

Institution:	GOLDSMITHS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
Unit of Assessment:	21 - Politics and International Studies
a. Context	

The Politics Department at Goldsmiths is creative, interdisciplinary, and iconoclastic, yet it is also firmly committed to reaching out to real people outside of the 'ivory tower'. This goal is accomplished by directly engaging with non-academic audiences, including artists, charities, non-governmental organisations, governmental actors, trade unions, the media, and think tanks. We focus both on directly working and interacting with these groups and on disseminating our work to such users to help them in their quotidian activities. Thus:

- Dragovic-Soso has not only regularly contributed to media reports on current events in the post-Yugoslav republics, but has also contributed to work seeking the establishment of a regional truth commission, which will endeavour to investigate war crimes and other serious human rights violations committed between 1991 and 2001, an initiative supported by over 100 NGOs from all of the successor republics to Yugoslavia now being considered by all the governments of the post-Yugoslav states.
- Gruffydd Jones works with local communities in Ghana and Mozambique to explore the impact of changing urban planning politics on land use, the changing fortunes of public spaces and real estate prices.
- Menz participated in a pan-European FP7-funded research project on Trade Unions and Immigrants during Times of Economic Crisis. The project partners conducted interviews with migrant workers and trade union officials at all levels in six European countries and explored the possibilities and limits of trade union activities in helping immigrants integrate and deal with particular challenges of relevance to them. The report was presented to stakeholders from migrant self-help organisations and trade union representatives from all six countries involved in Barcelona in May 2012. Under the auspices of his Jean Monnet Chair from the European Commission (2011-14), Menz invited visiting lecturers from humanitarian and migrant NGOs and the UK Home Office to Goldsmiths to interact with students from his third year undergraduate migration module as well as members of the local community.
- Levy is a regular commentator on national television on current affairs, as well as more specialised subjects, such as Italian politics. James Martin similarly engages with the media, and Newman has been interviewed extensively in the Brazilian media about social movements in that country.
- David Martin and Reardon have worked with local community activists, small non-governmental organisations, and artists in New Cross, the vibrant, but deprived part of South London the college is located in. They have secured funding from the Open Society Initiative for their work.
- Pusca worked with Roma NGOs in Romania and Hungary, securing EU funding for this endeavour in helping these groups enfranchise and participate more fully in local politics.

Finally, there are our two impact case studies, which we would like to present in more detail. Bernadette Buckley's research and teaching inspired one of her MA Arts and Politics students to establish a fund that will financially support and recognize through a prize projects that demonstrate how art can play a central role in stimulating debate about and transforming our understanding of war, violent conflict and social upheaval. Simon Griffiths is not only a long-standing commentator on British politics, both in the quality UK press (The Times, The Guardian, FT) and in frequent demand by foreign media. He is also a frequent collaborator with a number of London think tanks, especially the Social Market Foundation. His research critically explores the issue-area of public service reform, as well as probing the ideological currents that underlie various proposals for reshaping the agenda of public service delivery.

b. Approach to impact

We view the relationship between research, policy and practice as one of synergy, rather than contradiction or a matter of three discreet spheres. We have gone to considerable lengths to identify and interact with key stakeholders for whom our specialist expertise has particular relevance. We do not work in insulation or isolation, but firmly believe in disseminating our work widely, including notably amongst non-academic audiences. The examples elaborated above speak to the outreach and impact activities that our academic staff engage in. Whether locally in New Cross or in far-flung communities in Ghana, whether interacting with senior policy advisors in Westminster or Romanian Roma activists, our staff ensure that their critical reflection and analysis feeds into policy-making processes worldwide.

Research is conducted to meet high ethical standards. We take as a given that user groups are regularly consulted throughout the research process. Similarly, we ensure that the dissemination process is carried out so as to maximise user involvement.

The Politics Department is fortunate to be able to draw on the numerous resources the College has at its disposal to help raise the impact, notably in the form of media training workshops; the Communications & PR department aiding in the interaction with media and online comment and social media.

c. Strategy and plans

It seems likely that the emphasis on impact will continue to influence future rounds of research assessment exercises, yet in some ways this will require no paradigmatic shift for us, as the Department has a long-standing legacy of policy-relevant, engaged, and engaging research that was already present as early as the 1970s. We shall continue our trajectory of producing and delivering on user-oriented research with direct policy implications, without neglecting or marginalizing either our philosophical approach, detailed elsewhere, or indeed more theoretically oriented research enterprises. Staff members are already very proactive in disseminating their research, interacting with user groups, and tapping into local and national communities of relevance to their work within and outside the UK.

