

Syllabus

English 598.03 / Irish Studies 398.01 / Women's Studies 498.02 / European Studies 498.06:
Irish Women Writers
Fall 2012, M 7:15-9:45 pm, UH 1401

Professor: Molly Youngkin
Office: University Hall 3852
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2-2:45 pm and 4:30-6:45pm

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Course Description and Objectives

This course will examine women's issues in Ireland from 1800 to the present, from the perspective of Irish women novelists, playwrights, and poets. We will discuss how Irish women have typically been represented in literature, art, music, etc. and how real-life women have reacted to those representations. Over the course of the semester, we will read a diverse range of Irish women writers, and we will look at film and stage adaptations of these works to examine how representations of women in literature are translated to visual media.

In keeping with the goals of the undergraduate and graduate programs in English, Women's Studies, Irish Studies, and European Studies, we will take as our objectives:

- studying the literary, historical, national, and gender contexts for interpreting Irish texts
- improving our ability to interpret these texts in both written and verbal form
- examining primary and secondary sources, in order to produce high-quality oral presentations and critical papers

Because we are coming at this material from diverse disciplines, I will assume only basic knowledge of Irish history, women's history, and literary concepts. Don't hesitate to ask questions; we can fill in the gaps in our background knowledge together!

Required Texts

Boland, Eavan. *Domestic Violence*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. ISBN 9780393333084

Bowen, Elizabeth. *The Last September*. 1929. New York: Random House/Anchor, 2000. ISBN 0385720149.

Carr, Marina. *Woman and Scarecrow*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 2010. ISBN 082222416X or 978-0822224167.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th edition. New York: Modern Language Association, 2009. ISBN 9781603290241.

Gregory, Lady. Selected works, available through ERes.

Gore-Booth, Eva. Selected poems, available through ERes.

Lavin, Mary. Selected Stories, available through ERes.

Markievicz, Constance. Selected works, available through ERes.

O'Brien, Edna. *House of Splendid Isolation*. New York: Penguin/Plume, 1995. ISBN 0452274524

Owenson, Sydney (Lady Morgan). *The Wild Irish Girl*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. ISBN 9780199552498

Somerville, Edith, and Martin Ross. *The Real Charlotte*. 1894. Nashville: J. S. Sanders, 1999. ISBN 1879941465 or 978-1879941465.

Please purchase the editions I have specified here. It's very difficult to have a productive discussion if people are using a variety of editions, all with different page numbers.

To access ERes materials, see instructions at the end of the syllabus. You are responsible for printing out all the items included in ERes. It is not enough to read the articles before you come to class and work from memory while in class. It is not enough to access the articles in class on your laptop, since the wireless connection in LMU classrooms is not reliable. You need to have the hard copy articles, marked with your ideas about what is important and what needs to be questioned, with you in class. If you do not bring copies of the articles to class on the day we are discussing them, I will count you absent.

Grade Breakdown

Participation	20%
Oral Presentation	10%
Short Paper	15%
Field Day Anthology Assignment	10%
Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review	20%
Seminar Paper (8-10 pages for undergrads, 12-15 pages for grads)	25%

Assignments and Expectations

Participation: In upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses, participation is an absolute must. I expect you to come ready to discuss the readings for the day with enthusiasm, and I expect everyone to contribute to the discussion. Attendance is also a must. Because this course meets only once a week, you are allowed only two absences. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, so you should save your absences for dire emergencies (death in family, severe illness, work commitments). Coming to class late and leaving class early counts as a partial absence. If you miss more than two classes, there will be a significant reduction in your participation grade. You may not miss a day on which a major assignment is due. Part of the assignment is being in class to present your findings to your classmates.

Oral Presentation: We will use 10-minute oral presentations to get the conversation going each week. You will be expected to present a literary, historical, national, or gender context needed for us to understand the texts assigned for the day. I also expect you to pose a couple of questions for us to consider in our discussion for the day. Please bring a 1-page handout with a brief outline of the context you plan to discuss and the questions you would like us to consider.

Short Paper: You will write one short paper (4-6 pages, double-spaced), about the text you choose to do your oral presentation on. It will be due the week following your presentation, so you can write your paper with the benefit of class discussion. The paper should focus on one of the themes or issues you found most interesting in the text, and it should incorporate at least one outside secondary source not assigned by me. You also are welcome to use sources I have assigned, if they are helpful to your argument.

