



---

**UCC**

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire  
University College Cork, Ireland

# **Celtic Civilisation**

## **International Students 2020-21**

Roinn na Sean- agus na Meán-Ghaeilge, Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh  
Department of Early and Medieval Irish, University College Cork  
Tel : + 353 21 4903360 / 4902607

# Celtic Civilisation

Celtic Civilisation offers a broad new perspective on early Irish culture. Requiring no previous knowledge or language skills, the subject reveals Ireland's place in ancient and medieval Europe as well as its links with other Celtic regions. It complements courses in related areas such as archaeology, folklore, history or Irish language. Moreover, it provides you with interdisciplinary and analytical skills which are widely transferable.

Modules in year 1 provide you with a comprehensive overview of the origins and inherited ideology of the Celtic peoples, and introduce you to the rich, vital and violent world of medieval Celtic saga.

Modules in year 2 provide close readings of tales of the greatest Irish saints, and of the hero Finn and his companions, and offer insightful investigations of aspects of the culture including poetic sensibility, gender roles and the structure of society.

Year 3 considers the connections between the various Gaelic peoples of these islands, and medieval Irish spirituality, while also engaging in the close reading of some of the great works of medieval Irish and Welsh literature. At this point, it is also possible for you to embark on study of Early Irish language and to learn how to decipher medieval manuscripts.

***A small number of lectures will be delivered solely online. All other lectures will be delivered face-to-face on campus\*. These will also be recorded and made available subsequently online for the benefit of students for whom physical attendance is not feasible.***

***\*This is based on current social distancing guidelines (1m with face-masks in class), which are subject to change in prevailing pandemic circumstances and public health guidelines. Full details will be available on CANVAS module pages after registration.***

## Teaching & Administration Staff

Celtic Civilisation is taught by members of the Department of Early and Medieval Irish. Departmental offices are located in Block A on the ground floor of the O'Rahilly Building (just left of the reception area). The Departmental noticeboard is located to the right of the reception area.

Early and Medieval Irish Departmental Office: G22 O'Rahilly Building.

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9.15 a.m.-1.00 p.m. and 2.15 p.m.-5.00 p.m.

Telephone: +353-21-4903360/4902607

Fax: +353-21-4903102

Email: [c.nichurnain@ucc.ie](mailto:c.nichurnain@ucc.ie)

Website: [www.ucc.ie/en/smg/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/smg/)

Follow us on Twitter: @uccsmghaeilge

## MODULE EXCLUSIVELY AVAILABLE TO VISITING STUDENTS

---

### **CC2250 Ancient Ireland**

---

(5 credits, this module is available in the Autumn Semester and is repeated in the Spring Semester.)

**CC2250 Ancient Ireland** is designed to introduce International students to the culture of early medieval Ireland, and to illuminate connections between its literature, mythology, religion, society and material culture. Giving particular emphasis to medieval tales, as a window onto both the culture which produced them and the traditions on which they drew, this short course will open up a rich world of myth, legend, poetry, history and traditions, providing an understanding of the past which enriches our view of the present.

No previous knowledge of the subject is required and all texts will be studied in translation. Extracts of the translated texts and other documentation will be distributed in class. Lists of recommended reading material will also be supplied so students can go on to explore related topics on their own.

#### **Timetable:**

##### Autumn Semester:

Wednesdays 5pm – 6pm in Western Gateway Building G04

& Thursdays 2pm – 3pm in ORB 212

##### Spring Semester:

Wednesdays 5pm – 6pm in West Wing 6

& Thursdays 2pm – 3pm in ORB 212

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class assessment (40%) & 2,000 word essay to be submitted at the end of the Semester (60%)

# AUTUMN / SEMESTER 1 MODULES

---

## CC1110 The Ancient Celts: Origins

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

This module examines the emergence of the Celts as a separate people in the earliest historical record.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Mondays at 3pm – 4pm in Áras na Laoi G18

**Assessment:** 2,000-word essay (100%)

**Reading:** B. Raftery, ed., *Atlas of the Celts*; S. James, *Exploring the World of the Celts*.

---

## CC1113 Celtic Literature

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

The primary focus of this module is the early heroic literature of the Celtic countries (which is studied in translation), with an emphasis on Irish texts from the Ulster Cycle and in particular on *Táin Bó Cúailnge* ‘The Cattle-Raid of Cooley’, the most important extant epic from medieval Ireland.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Wednesdays 12noon – 1pm in Western Gateway Building 107 & Thursdays 10am – 11am in West Wing 9

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class assessment (20%) & 1½hr Winter Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** J. Gantz, *Early Irish Myths and Sagas*; M. Dillon, *Early Irish Literature*; M. Ní Bhrolcháin, *An Introduction to Early Irish Literature*; any of the following translations of *The Táin*: T. Kinsella, C. Carson, C. O’Rahilly.

---

## CC2002 Celtic Saints

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

Through close reading of stories about several major Celtic saints, this module illuminates such key aspects of Christianity in the Celtic lands as the nature of miracles, the relationship between spiritual and political power, the place of the saint in the community, and conceptions of the nature of holiness. Attention is given to the texts as literature, to the portrayal of a saint as an individual, and to the process of his or her growth into sainthood.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Thursdays 9am – 10am ONLINE & Thursdays 3pm – 4pm ONLINE

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Winter Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** John Carey, *King of Mysteries*; Liam de Paor, *Saint Patrick’s World*; Adomnán, *Life of St Columba* (trans. Richard Sharpe); Máire Herbert, ‘Hagiography’, in K. McCone & K. Simms, *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*.

