
VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES



CENTER FOR IRISH STUDIES



IRISH STUDIES
COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS
FALL 2022



CENTER FOR IRISH STUDIES



Minor in Irish Studies

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Villanova University hosts the Center for Irish Studies. The minor in Irish Studies is open to students from all colleges, and our interdisciplinary program features courses from seven departments. Irish Studies faculty research and teach through a range of disciplines. The Center facilitates courses in anthropology, art history, economics, history, language studies, literature, philosophy, political science, studio art and theatre.

Fifteen credits are required to complete the minor, of which six credits are core requirements: a 3-credit literature survey in English and a 3-credit survey in History. Students may structure and focus five of the many Irish Studies electives into a unified program of study that works with the student's overall goals. The Irish language (Gaelic) two-course sequence can fulfill the College of Arts and Sciences language requirement. Study-abroad courses taken in Ireland may be used for the minor.

Major in Irish Studies

Irish Studies offers a major as a specialization in the Department of Global Interdisciplinary Studies (GIS). The 31-credit major in Irish Studies provides an interdisciplinary and comparative approach to deepen students' understanding of the history, culture, religion, politics, literature, languages, and society of Ireland and produce an in-depth research thesis. Students may sign up for the GIS major and choose their Irish Studies (GIST) specialization through the Department of Global Interdisciplinary Studies in 36 Garey Hall. The GIS Chair and the Director of Irish Studies will work closely with students to develop individual interests, abilities, and career goals while fulfilling their major.

All courses listed here are 3.0 credit unless otherwise noted.

Fall 2022 Course Descriptions

ENG 2022-001: Writing Through Conflict

TR 4:00pm-5:15pm

Alan Drew

Writing through Conflict explores the important role of creative writing in confronting, protesting, and engaging with socio-political conflicts. The goals of this course are to study the work of established American, Irish, and other international authors who focus their creative eye on socio-political conflicts in their many forms, from poverty and racism to war and atrocity, and use these models as guides for the student's own original creative writing. In this course students will examine the lens through which established writers view these conflicts, will analyze the elements of craft employed by those authors and poets, and use similar techniques in their own creative writing. Among the writers we will study are: Seamus Heaney, Glenn Patterson, Anna Burns, Claudia Rankine, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Yiyun Li, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Time in class will be divided between the discussion of readings, lessons concerning craft, directed writing exercises, and the workshopping of student work. This is not a lecture course, but rather a participatory experience that is essential to the success of the class. Regular attendance and active engagement is required.

As part of this course, students will have the opportunity to travel to Belfast, Ireland over Villanova's fall semester break to participate in an intensive creative writing conference. The students will have the opportunity to participate in writing workshops, readings, and symposiums at Queens University. Co-sponsored by Villanova's Program in Creative Writing and the Center for Irish Studies, and in conjunction with the Seamus Heaney Center at Queens University, this exchange will have a particular focus on exploring the legacy of The Troubles in Northern Ireland. Over a seven day period, students will engage in daily writing workshops with both Irish and American authors, take literary tours in Belfast, attend readings and creative writing symposiums in the evenings, and revise and share their work in a student showcase on the final night of the exchange.

*There is a cost associated with the travel to Belfast. Please contact Professor Alan Drew (alan.drew@villanova.edu) for more information. Prerequisites: ENG 2992

Attributes: Creative Writing, Irish Studies, Writing Intensive Requirement, Writing and Rhetoric

ENG 3616-001: Irish American Drama & Film

TR 10:00am-11:15am

Dr. Rena Potok

This course will explore Irish culture, narrative and history through the lens of 20th and 21st century Irish and Northern Irish film. Our focus will be on iconic works including *The Field*, *Some Mother's Son* and *The Magdalene Sisters*, and more recent works of post-conflict Irish cinema, such as *Black '47*, *The Shore*, and *The Perished*. We will also view films by next wave Irish women directors, such as Cathy Brody's *Wildfire*, and *Stranger with a Camera* by Orlagh George. Discussion topics will focus on Irish myths and legends; occupation, nationalism and rebellion; the Troubles; gender politics; religion and the church; and post-conflict culture. An additional focus will be on film adaptations of seminal Irish literary works: James Joyce's "The Dead," and Colum McCann's "Everything in This Country Must." Students will have an opportunity to develop a variety of writing projects, including film scene analysis, personal reflections; analytical arguments, and collaborative essays. We will supplement the films and literary texts with background readings in film studies, Irish mythology and history.

