

Course Syllabus: History and Culture of Ireland, July 2016

Instructor: Professor Albrecht Classen
Dept. of German Studies 301 LSB,
1512 E 1st St.
The University of Arizona Tucson,
AZ 85721
aclassen@email.arizona.edu

Topic: Ireland from the Middle Ages to the early modern age: history and culture (we'll limit ourselves to the Middle Ages)

Course description: This study abroad course will offer a broadly conceived introduction to the Middle Ages, especially Ireland, focusing on its history, literature, and art history. We will begin with a very brief intro. to the Middle Ages, then turn to Ireland and read excerpts from literature and history.

Course content: In this course we will examine the development of medieval and early modern Irish art and literature within the historical context. In ten days we will have together we will focus on major literary works and specific art works, discussing the role of the Christian Church in Ireland, the tension with the ancient religion, the specific features of Irish within the European languages, and trace the transition from the Middle Ages to ca. 1800 and beyond.

Course materials:

Selections from:

1. *A companion to Irish literature* [electronic resource], edited by Julia M. Wright (2010/13):
http://literati.credoreference.com.ezproxy1.library.arizona.edu/content/entry/wileycirl/tain_bo_cuailnge/0?PHPSESSID=tta87h9ms3g9pdotr5m16nav94&id=12173007
- and:
http://literati.credoreference.com.ezproxy1.library.arizona.edu/content/entry/wileycirl/finn_and_the_fenian_tradition/0?id=12173008
2. *The Cambridge history of Irish literature*. Vol. 1, To 1890 [electronic resource], edited by Margaret Kelleher and Philip O'Leary (2008):
3. http://universitypublishingonline.org.ezproxy1.library.arizona.edu/cambridge/histories/pops/pops/pdf_viewer.jsf?cid=CBO9781139055000A006&ref=true&pubCode=CUP&urlPrefix=cambridge&productCode=cho

4. and:

http://universitypublishingonline.org.ezproxy1.library.arizona.edu/cambridge/histories/pops/pdfs/pdf_viewer.jsf?cid=CBO9781139055000A007&ref=true&pubCode=CUP&urlPrefix=cambridge&productCode=cho

3. *The Field Day Anthology of Irish writing*, general editor, Seamus Deane; associate editors, Andrew Carpenter, Jonathan Williams (1991-2002) (will be made available as PDFs)

4. John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *A short history of Ireland* [electronic resource] (2012):
<http://lib.myilibrary.com.ezproxy2.library.arizona.edu/ProductDetail.aspx?id=405393> (3rd ed., 2012)

5. *Early Irish Myths and Sagas*, trans. Jeffrey Gantz (London: Penguin, 1981)

Books 1, 2, and 4 are freely available to students through their university library. I will make PDFs available for all texts. Those will be posted on my webpage.

Update: All texts are posted online on my webpage, under Study Abroad, then Ireland.

Art history: <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/irish-art.htm>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_art

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/celt/ali/ali233.htm>

<http://etc.ancient.eu/2014/10/30/irelands-exquisite-insular-art/>

Grading:

1. Attendance: Regular attendance is expected, deduction will follow upon unexcused and excessive absences. **10%**
2. . 3 exams with essay questions: **30% each (total of 90%)**

Syllabus:

Day 1 (July 1, 2016): Introduction, the Middle Ages (mostly outside of Ireland)

Day 2-3: Irish medieval history: Ranelagh

Day 4-5: Irish medieval literature Gantz 1 and Gantz 2, plus Greene 1

Day 4: **1st exam**

Day 6-7: St. Brendan's Navigatio, 26-40

Days 8-9: Irish art: <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/irish-art.htm>

Day 8: 2nd exam

Day 10: Reflections, comparisons, and the **final exam**.

Possible Changes: The information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Final Grade Review: If there might be a problem with your grade, you can ask me for a review until: date to be determined (shortly before finals week is over). Beyond that, there will not be any opportunity to revisit your grade.

[The following is the fully-fledged syllabus for a 4 week intensive course. Disregard for our 2016 course.

1st Week: Introduction to the history and geography of Ireland, the Middle Ages, read the article by Emily Amt and Albrecht Classen:

<http://aclassen.faculty.arizona.edu/sites/aclassen.faculty.arizona.edu/files/amt.classen2015.pdf>

John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *A Short History of Ireland*: we'll skip over the prehistory and begin with Gaelic history in the early Middle Ages, pp. 22-42, beginning with the arrival of St. Patrick

We also read *A companion to Irish literature* [electronic resource], edited by Julia M. Wright (2010/13)

Part One: The Middle Ages

1 Táin Bó Cúailnge Ann Dooley

2 Finn and the Fenian Tradition Joseph Falaky Nagy

3 The Reception and Assimilation of Continental Literature Barbara Lisa Hillers

2nd Week: History, Art History, and Music of late medieval and early modern Ireland:

<http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/irish-art.htm>

We also read: *The Wooing of Etain, The Cattle Raid of Froech*.

We continue with Irish history, going into more details, using online material:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Ireland_\(800%E2%80%93169\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Ireland_(800%E2%80%93169))

Depending on the time frame, we'll continue with

3rd Week: Ranelagh, *A Short History of Ireland*, "From the Tudors to Cromwell" (43-65)

Art history: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/celt/ali/ali233.htm>

Literary texts: *The Birth of Cú Chulaind* and *The Intoxication of the Ulaid*.

4th Week: Seventeenth through nineteenth centuries: this last week depends on the actual course development, but I assume that we'll have only those first two weeks.]