

English 4/5391

Special Topics: Irish Emigration in Literature, Film, and on Foot

Instructor: John Ruff

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Class meets from 3:30 to 4:20 M, 3:30 to 6:15 T and W and 3:30-6:15 the first Thursday and Friday of the term. Attendance at public readings on Monday evenings (5-8) also required.

Course Description:

In this course we examine Irish literature in a variety of genres including film and visit cultural sites in or near Cork and Dublin that treat the Irish experience of emigration and eviction, especially during and subsequent to the Great Hunger of the late 1840's. Our reading list will include *The Countess Cathleen*, a verse drama by W.B. Yeats and Brian Friel's play *Philadelphia, Here I Come*. We will read two novels, Joseph O'Connor's *The Star of the Sea* and Colum McCann's novel *TransAtlantic*, a pair of short stories by James Joyce plus a selection of stories by Irish writers Roddy Doyle, Clare Cavanaugh, and Kevin Barry. We'll read poetry by Eavan Boland, from her collection *Woman Without a Country*, and possibly other poets from or associated with Cork and Irish immigration. We will also study three excellent movies, an film adaption of *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* directed by John Quesada, *In America* written and directed by Jim Sheridan, and *Brooklyn*, based on the novel by Colm Toibin and directed by Jim Crowley.

In Cork we will visit the Nano Nagle Place to examine the origins of Irish Catholic education for the poor and the Crawford Gallery which showcases a great collection of modern and contemporary Irish art. We will travel by train to Cobh, the port near Cork from which a vast majority of Irish immigrants departed, also the last port of call for the Titanic, to visit museums dedicated to both those narratives. Students who go on the Dublin excursion will tour EPIC, voted in 2019 the best museum in Europe, which is devoted to story of the Irish diaspora.

In this discussion-based course, each student will write two short papers and one longer paper longer (8-10 pages) on the one text (or possibly two) they find most compelling. There will be an entrance exam, a midterm and a final. Missing a class will be the same as missing a week of classes during the regular semester. More than one absence may result in a less than satisfactory grade (D or below) for attendance and participation.

Requirements: Attendance and participation (worth 20%)

Papers: (worth 40%: 10% each for the shorter papers and 20% for the longer)

Three examinations (worth 40%: 10%, 10%, and 20%)

Required texts:

Kevin Barry, "Beer Trip to Llandudno," from *Dark Lies the Island*, (short story, handout)

Eavan Boland, *A Woman Without a Country: Poems* (ISBN 0393352943)

Claire Cavanaugh, "The Parting Gift" and "Dark Horses" from *Walk the Blue Fields: Stories* (short stories, handouts)

Roddy Doyle, *The Deportees and Other Stories* (short stories) (ISBN 0143114883)

Brian Friel, *Philadelphia, Here I Come: A Comedy in Three Acts* (play) ASIN B01FEKJECU

James Joyce, from *Dubliners*, "Evelyn" and "A Little Cloud" (handouts)

Colum McCann, *TransAtlantic* (novel) ISBN 9780812981926

Joseph O'Connor, *The Star of the Sea* (novel) ISBN 9780156029667

Films: *Philadelphia, Here I Come*, dir. John Quesada

In America, dir. Neil Jordan

Brooklyn, dir. Jim Crowley

Learning Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate cross-cultural understanding by increasing knowledge of and engaging with their host country.
2. Students will develop cross-cultural communication skills so that they can communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals and groups.
3. Students will apply knowledge and critical thinking skills to engage in problem solving in global and cross-cultural contexts both generally and in their respective field of study.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to think reflectively about their own country and culture in relationship to others and develop a more global perspective.
5. Additionally, graduate students will be able to effectively demonstrate advanced research skills by completing a longer final project.

Requirements: Attendance and participation (worth 30%)

Three short papers (worth 30%, 10% each)

Three examinations (worth 40%: 10%, 10%, and 20% each)

*Graduate students will be expected to complete two short papers and a longer final essay (10-15 pages) and annotated bibliography of source materials.

Schedule

6/18: Introductions; entrance exam on Joseph O'Connor's *Star of the Sea* and Brian Friel's *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* Begin discussion of *Star of the Sea* and *Philadelphia, Here I Come*

6/19: Discussion continued; begin screening *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*

6/21: Sunday: Field trip to Cobh to visit The Cobh Heritage Centre and the Titanic Experience

6/22: [class meets from 3:30 to 4:20] First paper due; conclude discussion of *Star of the Sea*; continue screening *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*; **Public reading at An Spailin Fanach, 29 S. Main St., 5-8**

6/23: W.B. Yeats, *The Countess Cathleen*; conclude screening of *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*

6/24: James Joyce, "Eveline" and "A Little Cloud"

6/26: Friday morning: Dublin Excursion: Field trip to EPIC

6/29: [class meets from 3:30 to 4:20] Claire Cavanaugh, "The Parting Gift." Begin screening *Brooklyn*. **Public reading at An Spailin Fanach, 29 S. Main St., 5-8**

6/30: Cavanaugh, "Dark Horses." Poems TBD from *A Woman Without a Country* by Eavan Boland. Continue screening *Brooklyn*

7/1: Kevin Barry, "Beer Trip to Llandudno"; Poems TBD from *A Woman Without a Country* by Eavan Boland. Complete and discuss screening of *Brooklyn*

7/2: Midterm

7/3, 7/4, or 7/5: Field trip to Nano Nagle Place, Cork City

7/6: [class meets from 3:30 to 4:20] Short Paper #2 due; Roddy Doyle, stories from *The Deportees*

7/7 Doyle stories continued; begin screening *In America*

7/8: Day 1 with Colum McCann's *TransAtlantic*; continue screening *In America*

7/13: [class meets from 3:30 to 4:20] Day 2 with *TransAtlantic*; finish screening *In America* **Public reading at An Spailin Fanach, 29 S. Main St., 5-8;**

7/14: Day 3 with *TransAtlantic*; Poems TBD from *A Woman Without a Country* by Eavan Boland

7/1: Day 4 with *TransAtlantic*; Doyle story TBD; Final paper due

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information.

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.ods.uno.edu>.