Attributes: Irish Studies, Diversity Requirement 1, Writing Enriched Requirement

ENG 3680-001: Narratives of Northern Ireland

TR 4:00pm-5:515pm

Dr. Jennifer Joyce

The Troubles in Northern Ireland, beginning in the late 1960s and lasting almost thirty years, claimed more than 3,500 lives. The political conflict and violence between unionists—mainly Protestant, who want Northern Ireland to remain British—and nationalists—primarily Catholic, who favor the idea of an Irish state encompassing the island as a whole—touched nearly every aspect of life in Northern Ireland. This seminar will examine contemporary literary and cinematic responses to the atrocities of these recent Troubles in Northern Ireland and look at the various responses to peace and ongoing reconciliation. Late twentieth and early twenty-first century voices represent a range of varied backgrounds who are considered astute observers of the political atmosphere; writers including but not limited to Seamus Deane, Colette Bryce, Seamus Heaney, Sinead Gleeson, and Owen McCafferty. Lisa McGee's TV show *Derry Girls* and Kenneth Branagh's film *Belfast* also offer important contributions. By critically reading these works, we will draw conclusions about the ways in which conflict and peace ultimately shape community, and in doing so, we will come to a fuller understanding of Irish identity.

Attributes: Irish Studies, Peace & Justice

HIS 3216-001: Ireland Since 1800

TR 2:30pm-3:45pm

Dr. Craig Bailey

This course provides students with an introduction to Irish history, with a particular focus on the development of Irish history and identities from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century, an important and formative period which is generally referred to as "Ireland under the Union". The role of violence in the making and representation of Irish histories and identities serves as the overarching theme for the course.

The course consists of four units. The first unit, Early Modern Ireland, establishes the background and context necessary to understand and evaluate later developments. The major issues and events covered include the formation of ethnic and religious identities and the conflicts between developing groups in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the conditions in the 18th century that led to political union with Britain in 1800.

The second unit, Pre-famine Ireland, examines the conditions of everyday life in the early 19th century and the structures and institutions that shaped them. We will consider the lives of the poor, the rise of rural or "agrarian" violence, the expansion and limits of the state in Irish society, Catholic struggles for equality and the development of a national system of education.

Unit 3 looks at two major factors that impacted Ireland in the middle of the 19th century, the Great Famine and migration. In addition to examining the crisis of the famine, we will also investigate the responses to it, including migration, and the ways that the relationships between famine and migration have contributed to narratives about Irish identity.

The final unit covers the post-famine period to the early twentieth century. We will follow the tortuous path of Irish nationalism as it developed over this period and consider how its collision with what is known as "unionism" shaped the conflicts of the early twentieth century that eventually resulted in the partition of Ireland.

IS 1111: Introductory Irish Language I

MWF 8:30am - 9:20am / R 8:30am - 9:45am

OR

MWF 10:40am - 11:30am / R 11:30am – 12:45pm

(Two Sections)

Fulbright Language Instructor

Groundwork in Irish (Gaelic), including oral proficiency, aural comprehension and reading knowledge; for students beginning the study of the language. Supplementary language laboratory work on Irish culture and practicing spoken Irish. Successful completion of the course sequence, IS 111 and IS 1112, satisfies the language requirement for the CLAS. Taught by a Fulbright language instructor from Ireland.

4.00 credits. Counts toward the Irish Studies minor.

IS 1121-001: Intermediate Irish Language I

TR 2:30pm-3:45pm

Fulbright Language Instructor

Review of grammar and vocabulary in Irish (Gaelic). Recitations, readings and oral drills. Supplementary language laboratory work.

Prerequisites: IS 111 and IS 1112

4.00 credits. Counts toward the Irish Studies minor.

