

English 298: Irish Mythology, Then & Now
Spring 2014
TR 8:55 – 10:05 a.m.

Dr. Joel Wingard, Zinzendorf 304
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Course description and objectives

This course offers an examination of early Irish (or Celtic) myths in their own context and in terms of the uses of those myths by modern Irish writers. The course focuses on the ways myths shaped and reflected the cultural consciousness of ancient Ireland and the ways that consciousness was reshaped from the mid-19th century into the 20th. The course will involve the study of fiction, poetry, drama, film and popular culture texts, both written and iconic. Objectives of the course are:

- Enhanced understanding of Irish mythology and of the interpenetration of myth and history
- Enhanced understanding of a “foreign” culture
- Improved literacy with respect to Irish myths and the work of selected modern Irish writers
- Strengthened reading, writing, and oral presentation skills

This is a 200-level course, which by College policy:

- Build[s] on 100-level concepts and skills
- Provide[s] guided practice in methodologies and ways of thinking and knowing relevant to the discipline(s) in the course.
- Use[s] disciplinary content as a vehicle to the acquisition of skills
- [Is] Intended for people with a serious interest in the discipline and as a gateway to the major
- Build[s] an awareness of the language and behavior of the discipline(s) relevant to the course
- Involve[s] significant personal engagement in the material in and beyond the classroom
- Involve[s] synthesis of ideas from the discipline(s) relevant to the course and expression of original ideas

Required books (These will be supplemented by readings on handout, as indicated in the assignment schedule or not.)

Finneran, Richard J., ed. *The Yeats Reader*. Revised edition. New York: Simon & Schuster-Scribner, 2002.

Friel, Brian. *Dancing at Lughnasa*. London: Faber & Faber, 1990.

Glassie, Henry, ed. *Irish Folk Tales*. New York: Knopf-Pantheon, 1997.

Heaney, Seamus. *Sweeney Astray*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1984.

Jackson, Kenneth H., trans. *A Celtic Miscellany*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1972.

MacKillop, James. *Myths and Legends of the Celts*. London: Pearson Penguin, 2006.

Projects and grades

Students in ENGL 298 will be subject to two Contracts: an Inquiry Contract and a Grade Contract.

Inquiry Contract – This will govern the major written assignments, the group presentations, and the course portfolio. It is a way for each student to identify a particular topic or topics for study within the overall course topic and to use written and oral assignments to learn about that topic/s. It will consist of

- An written initial *Inventory* to discover and develop topics of interest;
- A written *Proposal and Clarification* project to articulate and declare a topic of interest;
- Two *Information* projects – one for an audience of peers, one for a wider academic or public audience – that present findings through close study of and/or research on the designated topic;1
- An oral *Presentation* – done in collaboration with a small group of classmates – on a related topic.

Grade Contract – This sets students’ course grades in advance. It says that each student will earn a **B** in the course if s/he:

- Completes all assigned work on time² and satisfactorily³
- Participates in satisfactory fashion in the group oral presentation
- Submits, on time and in satisfactory fashion, a Course Portfolio (see below)
- Earns at least a C+ grade for class participation (see below)

Students may earn an A for exceptional quality work on required assignments and for at least a B+ grade for class participation.

Class participation – In addition to the participation called for in connection with the presentations described above, this will comprise *attendance* (including *film viewings*), *responsive writing*, and *class discussion*.⁴ This course will depend on your participation; it will not be a lecture course; it will be student-centered and discussion-centered.

Course portfolio – This final project will include the Inventory, the Proposal and Clarification project, both Information projects and an outline for and summary description of the oral presentation; a selection of pieces of responsive writing; and a final written reflective statement.

Statement on academic honesty

It is every student’s responsibility to be aware of College policy regarding academic honesty and plagiarism.

The policy is laid out in the *Student Handbook* at

<http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic/academic2.html> Any student who feels s/he does not understand the policy is welcome to consult with Dr. Wingard before any written work is submitted.

