DESCRIPTION: This interdisciplinary course offers students an introduction to Irish heroic literature, Celtic mythology and Irish fairy tales and folklore. We will read a selection of early Irish tales from The Mythological Cycle, The Ulster Cycle, The Cycle of Finn and The Historical Cycle, exploring what literary genres our stories fit into, the significance of various recurring themes and symbols, the connections between Celtic mythology and other world mythologies and the origins of Arthurian legends as based upon Celtic prototypes. These stories offer a fascinating insight into the complex world of pre-Christian and early Christian Ireland by painting vivid portraits of life, culture and legends in pagan times. In addition to the literature aspect of this course, we will also explore insular and continental Celtic archaeology and early Irish history, both of which will enable us to place our stories within a tangible, historical framework. We will also examine legends of otherworldly beings that are particular to Ireland, such as the banshee, the leprechaun and the pooka—discussing how, over time, the mythology and pagan beliefs of early Ireland transformed into Irish folklore and superstitions.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
- Lectures
- Seminar discussion
- Small group discussion

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
Please bear in mind that this is a reading intensive course and you must have the required reading completed for the assigned day.
- Participation - 10%
- Presentation/Discussion leading - 20%
- Museum Review and Artefact Biography - 25%
- Final Essay - 25%
- Final exam - 20%

EVALUATION CRITERIA:
Oral and written assignments will be evaluated and graded according to the following: Content, Critical Engagement, Clarity, Research, Original Thoughts and Ideas.
1. Content: Clear, concise central thesis presented, line of argument is focused and sustained throughout the presentation/paper.
2. Critical Engagement: Line of argument is fully developed, ideas and points put forward are thoroughly analysed and fleshed out.
3. Clarity: Writing style/presentation is clear and fluently expressed with correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, paper/presentation is well organised and secondary sources are correctly cited.
4. Research: The presentation/paper is well researched and all secondary sources are thoroughly engaged with and clearly referenced.
5. Original Thoughts and Ideas: In addition to engagement with secondary sources, original ideas and independent analysis must be offered.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the course students will be able to:
- Assimilate the connections between Celtic archaeology, mythology and early Irish literature.
- Engage critically and analytically with early literary texts and place them within a historical framework.
- Discern how Celtic mythology came to form the fabric of Ireland’s folklore.
ATTENDANCE POLICY:
IES Abroad Dublin courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instruction and the lecture/discussion format, regular class attendance is mandatory. Any missed class, without a legitimate reason will be reflected in the final grade. A legitimate reason would include: documented illness or family bereavement. Travel, (including travel delays) is not a legitimate reason.

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<td>Introduction to Early Irish Life, Culture, Mythology and Literature</td>
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<td>From Neolithic to Iron Age Ireland. Who were the Celts?</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Celtic Myth and the “founding” of Fairy Ireland</td>
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<td>Sun Worship and Druidic Practices in the Celtic World</td>
<td>Heaney - The Mythological Cycle: The Tuatha Dé Danann; The Milesians Come to Ireland.</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Epic and Romance and Building the Irish Hero</td>
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<td>Required Course-Related Trip: Newgrange</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Required Course-Related Trip: National Museum of Ireland</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Irish Epic: The Táin</td>
<td>Heaney - The Ulster Cycle: Cú Chulainn and Ferdiá’s Fight at the Ford, The Weakness of the Ulstermen; excerpts from Kinsella’s translation of The Táin. Documentary – The Celts</td>
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<td>The Celts</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>The Death Tales</td>
<td>Heaney: The Ulster Cycle - The Death of Connla, The Death of Cú Chulainn Cross and Slover handout - The Death of Conchobhar</td>
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<td>Death and the Afterlife</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>The Journey into Fairy Land</td>
<td>Heaney - The Mythological Cycle: Midhir and Étain; The Cycle of Finn: The Birth of Finn’s</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>The Seanachai: Modern Fairies and Folklore</td>
<td>• WB Yeats - “The Stolen Child”</td>
<td>• Evans Wentz, W.Y.  <em>The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries,</em> 1911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**REQUIRED READINGS:**

- O’Toole, Fintan.  *Ireland in 100 Objects.* Dublin: Royal Irish Society, 2013.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

- Evans Wentz, W.Y.  *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries,* 1911
• Vermont: Inner Traditions Press, 1996.
• Mallory, JP. 'In Search of Irish Dreamtime: Archaeology and Early Irish Literature.' London: Thames and Hudson, 2016.