

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Role of higher education in revolutions is theme of international conference**

Student and academic revolts, from the 1790s up to the present day, featuring the French student uprisings of 1968, the Arab Spring, Easter 1916, and other major protest movements which led to the emergence of new states, will be explored in an international history conference in Dublin this June.

Organised by UCD, the event is open to the public and will be held in Newman House on St Stephen's Green over two days on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June. Entitled "Universities in Revolution and State Formation" the conference will discuss the role played by universities, both their staff and students, in social, cultural and especially political change, from the early modern to the contemporary. It forms part of the University's Decade of Centenaries programme which was launched by Minister for Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht Heather Humphries in April.

Funded by the Irish Research Council and UCD Research, the conference will discuss Sicilian, French, British, Indian, and Irish cases. The keynote address will be given by Dr Renate Marsiske of the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico. The Mexican Ambassador to Ireland, His Excellency Carlos Garcia de Alba, will be in attendance for this session. The conference will be opened by Professor Orla Feeley, Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact at UCD, and Chair of UCD's Commemorations Committee.

The conference will explore how, in the early stages, universities often act as the forum for debates and have a guiding influence on events. It will examine how, despite often central involvement in revolution and state formation, students and academics – especially the latter – often subsequently act as a restraining or moderating influence on these movements.

Noted academics will also discuss their personal experiences on the barricades. "*By enquiring into the role of activist/witness, the conference will reflect upon these more recent events and provide an open space for discussion of their successes, failures, and significance*", comments conference organiser Dr Conor Mulvagh, Lecturer in Irish History with special responsibility for commemorations at University College Dublin.

The conference runs from Friday 5 to Saturday 6 June. Full details, including the programme of talks and pre-registration details are on the conference website: [http://centenaries.ucd.ie/events/universities\\_and\\_state/](http://centenaries.ucd.ie/events/universities_and_state/)

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