CIEE in Dublin, Ireland

Course name: Irish Culture, Society and Identity
Course number: SOCI 3002 IREL
Programs offering course: January in Dublin Program
Language of instruction: English
U.S. Semester Credits: 3
Contact Hours: 45
Term: January 2020

Course Description

This course examines the emergence of Ireland as an independent entity and the formation of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It begins by looking at the early influences on modern Ireland such as the War of Independence, the Civil War, and the partition of Ireland North and South. This forms the basis for the examination of twentieth and twenty-first century Ireland’s political, social and cultural landscape.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the primary historical factors that have shaped Irishness in the context of socio-political identity;
- Critically analyze dominant socio-cultural aspects of Irish society;
- Identify features of the political and cultural milieu within which the independence movement thrived and ultimately succeeded in its aims and objectives;
- Summarize the historical processes, the ideologies and the political movements, that have created the social, economic and cultural conflicts in Northern Ireland;
- Discuss the influences that have shaped and are forming new cultural, economic, religious, political, ethno-racial and class pathways in today’s Ireland;

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this class.

Methods of Instruction

The course will be taught through a variety of methods including:
- Guest Lectures
- PowerPoint presentations
- Seminars
- Sites visits and walking tours related to course content
• Lectures
• In-class and independent multimedia screening including films, documentaries and contemporary media sources.
• Afternoon visits to sites

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Media Assignment 20%
2. Classroom writing assignments 25%
3. Overall classroom participation 25%
4. Final paper 30%

Course Requirements

Media project and research

Students will use Irish media sources to prepare a short piece of research on contemporary issues of cultural identity in Ireland (500 words).

Written responses in class

Students will write critical responses to two selected course texts (500 words each).

Classroom participation

Students, in groups of two, are required to lead discussion relating to one selected course text. This will involve preparing questions for class-mates and guiding discussion. Students are also expected to have read each required reading and participate in every class discussion and group activity.

Essay on Irish Cultural Identity

The students are provided with several essay topics which cover the breadth of the class. Students may devise their own topic but must have it approved by the lecturer. Topics must be based on material covered in the lecture series. The use of readings and academic references is required. In this context, it is expected that the essay will involve independent research and critical analysis.

Word Count: 1200 words (excluding title page and references)

Course work must be completed and submitted on time. Any unexplained delay will result in a 10% reduction in grade per day. If the assessment is more than 3 days late then students will be required to meet with the Resident Director. No coursework will be accepted after the last day of class.
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1

1.1 | Course Outline and Introduction to Irish Identity

- Syllabus overview
- Assignments overview
- What is identity?

Week 2

2.1 | Identity and Power

- ‘Encoding and Decoding’ cultural texts
- The relationship between identity and power - class, gender, race
- Work due for this class - discussion of ‘Encoding/Decoding’


2.2 | 800 Years in a Couple of Hours: Historical Context of Ireland

- Outline of the major cultural forces that have shaped Irish identity – religion, class, gender and sexuality, ethnicity, and nationalism
- Work due for this class - Class discussion of Black ‘47

Wetherell, M. 2008. ‘Subjectivity or Psycho-discursive Practices?’ Subjectivity, 22, pp.73-81.

2.3 | Trauma and The Troubles

- Historical context of Northern Ireland
- Screening: *Bloody Sunday*
- Class discussion of *Bloody Sunday*
- Work due for this class – Everyone: Blaney – ‘Remembering Historical Trauma in Paul Greengrass’s Bloody Sunday’


Offsite Instruction | Belfast Trip

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**Week 3**

**3.1 | Imagining Ireland: National Identity and Culture**

- Outline of theory of social imaginaries and imagined communities
- Exploration of Irish cultural nationalism in the context of colonialism
- Assignment due: Media Project
- Work due: Joyce, ‘The Dead’. Group 1 – Preparation for leading class discussion


**3.2 | Postcolonialism and Irish Identity**

- Irish cultural identity after colonial rule
- Ireland and modernity
- Work Due: Rocky Road to Dublin. Group 2 – Preparation for leading class discussion
- Onsite Instruction: North Inner City Folklore Museum

Lennon, P. 1967. Rocky Road to Dublin [online] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kaAQHj9Efk

**3.3 |The Positioning of Women in Recent Irish History**
- Women of the Revolution
- Women after the Revolution
- **Work due:** Everyone – Claire Keegan, selection from Antartica. Group 3 – Preparation for leading class discussion


### 3.4 | The Irish Man
- Hegemonic masculinity and the Irish context
- Online masculinities
- The Irish liberal revolution
- **Work due:** Everyone - *I Am Traveller*. Group 4 – Preparation for leading class discussion


### 3.5 | Neoliberal Ireland
- From protectionism to neoliberalism
- The Irish sociotechnical imaginary
- Class discussion of ‘The Night Gym’
- **Work due:** Everyone: ‘The Night Gym’ prepared for class discussion


**Week 4**
4.1 | New Ireland, New Identities

- Exploration of marginalised identities – migrants, travellers, working class youth.
- Speaking in HR: Revising the intercultural experience

Crowley and Kitchin ‘Academic “Truth” and the Perpetuation of Negative Attitudes and Intolerance Towards Irish Travellers in Contemporary Ireland’ (pp.153-170).

4.2 | Onsite Instruction

- *Inequality and Poverty in the Land of Plenty*
- *Assignment due: Final Paper*
- *Assignment due: Written response to Bloody Sunday*
- *Assignment due: Written response to ‘The Night Gym’*


Selected site-visits/tours

**North Inner City Walking Tour:** This tour is led by local historian and founder of the North Inner City Folklore Project, Terry Fagan. It features stories from around Dublin’s onetime famous red-light district, known as “Monto”. The tour takes in stories of the 1913 great Lockout and the 1916 Easter Rising. Students will discover what life was like for the ordinary local people living in the rat-infested tenements and of the man from Monto with the hidden secret, dubbed after his death as “Dublin’s Oskar Schindler”.

**GPO** – A guided tour of one of the key sites of the 1916 Irish Rising, the rebellion that precipitated the Irish War of Independence.

**National Museum (Archaeology)** - This is the national repository for all archaeological objects found in Ireland and home to over two million artifacts. The visit charts Irish history and give the students an opportunity to see the artefacts of from times and events in their lecture series.

**Kilmainham Gaol** - This trip is linked to the Shaping of Ireland and the Gaol itself is a lesson in object history. The history of the gaol is intertwined with the major events in modern Irish History such as the Famine, Political struggle for Home Rule, the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and the Civil War.
Ballad Walking Tour: The tour uses ballad singing and storytelling to bring students through the cultural history of Dublin.

The National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts & History: is home to a wide range of objects, which include weaponry, furniture, silver, ceramics and glassware; as well as examples of folk-life and costume.

The National Gallery of Ireland houses the national collection of Irish and European fine art. Student will get to appreciate Irish art and will get an alternative insight into Irish culture.

Irish Museum of Modern Art: Collection and exhibitions of Irish modern art.

Further Reading


Tovey, H., Perry, S. 2000. *A Sociology of Ireland*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.