, historiography and ideology of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary processes as well as a comparative survey of individual revolutionary events over a wide geographical and chronological spectrum, from the early medieval period to the 21st century, covering major revolutionary events from the crusades to post-communist Europe. The optional modules will allow the students to study two areas in greater depth, and the dissertation will offer the opportunity for more independent research on a topic of their choice.

Subject-specific skills and other attributes

- The programme will enable the students to develop their historiographical skills at an appropriate level for postgraduate study. They will be able to discuss the ideology and politics of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary process in greater depth than at undergraduate level, and will be required to participate actively in seminars as well as writing essays, reflective reviews and dissertation proposals of an appropriate standard. They will be required to assess the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary processes in a number of time periods and geographical areas, and to account for change over time and for cultural and geographical differences. The course will develop the students’ skills in comparative historical studies as well as their ability to write at length on a specific topic and place it in the ideological and historiographical context. They should then be well equipped to progress to more independent, higher-level study.

Generic skills (e.g. information skills, communication skills, critical, analytical and problem solving abilities) and other attributes

- In addition to the subject-specific skills outlined above, the students will develop communication skills in terms of seminar presentations, participation in discussions and presentation of written work. They will be required to think comparatively and analytically and to present reasoned, concise argument. All of these will enhance generic skills and assist the students to progress, either to higher academic study or into a variety of careers which require such skills.

Learning, teaching and assessment strategies:
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) on overall approach taken to develop and assess learning outcomes, including any distinctive features

- As this is a taught course, the main teaching method will be weekly seminars, which will require
considerable input from the students. They will be expected to read more widely and to contribute
to discussion at a deeper level than in undergraduate programmes. Seminars will be run in a variety of
ways, thus broadening the students’ academic experience. Personal development will come from
an increasing ability to discuss abstract concepts and their application to the historical situation.
There will be sufficient breadth and depth in the curriculum [in terms of core and optional modules
and the level of study] to fulfil the requirements of a Master’s degree – the students will cover a
range of concepts in depth, and also a range of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary processes in
history.

- Assessment for the first core module on concepts and historiography will comprise a 4000-word
essay on an abstract, historiographical topic (60%), and an extended comparative book review (2-
3000 words) which examines two or more relevant texts (40%). These will help the students to
enhance their ability to read critically and comparatively and to analyse at an appropriate level.
Assessment in the second core module, dealing comparatively with specific revolutionary
processes, will comprise a 4000-word essay on one or more of these specific case studies (60%),
together with an assessed proposal (2-3000 words) for the dissertation to be undertaken during the
summer (40%). These will contribute towards the outcome of preparation for independent research as
well as assessment of the debates surrounding specific historical events and periods. The
optional modules will be assessed by a 4000-word essay (70%) and a reflective report on a seminar
presentation (30%). This report will assist the students to achieve the outcomes of enhanced
communication skills and the ability to reflect dispassionately, critically and constructively on their
presentations and subsequent seminar discussions. It was felt that the use of comparative book
reviews, reflective seminar reports and assessed dissertation proposals would offer both a variety of
assessment methods and assist in developing subject-specific and transferable skills.

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