LT 340 IRISH LITERATURE IN THE LAST 100 YEARS: IDENTITY, SELFHOOD AND THE STATE
IES Abroad Dublin

DESCRIPTION: The part that storytelling has played and continues to play in Ireland is difficult to underestimate. Perhaps more than any other English-speaking people, the Irish have an affinity with and aptitude for narrative that places story at the core of their collective consciousness. Ireland has long been a country of stories, from mythical tales of ancient warrior tribes and their epic quests and battles, to contemporary narratives of ‘everyday’ people living in extraordinary circumstances. Many of Ireland’s most well known and accomplished writers have produced their best work while in self-imposed exile. This curious phenomenon is one of the reasons why a close engagement with Irish literature perpetuates a fundamental characteristic of art: more questions are asked than answered.

This course examines selected works by Irish authors writing in English from the end of the 19th century to the present day. Students will be guided in the critical reading of primary sources and will practice how to interpret literary texts from different genres. Concurrently, primary readings will help illustrate and illuminate aspects of Irish culture and society and trace patterns of change. The 20th Century saw Ireland emerge from a decade of unrest as a free state in 1922, achieve the status of Republic in 1948, and join the EEC (EU) in 1970. Partition in 1926 resulted in Northern Ireland remaining part of the United Kingdom, including within its borders at the time a sizable nationalist minority. These political developments and ensuing periods of violence created different conditions for writing North and South of the border. Over the last sixty years, the rapid modernization of the Irish economy has led to tensions between Church and State over national morality. A pronounced urban/rural divide has emerged, and a conviction that the state has not always acted in the best interests of the majority of its citizens. These circumstances have given rise to experimental works of literature that challenge the fundamental concepts of selfhood and identity along national, gender, religious and ethnic lines. Each of the twelve class sessions will be situated in the appropriate historical context and cross-referenced to the literary trends that the primary text exemplifies.

Beyond developing academic reading skills, students will be encouraged to think critically about themes and trends while analysing the connections to the cultural reality accompanying their respective study abroad experience.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: Students from the IES Dublin Summer Irish Studies program may enrol in this course

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
- Class will meet twice a week for two and a half hours in a seminar format. Students will be required to come to class prepared to discuss the primary texts.
- During class, readings, music and screening of pertinent documentary and film pieces will help students develop an understanding of cultural, historical, and ideological circumstances and principles.
- Guided walking tours and course-related trips will make cultural Dublin a fundamental learning resource. Its compact layout makes the city ideal for excursions to locations of note such as libraries, museums and galleries.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
The various elements will be taken into account when determining final grades are listed and weighted below. The content, criteria and specific requirements for each assessment category will be explained in greater detail in class. All formal written work must be submitted via the IES Dublin Moodle.
- Participation (10%)
- Midterm Academic Paper, 2000 words (25%)
- Theatre Reflection Paper, 2000 words (25%)
- End-of-term Academic Paper, 3500 words (40%)
**Participation (10%)**:
The ambition in including a participation component is to facilitate students learning from each other and to give them the opportunity to practice and develop listening, speaking and persuasive skills. A set of simple guidelines will be introduced at the start of Session 1. These guidelines will be discussed in detail so that students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Below is an outline of these guidelines:

**Outstanding Participant**: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas are consistently substantive and insightful, and persuasively presented. Absence would significantly diminish the quality of class discussion.

**Good Participant**: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive and insightful, and often persuasively presented. Absence would diminish quality of class discussion.

**Adequate Participant**: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas are sometimes substantive and insightful, but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Absence would diminish quality of class discussion.

**Non-Participant**: Little or no contribution in class. Subsequently, there is limited basis for evaluation. Absence would not affect the quality of class discussion.

**Unsatisfactory Participant**: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide little insight, and are rarely constructive. Absence would improve the quality of class discussion.

**Midterm Academic Paper, 2000 words (25%)**: A research paper focused on at least one of the topics studied in class during the semester that students will have to analyse in depth. The paper must be at least 2000 words in length, and include reference to secondary sources and a bibliography of the sources used.

**Theatre Reflection Paper, 2000 words (25%)**: In this paper, students will reflect on the experience of attending a performance of a play that will be read and discussed in class. In doing so, each student will identify how the play was realised as a theatrical piece, how directorial decisions affected the 'page to stage' process, and, where appropriate, how differences between text and performance might resonate in the contemporary world. For example, the implications of Sean O’Casey's critique of the 1916 Rising - 'The Plough and the Stars' - being set in Dublin in 2016. Students will need to develop a thorough understanding of the text and the socio-historical context of the setting, and to engage with and make reference to appropriate secondary readings.

**End-of-term Academic Paper, 3500 words (40%)**: A research paper focused on at least one of the topics studied in class during the semester that students will have to analyse in depth. The paper must be at least 3500 words in length, and include reference to secondary sources and a bibliography of the sources used.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**
Knowledge Skills: Cultural, Historical, and Literary
- to interpret how cultural trends throughout the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries have shaped Irish literature
- to illustrate an awareness of the role emigration has played in the shaping of Irish identity
- to develop an understanding of postcolonial theory and be able to apply it to Irish culture

Critical Thinking Skills: Oral and Written
- to develop critical thinking so as to better understand political, social and historical factors represented in the literary texts
- to effectively identify, evaluate, and utilize pertinent secondary sources
- to recognise and apply conceptual tools and appropriate vocabulary in order to produce original papers and text analysis

Attitudinal Skills: Affective & Behavioral
- to value literature as a possible means of understanding a new culture
- to gain intercultural competence
- to further develop inter and intra personal skills

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**
A note about the IES DUBLIN ATTENDANCE POLICY: Because IES 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.

**CONTENT:**

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| **Session 1** | The Irish Literary Tradition: Potencies and Paradoxes  
*Presentation, Readings, and Discussion* | Required readings and resources:  
| **Session 2** | Language and Identity in Irish Writing  
*Presentation, Readings, and Discussion* | Required readings and resources:  
| **Session 3** | Linguistic Cartography: Brian Friel’s Translations  
*Presentation, Readings, and Discussion* | Required readings and resources:  
| **Session 4** | Everyday Street Life: *Ulysses* by James Joyce  
*Presentation, Readings, and Discussion* | Required readings and resources:  
### Session 5
#### The Truth of Life As He Saw It: *Dubliners* by James Joyce

**Presentation, Readings, and Discussion**

**Required readings and resources:**


### Session 6
#### The Political and the Personal: Selected Writings and Poetry of WB Yeats

**Presentation, Readings, and Discussion**

**Required readings and resources:**

| Session 7 | Dramatic Timing: Irish Theatre and Sociopolitical Change  
Presentation, Readings, and Discussion |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------|
|           | Required readings and resources:  

| Session 8 | Society and the Irish Short Story  
Presentation, Readings, and Discussion |
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**Session 12**

**Stand Back And Let It All Be: Poetry and Contemporary Ireland**

*Presentation, Readings, and Discussion*

**Required reading and resources:**


**REQUIRED READINGS:**

*Copies of all readings, audio, and video resources available on the IES Dublin Moodle*


RECOMMENDED READINGS:
Copies of all readings are available in the IES Dublin Library