PHI 2470-001: Irish Thought and Literature

MW 4:45pm-6:00pm

Dr. William Desmond

Ireland is well known for its poets and writers but what of its thinkers? In the past Ireland has also been called “the island of saints and scholars” but again what of its thinkers? Thomas Duddy’s book *A History of Irish Thought* (2002) offers us helpful resources to address this question. This course will explore some of the main thinkers in the Irish tradition. It will consider whether there is a distinctive style (or perhaps styles) of Irish thought, whether there is a plurality of traditions that yet exhibit distinctive marks. The relation of reason (science) and religion is a major concern in Irish tradition(s). So also is the importance of poetry for the Irish mind. Thinkers to be considered will include Scotus Eriugena, John Toland, George Berkeley, Edmund Burke. We will also look at the explorations of thought in some writers of literature, figures such as Jonathan Swift, James Joyce, William Butler Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Patrick Kavanagh and Seamus Heaney. Some time will also be given to a poet considered to be the major modernist poetry writing in the Irish language: Séan Ó Ríordáin. The course will conclude with a consideration of some recent Irish thinkers in the 20th century, including Iris Murdoch, William Desmond, and Richard Kearney. Themes to be explored in selected texts include:

- a. (e)migrant thought: the reality of leaving home, and going into exile, either voluntarily and enforced, has been a recurrent reality and theme in Irish writing. What do migration and emigration say about thinking about exile? What is the meaning of exile as religious chosen, as opposed to being forced on one by economic and political oppression and necessity?
- b. intimate/local knowing and universal reason: in Irish history the English as colonizers were thought to be more representative of a universal reason while the local Irish were more particular, somehow at the edges of this universal. We will explore this condition more deeply.
- c. exile and home: the condition of “being between” – between one’s first home and the need to build a second home away from home. What is it to remember the first home, and make a new home in the New

World (as the US was once called). How does this affect the children of those who have settled in the New World? How to look on the world of one's ancestors.

- d. broken tradition(s): losing a language and finding a voice – the Irish lost their first tongue, the Irish language, and yet in a short time gave rise to some of the great modern writers in English. We will explore this double, plurivocal condition of languages beyond just one dominant univocal language.
- e. the sacred and thought; Irish poetry and reflection; laughter/comedy and Irish thought. Irish history shows politics and identity to be deeply intertwined with religious commitments. How does comedy emerge for those who are in the subordinated, or subjugated position in relation to political masters who come from another tradition?

Attributes: Diversity Requirement 1, Irish Studies

PSC 4375-002: Gender, War & Peace

TR 2:30pm-3:45pm

Dr. Cera Murtagh

In this course students will learn about global conflict and peace through the lens of gender. The course will explore the theoretical intersection of gender, conflict and peace, before examining the impact of war on women, men and non-binary genders, their respective roles in peace processes, and, finally, in post-conflict democracy. The course will confront contemporary topics such as masculinity and war, sexual and gender-based violence, post-conflict democratization and LGBT politics. It will take a comparative approach with a particular focus on the critical case study of Northern Ireland.

Attributes: Irish Studies, TBA

Graduate Course:

ENG 8680: James Joyce's *Ulysses* at 100

R 5:20pm-7:20pm

Dr. Joseph Lennon

This course will take place during the 100th anniversary year of the publication of *Ulysses*, James Joyce's great modernist novel. He published the book on 2/2/22, his fortieth birthday, and the book was quickly banned in the United States and the United Kingdom for what the British director of public prosecutions called its "unmitigated filth." The novel follows three Dubliners over the course of a single day, June 16, 1904, and is now considered by the Modern Library the greatest novel written in English.

Ulysses used almost every literary device known at the time to retell Homer's epic on the streets of Dublin. Joyce wrote as both an Irish author and an international avant-garde modernist, and we will survey contemporary scholarship on modernism, postcolonial Ireland, and more recent readings in memory studies and network theory. We will read the text alongside Homer's *Odyssey* and a few scholarly aids: Harry Blamires's *Bloomsday Book*, Don Gifford's *Ulysses Annotated*, a hypertextual concordance, multiple digital maps, and a virtual simulation produced by Boston College. We will also review recent illustrations and attend a live dance performance by one of Ireland's leading choreographers, Liz Roche, as we develop a critique for visual representations of the novel in the digital age.

You will be expected to read or review Joyce's earlier works *Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by the second week of class, so you may want to read them before the semester begins. We will also touch on his poetry throughout the semester. Everyone will present on a chapter and write a short piece and a final research essay. The bulk of our work, however, will be devoted to closely reading *Ulysses*.