1 These may be in any number of media.

2 “on time” ordinarily means that work is submitted, whether physically or electronically, on the assigned due date and time; late work will be subject to penalty if arrangements for its being submitted late are not approved in advance by Dr. Wingard.

3 “satisfactory” means complete, purposeful and reasonably correct as to grammar, mechanics, spelling and formatting; students will be allowed, without penalty, one rewrite of work judged unsatisfactory.

4 “discussion points” are awarded to students for speaking voluntarily in class; (at the same time, students are expected to be ready to respond to questions and situations presented by the instructor); these points, together with attendance and “on time” and “satisfactory” points, will form a numerical basis for Class Participation grades.

Statement on disabilities

If you have a learning disability and believe you may require accommodation to succeed in this course, you should contact the Learning Services Office at 1307 Main Street. Its phone number is 861-1510. Do this as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Any student who wishes to disclose a disability and request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for this course first **MUST** meet with either Mrs. Laurie Roth in the Office of Learning Services (for learning disabilities and/or ADD/ADHD) or Dr. Ronald Kline in the Counseling Center (for all other disabilities). The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

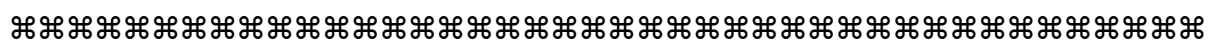
Assignment schedule *

Week I M 1/13 – F 1/17	Course introduction. Inventory-taking ⁵ Video: “Michael Quirke, Woodcarver-Storyteller of Sligo” Introductions to MacKillop, Jackson, and Glassie books Byrne, chapter on “Early Irish Society” (handout); MacKillop, Chapters 1-4.
Week II T 1/21 – F 1/24	MacKillop, Chapters 5-6; <i>A Celtic Miscellany</i> (selections); other tales (handout) MacKillop, Chapters 7-8; <i>A Celtic Miscellany</i> (selections); other tales (handout) Storyteller Tom Egan
Week III M 1/27 – F 1/31	MacKillop, Chapters 9-10; <i>A Celtic Miscellany</i> (selections) MacKillop, Chapters 11-12; <i>A Celtic Miscellany</i> (selections) Professor Sandy Bardsley
Week IV M 2/3 – F 2/7	readings in Celtic Christianity (handouts); <i>A Celtic Miscellany</i> (selections) Film: “The Secret of Roan Inish” Proposal and Clarification project due
Week V M 2/10 – F 2/14	<i>Irish Folk Tales</i> (selections) Fiddler Alison Gillespie
Week VI M 2/17 – F 2/21	<i>Irish Folk Tales</i> (selections) Library day

* This is a general and tentative schedule. I will make more detailed assignments at each class meeting. Some changes may become necessary.

⁵ This writing will be due outside of class, Wednesday, 15 Jan.

Week VII M 2/24 – F 2/28 (midterm)	<i>The Yeats Reader</i> (selected poems)
Week VIII M 3/10 – F 3/14	Plays by J.M. Synge: “In the Shadow of the Glen” and “Deirdre of the Sorrows” (handouts) Film: “Into the West” Information project I due
Week IX M 3/17 – F 3/21	<i>The Yeats Reader</i> (selected poems)
Week X M 3/24 – F 3/28	<i>The Yeats Reader</i> (selected plays)
Week XI M 3/28 – F 4/4	<i>The Yeats Reader</i> (selected plays)
Week XII M 4/7 – F 4/11	Friel, <i>Dancing at Lughnasa</i> Film: “Dancing at Lughnasa” Information project II due
Week XIII M 4/14 – R 4/17	Heaney, <i>Sweeney Astray</i>
Week XIV T 4/22 – F 4/25	Presentations Film: “The Commitments,” “The Dead,” or “Waking Ned Devine”
Week XV M 4/25 – F 4/29	Presentations Presentations
Final exams M 5/2 – Sa 5/7	Portfolios due, TBA



May Term Su 5/11 – R 5/22	Irish Mythology Tour
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