Field Day Anthology Assignment: Until very recently, one of the major issues in Irish studies has been the lack of secondary sources available about Irish women writers, and the exclusion of women writers from the Field Day Anthology, the definitive anthology of Irish writing, has caused particular concern. Since part of the purpose of this class is to understand Irish texts in its gender context, I would like you to read and analyze a portion of the Field Day Anthology. I will give more details about this assignment in class, but it basically will involve comparing and contrasting one of the essays in the “regular” volumes to an essay in one of the more recent “women’s” volumes. Once you have compared and contrasted the two volumes, you will present your conclusions in a 3-4 page paper. The assignment is due Mon., Oct. 26, at the beginning of class.

Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review: The annotated bibliography is a list of 8 secondary sources, with brief summaries and analyses of the contents of those sources, on any topic related to this course. The literature review is a 2-3 page essay, summing up the materials in the annotated bibliography and analyzing how these materials can provide a framework for the seminar paper. I recommend that you choose the topic you plan to develop in your seminar paper, since annotating the sources will take significant time and effort. I'll give you more details about this assignment in class. The assignment is due Mon., Nov. 23, at the beginning of class.

Seminar Paper: The seminar paper is the major writing assignment for this class and acts as a capstone to the rest of the work you will do this term. Your seminar paper (8-10 pages for undergrads, 12-15 pages for grads) should articulate a clear but complex argument about one of the texts we've read in this class, in relationship to the literary, historical, national, or gender contexts of Irish texts we have discussed this semester. You should demonstrate a critical awareness of the topic you choose by incorporating a range of secondary (and possibly primary) sources; the oral presentation and the short paper may serve as the initial inspiration for your seminar paper, and historical documents assignment and the annotated bibliography should help you gather the research materials for your paper. You will be expected to meet with me to discuss your progress on the paper during the last week of classes, and the paper will be due on Mon., Dec. 14, at 7:15 pm.

Grading Scale and Criteria:

The grading scale for undergraduates is based on the grading system approved by LMU. I will assign numerical grades for all assignments, and I will use the final grade sheet attached to this syllabus to figure final grades. The numerical/letter grade correlation is as follows: 94-100=A, 90-93=A-, 87-89=B+, 84-86=B, 80-83=B-, 77-79=C+, 74-76=C, 70-73=C-, 60-69=D, and 0-59=F. My primary grading criterion is this: for all assignments, I am looking for what I call "academic writing," writing that expresses a complex argument with specific examples as evidence and does so in an engaging, sophisticated manner. See attached handout for more about this. Graduate students should see me for more information about the grading scale and criteria for this course.

Late Assignments:

Expect deductions for late assignments. Typically, I deduct 10 points per 24 hours; for example, a paper that earns 90 points and is a day late will drop to an 80. No papers will be accepted via email, and no double submissions (same project submitted for another class) allowed.

Electronic Equipment and Visitors in the Classroom:

No cell phones, pagers, CD players, tape recorders, or other electronic equipment in the classroom. If you want to bring a laptop to class, record lectures, or bring a guest to class, you must get my approval first.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's ideas or words as your own. It is a serious academic offence and may result in a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, and/or university disciplinary action. For more details about the university's policy on this issue and other forms of academic dishonesty, see the Undergraduate or Graduate Bulletin.

If you are unsure about how to integrate others' ideas or words into your work without plagiarizing, consult your English handbook and/or come talk to me. I'll be glad to help you avoid plagiarism!

Drop policy:

If you do not want a "W" on your record and want a full tuition refund, you must drop the course before the end of the first week of classes. From week 2-10, you may drop, but you will receive a "W" and will not receive a full tuition refund.

Resources for Students:

Tutoring Center: The Tutoring Center is located on the second floor of Daum Hall. Experienced tutors are available to help students who wish to improve their writing. For an appointment, call 338-2847.

Advising: For questions about the undergraduate English curriculum, see your adviser. If you are an English major/minor and you haven't talked to your adviser yet, you should do so as soon as possible.

Disabled Support Services: Persons with disabilities are welcome in this classroom. If you have a disability and need specific accommodations, please register with DSS as soon as possible and then come talk to me. DSS is located in the Academic Resources Center, Room 224 in Daum Hall. The phone number is 338-4535.

Class Schedule

The dates and activities listed below are subject to change, but I will do all I can to keep us on schedule. You are responsible for noting any changes in the syllabus.

