

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES



CENTER FOR IRISH STUDIES



IRISH STUDIES
COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS
SPRING 2025



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.

Spring 2025 Course Descriptions

AAH 3007-001: The Art of Ireland

MW 3:20-4:25pm

Dr. Tina Waldeier Bizzarro

Why did “Star Wars,” Episode VII, chose Ireland’s westerly island of “Skellig Michael” as the rendez-vous venue 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.

Attributes: Irish Studies

ENG 2022-001: Writing Through Conflict

TR 10:00-11:15am

Alan Drew

This course 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 are 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.

Attributes: Creative Writing, Writing and Rhetoric, Irish Studies

*There is a co-requisite 1-credit course (ENG 2992) designed to provide an embedded study-abroad experience to complement a requisite English course.

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

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

ENG 3615-001: Ulysses

TR 2:30-3:45pm

Dr. Megan Quigley

What is *Ulysses*? It's just a story about an advertising salesman wandering around Dublin one day in June 1904 (and worrying that his wife may be cheating on him). Or it's the novel to end all novels, a novel that makes us wonder why we write novels, how we think in and through language, and the ways that we tell ourselves stories about our families, our communities, and our countries.

How do you read a big novel like *Ulysses*, the master novel that is always atop the greatest novel *ever* lists? Why is it so controversial? What approach should you take to best understand and to enjoy this novel?

This course will take many different approaches—using films, music, audio recordings, graphic novels, guidebooks, Joyce's letters—as we learn to “read” *Ulysses*. Is it a story about immigration? Leopold Bloom is the son of a Hungarian Jewish emigrant and a Protestant Irishwoman who encounters the young brainy Stephen Dedalus. In Stephen, Bloom may find the son he lost and the connection to Ireland he always wanted. Or is it the story of a nation? We will learn about James Joyce's life and the ways that Irish History and the Catholic church marked his epic of the modern Irish people. Or is it a story about music, the imagination, and love? We will consider the idea that Molly Bloom may be the actual hero of the novel, who responds yes even in the face of disillusionment and loss.

Why did James Joyce, writing his modernist masterpiece *Ulysses* in exile, make its hero the son of a Hungarian emigrant to Ireland? Stephen Dedalus, Joyce's alter ego in the novel, encounters questions of immigration and racial difference through Bloom, who is always somehow outside the Irish circles he attempts to penetrate. The novel's climax occurs when Bloom, wandering Jew, and Stephen, disillusioned Irish Catholic, meet, perhaps fostering a father-son bond. Bloom seeks to replace the son he lost and create the connection to Ireland that he always desired; Stephen seeks a cosmopolitan, linguistically savvy father-figure to help him move beyond his sense of Irish paralysis. But is the father-son bond forged? Through the narrative intricacies, Homeric parallels, and linguistic innovations of his modernist style, Joyce interrogates the

problems created by race and immigration for nation-building in his modern Irish Epic. In *Ulysses*, Joyce sought to recreate in a novel the way that Dublin appeared on the 16th June 1904. But what does Joyce's novel show us about the difficulties that both Ireland and the United States face in building inclusive communities in the 21st century?

We will begin the course by reading from Joyce's *Dubliners* and the novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in order to learn about some of the characters in *Ulysses*. We will then launch into *Ulysses*, taking the parallels to Homer's *Odyssey* less as directing the plot than influencing the style of each chapter. Our course will include a field trip to the Rosenbach Library in downtown Philadelphia in order to see the *Ulysses* manuscript, a wonderful opportunity with the help of the Rosenbach curatorial staff. And at the end of our class, you will have read *Ulysses*, having found your own unique approach to understanding Joyce's masterpiece.

Attributes: Irish Studies, Writing Enrichment Requirement

IS 1112-001: Irish Language II

Lec: TR 2:30-3:45pm

Drill: M 9:35-10:25am

Dr. Jonathan O'Neill

-OR-

IS 1112-002: Irish Language II

Lec: TR 2:30-3:45pm

Drill: M 10:40-11:30am

Dr. Jonathan O'Neill

Continuing groundwork in Irish (Gaelic), including oral proficiency, aural comprehension, and reading knowledge; for students with no prior knowledge of Irish. Supplementary language laboratory work and oral drills.

Attributes: Irish Studies

IS 3100-001: Modern Irish Culture

TR 4:00-5:15pm

Dr. Jonathan O'Neill

This course examines contemporary Irish culture by exploring its origins and evolution through the varied circumstances of Irish historical and political events. The course considers the impact these events had on the unfolding of distinct cultural practices in the fields of language, literature, sport, music, and folk traditions.

Attributes: Irish Studies

PSC 3340: Irish Conflict and Peace

TR 2:30-3:45pm

Dr. Cera Murtagh

This course will explore the dynamics of conflict and peace and the challenges societies face in transitioning onwards towards democracy. It will examine these phenomena through the critical case of Ireland, a partitioned island which over the last century has experienced a war of independence, civil war and a violent conflict in the North of the island spanning three decades. This course will examine the roots of Ireland's conflicts, its journey towards peace and its progress towards fuller 'post-conflict' democracy. It will explore relations within the island (north and south), between the islands of Ireland and Britain and between Ireland and the wider world. In so doing, it will critically assess the current and future challenges facing Ireland, including post-Brexit (the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union) and its implications for the future of Ireland.

Irish Conflict and Peace will, furthermore, chart the immense social, political, cultural and economic change that Ireland has undergone in moving from conflict to peace, not least in the sphere of gender. It will evaluate the quality of democracy, north and south, and examine what social justice means in contemporary Ireland.

Through the case of Ireland, this course aims to illuminate the fundamental dynamics of conflict and peace including: colonialism, nationalism, sectarianism, international relations, international peacebuilding, human rights, gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights and social justice.

Attributes: Irish Studies, GWS, Peace & Justice