
VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES



CENTER FOR IRISH STUDIES



IRISH STUDIES
COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS
FALL 2021



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 2021 Course Descriptions

AAH 3007-001: The Art of Ireland

TR 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Dr. Tina Waldeier Bizzarro

Why did “Star Wars,” Episode VII, chose Ireland’s westerly island of “Skellig Michael” as the rendez-vous scene for Luke and Leah? Ireland’s medieval visual culture provides us with a rich cache of sacred sites and mysterious artifacts. This course seeks to stimulate an interest in and love of the unique art of Ireland—from the Stone Age through the Middle Ages—before the cultures of Western Europe permeated Ireland’s borders, when Ireland was insular and isolated, when it was uniquely Celtic and non-Western. Together, we will investigate: Ireland’s fascinating passage graves and Stone Age art; the defensive architecture of ring and hill forts and living spaces and the sculpture of the Bronze and Iron Ages; the flowering of Christianity in Ireland under Patrick and before, manifest in Ireland’s famous illuminated manuscripts of the Golden Age and in early church architecture; through the development of medieval churches in the 11th and 12th centuries in the Romanesque style. The student leaving this course will have developed a love for and a firm knowledge of the major monuments of Irish Art.

ENG 1975-014: Narratives of Contemporary Irish Literature

TR 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Dr. Jennifer Joyce

What does it mean to belong? In what ways is it fundamental to the human experience? How might the act of belonging influence understandings of personal, familial, and national identities? In the 20th and 21st Century, Irish writers continue to explore expressions of belonging, and in contrast, separation and isolation, in narratives throughout multiple genres. Their experiences in Ireland and Northern Ireland include a wide cultural range; from the trauma of the politics and violence of the Troubles to the marginalization of women in Irish society and the arts, from Irish emigration to the influx of refugees immigrating to a traditionally homogenous Dublin, and from homophobia to the legal and religious ramifications of gender fraud and transgender identity. This English Core Literature and Writing Seminar will analyze and respond to modern and contemporary Irish short stories, novels, drama, and poetry in an effort to uncover the inextricable link between the vital experience of belonging and what it means to be Irish. Moving from traditional literature to the contemporary, this course will unpack a traditionally patriarchal literary canon and culture and will examine the ways to which the canon and Irish identity is being redefined today. Texts will range from Seamus Heaney, James Joyce, and Colum McCann, to Melatu Uche Okorie, Stacey Gregg, and Claire Keegan, among others, which will offer tremendous occasion for critical thinking about the intersections of identity, nationhood, class, gender, sexuality, religion, and power in Ireland and within the global context. This 3-credit course counts as an English Core Lit and Writing seminar, as well as an Irish Studies elective.

GIS 5011-002: Networks of Revolution: Irish, Indian, and Russian Revolutionaries in London

TR 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Dr. Joseph Lennon (English) & Lynne Hartnett (History)

At the height of the British Empire, London became a hub for activists from many social justice movements, including Russian revolutionaries, women's suffragists, and Irish and Indian anti-colonialists. At the same time issues of gay rights began to emerge in public discourse. Public debates around homosexuality emerged during the very public trials and convictions of Oscar Wilde and Roger Casement and women rights advocates advocated new visions of womanhood. Against a backdrop of political agitation, authors wrote about revolutionaries, saboteurs, and exiles in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century London. This team-taught course dives into history and literature, tracing how literature and media explored these issues while debating strategies of violence and passive resistance, including bombing campaigns, the boycott, the hunger strike, and a range of publicity stunts or "outrages." Within the pages of the periodicals such as *Free Russia* and *Votes for Women* and in novels and plays, we will discover this age of foment. Authors include residents of London such as Joseph Conrad, Mohandas Gandhi, Sylvia Pankhurst, W.B. Yeats, Sarah Grand, H.G. Wells, and Peter Kropotkin.

IS 1111: Introductory Irish Language I

MWF 8:30 a.m. - 9:20 a.m. / R 8:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.

OR

MWF 11:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m. / R 2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

(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.

PHI 2470-100: Irish Thought and Literature

M 6:10 p.m. – 8:50 p.m.

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 recent 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 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 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 is 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?