- M, 8/27: Syllabus and Introduction to Course
- M, 9/3: No class—Labor Day—but start reading *Wild Irish Girl*.
- M, 9/10: Owenson, *Wild Irish Girl*, pp. 3-266. Also, be sure to read the introduction after you've completed the novel. You should do this for all the novels we read that have introductions, since I will refer to the introductions in class.
- M, 9/17: Somerville and Ross, *The Real Charlotte*, pp. 3-190
- M, 9/24: Somerville and Ross, *The Real Charlotte*, p. 191-386
In class, we also will discuss how to do the Field Day anthology assignment.
- M, 10/1: Gregory, Selected works, *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, "Diarmuid and Grania," *Grania*, and "Introduction." Available through ERes.
- M, 10/8: Bowen, *The Last September*, pp. 3-150
- M, 10/15: Bowen, *The Last September*, pp. 151-303

- M, 10/22: Field Day Anthology Assignment due at the beginning of class.
- Also read selected works by Eva Gore-Booth and Constance Markievicz, available through ERes. We'll spend the first half of class sharing our research findings and discussing how to do the Annotated Bibliography/Literature Review assignment. We'll spend the second half of class discussing the readings by Gore-Booth and Markievicz.
- M, 10/29: Lavin, Selected Stories, "In the Middle of the Fields," "Chamois Gloves," "In a Café," and "A Cup of Tea." Available through ERes.
- M, 11/5: O'Brien, *House of Splendid Isolation*, pp. 3-129
- M, 11/12: O'Brien, *House of Splendid Isolation*, pp. 130-232
- M, 11/19: Annotated Bibliography/Literature Review is due at the beginning of class.
- Also, read Boland, *Domestic Violence*. We will spend the first half of class sharing our research findings and discussing how to proceed with the seminar paper. We'll spend the second half discussing *Domestic Violence*.
- M, 11/26: Carr, *Woman and Scarecrow*
- M, 12/3: Individual Conferences

There is no final exam for this class, but your seminar papers are due in my mailbox on Monday, Dec. 10 by 7:15 pm.

**Molly Youngkin
Grading Criteria
English 598**

Below are the grading criteria for the assignments in this class. When I refer to the paper's thesis, I am referring to the main statement of your argument, which I expect to see early in the essay. When I refer to the argument, I mean the way in which the thesis is developed in the rest of the essay, through clear statements about where the argument is going at key points in the essay. Finally, when I refer to supporting evidence, I mean the specific examples from the text you are using to flesh out your argument. If you have not written this type of paper before, please come talk to me about how to go about it.

A= All material required for the assignment is present. The paper's thesis goes way beyond the obvious, and the argument presents a precise, informed, incisive, and satisfying critical investigation of the topic. The implications of the thesis are fully developed through the use of supporting evidence. The ideas within the essay are well-organized, and the language used in the essay is appropriate to the audience. The essay is written in MLA format, with in-text citations and a Works Cited page.

B= All material required for the assignment is present. The paper's thesis goes beyond the obvious, and the argument presents a clear and accurate investigation of the topic. There is some strong supporting evidence for the thesis, but the ideas may not be fleshed out as fully as they might be, or some readings may not be as precise as they could be. The ideas within the essay are well-organized, and the language used in the essay is appropriate to the audience. The essay is written in MLA format, with in-text citations and a Works Cited page.

C= All material required for the assignment is present. The essay has a thesis and details to support that thesis. The argument is adequate, but does not fully explore the implications of the topic or does not present a critical viewpoint that goes very far beyond the obvious. The supporting evidence for the argument may be adequate but not as fully developed as it could be and less convincing than it could be. The ideas within the essay are appropriately organized, and the language used in the essay is appropriate to the audience. The essay is written in MLA format, with in-text citations and a Works Cited page.

D= Material required for the assignment may be missing. The essay has a weak thesis, and details to support the thesis are not developed adequately. The thesis does not go beyond the obvious or is more descriptive than analytical. Supporting evidence for the thesis may be missing or is so far off-base to be unconvincing. The ideas within the essay are not well-organized, and the language used in the essay may not be appropriate to the audience. The essay may lack items related to MLA format.

F= Material required for the assignment may be missing. The essay has a very weak thesis or no thesis, and details to support the thesis are not developed adequately or are missing. The thesis does not go beyond the obvious or is more descriptive than analytical. Supporting evidence for the thesis may be missing or is so far off-base to be unconvincing. The ideas within the essay are not well-organized, and the language used in the essay may not be appropriate to the audience. The essay may lack items related to MLA format.

**Molly Youngkin
Grade Calculation Sheet
English 598**

Student _____

	Numerical Value		Percentage Weight	Total Weight
Participation	_____	x	____.20____	= _____
Short Paper	_____	x	____.15____	= _____
Oral Presentation	_____	x	____.10____	= _____
Field Day Anthology Assignment	_____	x	____.10____	= _____
Annotated Bibliography / Lit Review	_____	x	____.20____	= _____
Seminar Paper	_____	x	____.25____	= _____
			Numerical Total	_____
			Final Grade	_____

Final Grade Scale

94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
60-69	D
0-59	F

Directions

1) Fill in the appropriate numerical value for each assignment; 2) Multiply that value by the percentage weight in the second column; 3) Add the amounts in the "total" column; 4) Use the "final grade scale" to calculate your final letter grade.