



LEARNING ABROAD CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Storytelling: Writing Irish Cultural Narratives

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: DBLN 3011

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Instructor: Dr. Sara Keating

Course Description

This course will examine the role of storytelling in Irish culture and the way in which 'story' is used to create a narrative of Irish culture. It will provide an introduction to traditional oral folk traditions, modernist documentations in the Irish short story, theatrical performance, filmic narratives, and the contemporary iteration of cultural change on the streets of its capital city. Students will have an opportunity to practice immersive research and to engage in a variety of different modes of storytelling.

Course Objectives

Through exploring the tradition of storytelling in Ireland, from conservation to subversion and from folk tale to street art, students will discover in and out of the classroom how this embedded feature of Irish culture allows and obstructs how to present and represent a nation to itself and others and how the students too can create a story

Methodology

The course will be taught in individual theme-based seminars. There will be a core lecturer, with visiting speakers as appropriate. Student participation through presentation and class discussion will be essential. Attendance on field trips is mandatory.

Required Reading / Materials

Primary Texts

- J. M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*
- James Joyce, *An Encounter*
- Edna O'Brien, *Selected Stories*
- Samuel Beckett, *Krapp's Last Tape/All That Fall*
- Eric Cross, *The Tailor and Ansty*
- Tom Murphy, *Bailegangaire*
- Brian Friel, *Faith Healer*
- Conor McPherson, *This Lime Tree Bower*
- Mark O'Rowe, *Howie the Rookie Frank McCourt, Angela's Ashes*
- Nuala O'Faolan, *Are You Somebody?*
- Michael Harding, *Staring at Lakes*
- Sinead Gleeson, *Blue Hills and Chalk Bones in Granta: New Writing From Ireland 2016*
- Emer O'Toole, *Girls Will be Girls*
- Ciaran Cassidy, *The Boys of Foley Street*

Secondary Reading

- Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, Chapter 7. The national longing for form
- J. M. Synge, *The Aran Islands*
- Robert Flaherty, *Man of Aran*
- Nicholas Grene, *The Politics of Irish Drama: From Boucicault to Friel*, Chapter 2. *Strangers in the House*
- Eric Cross, *The Tailor and Antsy*
- Ed Fintan Walsh, *Theatres of Testimony in That Was Us: Contemporary Irish Theatre and Performance*
- Aoife Kelleher, *One Million Dubliners*
- Ed Fintan Walsh, *Theatres of Testimony in That Was Us: Contemporary Irish Theatre and Performance*

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
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.

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
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

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Class contribution	25%
Research Project: 2 parts	50%
Story/Telling Performance/Presentation	25%
Overall grade	100%

Course Content

Unit 1

- Introduction: Telling Stories/ Storytelling

Unit 2

- Folk Tales and Fantasies: The gap between the story and the gallous deed
- J. M. Synge, The Playboy of the Western World and Man of Aran (film)J. M. Synge The Aran Islands,

Unit 3

- Filth and Fantasy:
- James Joyce, An Encounter/ Edna O'Brien, The Country Girls

Unit 4

- Mastering the Telling/ The Master Storyteller: • Eric Cross, The Tailor and Ansty • Guest Speaker/Workshop Nuala Hayes

Unit 5

- Truth and Lies: Storytelling as Theatre
- Brian Friel, Faith Healer/ Tom Murphy Bailegangaire/ Mark O'Rowe, Howie The Rookie

Unit 6

- Writing workshop with Fighting Words

Unit 7

- Glamorous Poverty:
- Frank McCourt, Angela's Ashes/ Peter Lennon, The Rocky Road to Dublin (documentary film)

Unit 8

- The Writing on the Wall: Political Graffiti

Unit 9

- Have I No Mouth? Staging Oral Histories (ANU Theatre and Brokentalkers)

Unit 10

- Telling it Like it Is: Storytelling workshop with Stephen James Smith (poet)
- Class Visit to Milk and Cookies Storytelling Event

Unit 11

- Queering the Nation One Tweet at a Time
- Emer O'Toole, Girls Will be Girls/ Dir. Conor Horgan, The Queen of Ireland

Unit 12

Theme

- Real Life as Literary Form: The Confessional Essay and telling your own story
- Text: Sinéad Gleeson, Blue Hills and Chalk Bones/Michael Harding, Staring at Lakes

Unit 13

Theme

- Final storytelling performance/presentation

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance

alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & 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. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).