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# Engaging Ireland: Past, Present, & Future

**COURSE DESIGNATOR** DBLN 3012

**Language of Instruction** English

**NUMBER OF CREDITS** 3 credits

**Contact Hours** 45 hours

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course seeks to equip students with an appreciation of particular approaches to the production of historical knowledge across disciplines and teach them to think critically about competing assumptions about the Irish historical experience (including their own!).

The purpose of the core course is to examine the beliefs, practices, and relationships that shaped the Irish historical experience(s). The module aims to give students an historical grounding for their explorations and studies in Ireland. The historical, social and political dimensions of the core course will be complemented with onsite journeys into other unique dimensions of Irish culture and historical artifacts and primary source material: including language; folklore; music; visual culture; and the literary imagination. Thus, the focuses on social, economic and cultural change over time, giving attention to specific historical contexts conscious of the value and the limitations of historical and cultural sources and the role of the contemporary as the mediator of what is remembered.

A unique aspect of this course is a focus on the multiplicity of 'authentic voices' of social and political upheaval, that are frequently conflicting and contradictory, which will enhance students appreciation of the arbitrary nature of historical change and the creation of the modern. Contemporary issues pertaining to economic change, church-state relations, immigration and the global environment will be explored in this interdisciplinary, team led course

## INSTRUCTOR

Dr Conor McNamara and panel of guest lecturers.

## COURSE GOAL

This course seeks to facilitate students to be equipped to interpret the Irish historical experience in specific contexts through the use of class teaching and the examination of primary sources: to introduce students to questions and debates surrounding the methodology and how aspects of Irish history has been manufactured, ignored and re-invented, and finally, to empower students to analysis and interpret primary source material, conscious of their own distinct interpretive frameworks..

This course seeks to stimulate students to examine the Irish historical experience, including the beliefs, cultural, social and religious practices and relationships that the Irish people over time. Historical change is a fundamental category of analysis of Irish society and culture and cognizance of the specific and distinctive historical contexts is crucial. Students will learn about and critically assess methods and concepts employed in producing 'Irish history' and learn to interpret distinct historical narratives and the factors, which produce them.

Students will learn how to analyze primary sources including personal accounts of the marginal, the politically aware, as well as cultural artifacts including, song, poetry and story, along with official state produced statistics, reports and commentary. In this way, students will learn to make meaning out of conflicting historical sources and commentary.

Students will also learn to evaluate the uses and the limitations of those sources and learn to be historically skeptical of manufactured interpretations that serve particular social or political objectives and consider how the questions we ask and the sources available to us shape our knowledge of Irish history.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The skills gain in this class will fundamentally contribute to students' career readiness through the encouragement of independent critical assessment of historical material. An emphasis on stimulating cultural citizenship, self-reflexivity and intellectual enquiry is designed to equip students with an intellectual tool kit of universal intellectual value.

The purpose of these unique seminars is to develop an interactive learning environment featuring multiple methodologies, where students are empowered to develop their critical facilities through an exploration of historical change.

The aim of this course is to empower students to engage critically on the experience of historical change in new and different ways. These unique modules will develop students' appreciation of humanistic commerce with an emphasis on the importance of transnational history, the multiplicity of historical narratives of change and the universality of human experience.

The module will provide the students with an appreciation of the inherently particular nature of historical sources, and their inherent prejudices, as well as their cultural, social and political contexts – which, along with the perspective the historian/student brings to them – leads inevitably to multiple and frequently conflicting interpretations of the Irish past.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This module considers how the questions we seek to answer and the historical sources available to us shape our knowledge of Irish history and our understanding of the significance of complex change. Rather than focusing on single historical meta-narratives, each thematic module will involve explorations of unique and competing experiences of continuity and change focusing on the social and lived dimension of historical change. The reflective nature of independent assessment of key historical source material will be developed to encourage critical thinking that engages with issues pertaining to historical narrative of gender, ethnicity, power relations and sexual orientation.

The interpretation of primary source material is fundamental in terms of introducing student to the critical assessment methods and concepts employed in producing historical knowledge. Students work with primary sources documents, artifacts and cultural expressions, learning how to interpret and makes meaning of historical material, including the uses and the limitations of primary sources.

In terms of the provision of resources for class discussion, digital tuition will complement class room teaching and group discussion. Students will be provided with key primary archival sources for each thematic exploration which they will be asked to reflect and engage with in preparation for their discussions of overarching historical themes. Teaching and the choice of sources will emphasize the perspective of marginal social groups, women's lives, childhood and the powerless, rather than solely social and economic elites.

Students will be asked to question traditional historical narratives and bring a degree of intellectual skepticism to historical meta-narratives: students are encouraged to ponder what has been sanitized, censored and excluded in the process of producing nationally acceptable narratives of change.

## REQUIRED READING/MATERIALS

In terms of the provision of resources for class discussion, digital tuition will complement classroom teaching and group discussion. Students will be provided with key primary archival sources for each thematic exploration, which they will be asked to reflect and engage with in preparation for their discussions of overarching historical themes. Teaching and the choice of sources will emphasize the perspective of marginal social groups, women's lives, childhood and the powerless, rather than solely social and economic elites.