Much of the work carried out in the Politics Department is highly policy-relevant and timely. Our research centres attract leading speakers from within academe and beyond, in future we will more proactively return to our past legacy of reaching out to leading practitioners and community activists. All three existing centres along with the new Centre for Political Economy will elaborate subject-specific impact strategies and work towards them. The two new appointments made with effect of this autumn will further enhance our position in the field of political economy. Montgomerie's work on the politics of personal finance and debt, and Ivanova's on banking and credit, for example, could not be more timely and topical.

In future, we will incorporate the emphasis on impact more centrally into our own departmental research culture. This will be accomplished not only by incorporating "impact" as a relevant matter for the Performance Development Review, but also by encouraging staff to take this criterion into account from inception stage in future research endeavours. The department has a helpful virtual repository for sharing past and current grant applications, which we hope to use as a basis for a new regular departmental research seminar that will serve as a platform for launching future impact-oriented grant applications. One of the sessions that forms part of the Departmental Away Day in November 2013 will focus on raising the department's research profile, increasing the impact our work can achieve, and more proactively identifying and approaching user groups, as well as exploring new strategies for disseminating our research results. Members of the college's Research Office and the Communications and PR department will assist us in this.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our case studies are based on Bernadette Buckley's pivotal involvement in the genesis of the Artraker Fund through her inspirational research-led teaching and Simon Griffiths' influential work on public service reform. Both serve as examples of the impact strategy the department is currently pursuing: both address current and topical political issue-areas, focus on cutting-edge themes, and demonstrate how academic research can inspire, illuminate and ultimately bring about real-life political and social change. In this way, though distinct in their methodology and focus, these cases showcase the philosophical guiding principles of Goldsmiths Politics department: undertaking timely, challenging, even cutting-edge, but never merely sensationalist research that has real and tangible effect. Thus:

- Bernadette Buckley was appointed to build and strengthen the Arts and Politics node in the department, and her research work has directly infused her teaching. Her MA Art and Politics, a truly novel, even iconoclastic degree unique in the United Kingdom and beyond, is profoundly informed by and draws on her decade-long interest in exploring the role of art in elucidating and questioning political violence, terrorism, and war. Previously Head of Research and Education at John Hansard Gallery in Southampton, she has long worked on questions related to the function and role of art and artists in an era of terrorism and war. Her inspirational teaching inculcated an interest in this nexus within her students that eventually led to the creation of the Artraker Fund, a unique funding opportunity for artists from the Global South interested in probing the meaning and the background of politically motivated violence, but also expressing ways of addressing – if perhaps not solving – the underlying tensions.

The Artraker Fund's first annual prize, awarded in September 2013, drew entries from an array of countries as diverse as Pakistan, Congo and the Palestinian Territories. Buckley's teaching has also had a direct and tangible impact on the artistic work carried out by Manali Jagtap-Nyheim, the alumnus and creative brain behind the Artraker Fund. The fund's purpose is defined as follows: to *"help shape and inspire through the medium of art how people and organisations understand, engage, and respond to conflicts, and to become the recognised home for powerful conflict art and artists"*.

- Simon Griffiths' work on public service reform has been inspired by his research interest in the re-invented form of Social Democracy in the UK and the post-Thatcherite neoliberal legacy. He has long straddled the divide between academia and the London think-tank world, escaping the confines both of the so-called Westminster Village and any tendency towards ivory tower-style navel-gazing. As in the case of Buckley, Griffiths' research infused his teaching on issues of political economy and post-Thatcher British politics, but it also informs writing deliberately targeted at the policy-making community in Whitehall and Westminster. His policy reports attracted significant media coverage in all cases, attracting interest from senior policy advisors of both the major parties and ministers. Griffiths was subsequently invited to give evidence to a House of Lords committee based on his reports. His work has had tangible impact on thinking and discourse amongst senior policy advisors and ministers.