Readings:

Ireland, A History: Thomas Bartlett (Cambridge U Press)

Ireland a Social and Cultural History: Terence Brown

Individual reading and other class materials provided for all individual topic based classes

## GRADING

### CRITERIA FOR GRADING AND GRADING STANDARDS

Grading Rubric		
A	93-100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90-92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D	60-66	
F	0-59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of how grades are weighted:

Research report related to a course site visit	20%
Reflective report on field weekend/study tour	20%
Mid-term paper	20%
Participation	20%
Final presentation with choice of format/media	20%
Overall Grade	100%

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### UNIT 1

- **Welcome and Introduction Session** – A chance for the students to meet their lecturers, introduce each other and discuss their backgrounds and interests – students will be familiarised with the structure

of the course and how they can maximise their time and personal development.

- **Site visit:** From the Famine to Facebook, chronology and tour of the city,
- **Cultural visit:** Temple Bar Tradfest – Annual authentic Irish music festival in city.

## UNIT 2

- ***Kingship and Kinship: Early Medieval Irish Society:*** Students will engage with issues pertaining to: kingship & kinship in Ireland – women and the medieval world – settlement and society in medieval Ireland - the Coming of the barbarians; Vikings and the foundation of the urban world.
- **Visual Culture:** National Museum of Archaeology and History.
- **Field visit:** archaeologist led visit to Newgrange Stone Age Passage Tomb and other sites in Boyne Valley.
- **Cultural event:** Dublin Literary walk

## UNIT 3

- **Gaelic Culture:** The Lore of Placenames,
- **Literature/Drama /** Castle Rackrent, Translations.
- ***Making Ireland British: Plantation and Dispossession, 1558-1690:*** Students will engage with issues pertaining to: colonialism and the native – Gaelic resistance to dispossession - the Northern Plantation: Ireland becoming British? – the Cromwellian conquest and the centrality of loss in Gaelic society.
- **Cultural event : Reading**

## UNIT 4

- ***An Ghorta Mór: The Great Famine, 1845-52:*** Students will engage with issues pertaining to: sectarian and racist responses to poverty – the coming of the potato: an island transformed – food and Irish families – the decimation of the cottiers - governance and culpability.
- **Visual Culture:** Representations of the Famine.
- **Site visit** Jeanie Johnson /Famine memorials.

## UNIT 5

- ***Becoming White: Irish America and the Making of the Diaspora, 1776-2016:*** Students will engage with issues pertaining to: Ulster Scots identity in modern America – Famine and the Catholic diaspora – ‘Becoming White’ – the rise of Irish America – heritage and identity in contemporary America.
- **Gaelic Culture/Music:** Home from Home
- **Site visit:** The Traditional music archive.
- **Cultural Event:** music session

## UNIT 6

- **History/Social Studies A Risen People:** The Revival, Nationalism and Class Stuggle,
- **Lit/Drama** The Creation of a National Theatre. Yeats and the Abbey
- **Site Visit:** Liberty Hall and the Abbey Theatre

- **Cultural event:** Yeats exhibit, National Library

## UNIT 7

- ***The Struggle for Independence: The Irish Revolution:*** Students will engage with issues pertaining to: Ireland & World War I: a peripheral nation? – the 1916 Rising and the notion of national redemption – the role of female liberation fighters – the evolution of the guerrilla struggle.
- **Site visit:** Kilmainham Jail
- **Cultural event:** Film screening

## UNIT 8/9

- **History:** The Civil War and the foundation of the New State.
- **Literature:** The Dublin Plays of Sean O Casey.
- **History:** The Making of Modern State.
- **Economy/Social Studies:** Impact of the EU.
- **Site Visit** National Museum Collins Barracks
- **Cultural event:** independent photo shoot

## UNIT 10

- **Northern Ireland and the Politics of Conflict, 1969-2010:** Students will engage with issues pertaining to: the establishment of the Orange State – the Civil Rights Movement – the emergence of the Irish Republican Army – the dynamics of communal violence – the hunger strikes – peace process and new beginnings: a post-conflict society.

## UNIT 11

- **Gaelic Culture: Irish Language/Visual Culture:** British perceptions of poverty and backwardness – the impact of the Famine – Idealisation of the Peasant – Language Loss /Revival in Contemporary Ireland.
- **Site Visit** National Gallery /Hugh Lane Gallery

## UNIT 12/13

- **Gender, women and the family in Ireland, 1845-2016:** Students will engage with issues pertaining to: the evolution of marriage as a commercial transaction – the emergence of a womens movement in nineteen-sixties Ireland – Liberalization and Modern Ireland; the thorny issues of contraception and divorce and abortion
- **Economy and Society: Critical Issues: The persistence of poverty in Ireland,:** This module engages with the persistence of poverty in modern Ireland through an exploration of the marginal experience of modernity, issues explored include – the experience of Irish Travellers (gypsies) – perceptions of working class women - public housing and respectability in Ireland – the evolution of diet and the persistence of food shortage.
- **Site Visit:** Dáil Eireann- The Irish Parliament

## UNIT 14/15

- **The Clash of the Ash:** Sport, class and culture in Ireland : The GAA, Rugby. And Cricket
- **Site Visit:** Gaelic games match- national stadium Croke Park
- **Re-presenting Ireland:** Riverdance, Ryanair and the new Irish.
- **Site visit:** Irish Museum of Modern Art, Irish Film Institute
- **Cultural event** Film screenings
- **Concluding Session:** Recap of debates and key issues discussed during the year – a chance for students to ask questions regarding any aspect of their course , debate their ideas and seek further guidance.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory in order to earn full marks. The final grade will take into consideration preparation required for class (i.e. readings) and participation in class discussions. If you miss any meetings without an excused absence from the on-site director, your final grade will be dropped accordingly. In the case of absences, it is the student's responsibility to find out what information was given in class including any announcements made.

### UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

#### SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

#### STUDENT CONDUCT

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct and student needs. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.