---

## CC2003 Exile and Longing: Early Celtic Lyric Poetry

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

Selected texts representative of the earliest poetry of Ireland and Wales are studied in translation. The primary aim of this module is to examine the context that gave rise to the oldest vernacular literature in Europe through a close reading of particular poems. The emphasis is on the salient

themes that are readily identifiable in these texts such as love, loss, exile, longing, companionship, love of nature and the onset of age.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Tuesdays 9am – 10am in ORB G20 & Tuesdays 11am-12noon in ORB G20

**Assessment:** 2,000-word essay (60%) & 1hr in-class assessment (40%).

**Reading:** Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics*; Kuno Meyer, *Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry*; Joseph Clancy, *The Earliest Welsh Poetry*.

---

## CC2011 Gender, Image and Identity in Medieval Ireland

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

The Celtic literatures contain a variety of strong and memorable female and male characters, some positively portrayed and others negatively. The idealised gender characteristics which may underpin these portrayals will be explored in the lectures. In the case of the ultimate model of masculinity, the male hero, the myth of heroic prowess coupled with the underlying threat of unpredictability and violence will be examined. In addition, the blurred lines of gender identity in poetry will be a particular focus. Saints' Lives of the Middle Ages, often an unexpected source of gender role reversal and fluidity, will also be covered. A range of representative texts will be read in translation, and discussed and analysed in lectures.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Wednesdays 1pm – 2pm in ORB 101 & Thursdays 4pm – 5pm in ORB 212

**Assessment:** 2,000-word essay (60%) & 1hr in-class assessment (40%)

**Reading:** Angela Bourke, et al., *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Literature*, vol. 4: *Irish Women's Writing and Traditions*; Charlene Eska, *Cáin Lánamna*; Joanne Findon, *A Woman's Words*; John Koch & John Carey, *The Celtic Heroic Age*.

---

## CC3001 The *Mabinogi*: Legends of Medieval Wales

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

An examination of the Welsh tales called the *Mabinogi*, considered both as vehicles of Celtic tradition and as works of literature. These four stories represent some of the finest narrative prose produced in medieval Europe. In a close reading of these tales in translation, students consider their roots in British myth, the evidence for external influences, and ways in which they serve as documents of the time of their composition.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Thursdays 10am – 11am ONLINE & Thursdays 1pm – 2pm ONLINE

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Winter Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** John Carey, *Ireland and the Grail*; Sioned Davies, *The Mabinogion*; Proinsias Mac Cana, *The Mabinogi*; C. W. Sullivan III, *The Mabinogi: A Book of Essays*.

---

## CC3003 Ireland and Scotland: The Gaelic World in the Middle Ages

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

This module examines the early political and ecclesiastical interchange between Ireland and Scotland, covering such topics as the expansion of Irish settlers in Scotland at the expense of the indigenous Picts, the range and significance of the monastic federation of Iona, and the impact of the Vikings in different parts of the Gaelic world.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Tuesdays 3pm – 4pm in ORB 156 & Tuesdays 4pm – 5pm in West Wing 8

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Winter Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** M. Herbert, *Iona, Kells and Derry*; F.J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High-Kings*; A.P. Smyth, *Warlords and Holy Men: Scotland AD 80-1000*; A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba: 789-1070*; J. Bannerman, *Studies in the History of Dalriada*.

---

## CC3010 Early Irish I

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

Study of the basic rules of Early Irish grammar and syntax.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Mondays 12noon – 1pm in West Wing 3 & Tuesdays 1pm – 2pm in ORB 145

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class test (20%) & 1½hr Winter Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** E.G. Quin, *Old-Irish Workbook*; J. Strachan, *Old-Irish Paradigms and Selections from the Old-Irish Glosses*; R. Thurneysen, *A Grammar of Old Irish*.

---

## CC3012 The Roots of the Arthurian Legend

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

The most far-reaching Celtic impact on the European imagination was probably through stories about King Arthur and his knights: although adapted to fit the norms of chivalry, these narratives preserve many themes from Welsh tradition. This module considers the origins of the legends, and traces Celtic elements in the romances themselves. Welsh and Continental Arthurian texts will be read in translation, and analysed and placed in their broader context in lectures.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Thursdays 11am – 12noon ONLINE & Fridays 9am – 10am ONLINE

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Winter Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** Rachel Bromwich et al., *The Arthur of the Welsh*; John Carey, *Ireland and the Grail*; Jeffrey Gantz, *The Mabinogion*; John T. Koch and John Carey, *The Celtic Heroic Age*.

---

## CC3013 Medieval Manuscript Culture

---

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

An introduction to the rich history of medieval manuscripts with a particular emphasis on Irish examples. Themes covered: Medieval Manuscript Culture and Codex Production; Insular Scripts and Scribal Techniques; Late Medieval and Humanist Scripts; the Corpus of Medieval Irish Manuscripts; Modern Irish Manuscript Tradition; Digital Technology and Manuscript Research.

**Timetable:** Autumn Semester, Mondays 4pm – 6pm in Food Science Building 322

**Assessment:** In-class Transcription Exercise (25%); in-class Codicology Exercise (25%); 1,500-2,000 word essay on a Manuscript/Palaeographical Topic (50%).

**Reading:** Timothy O'Neill, *The Irish Hand* (Cork University Press: 2014); Michelle P. Brown, *A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600* (British Library Publishing Division, 1999)

## SPRING /SEMESTER 2 MODULES

---

### CC1100 The Ancient Celts: Legacy

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

The module charts the progress of the Celtic speaking peoples and their social history on the Continent, in Britain and in Ireland.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Mondays at 3pm – 4pm in Electrical Engineering Lecture Theatre 2

**Assessment:** 2,000-word essay (100%)

**Reading:** D. Rankin, *Celts and the Classical World*; S. James, *Exploring the World of the Celts*.

---

### CC1112 Celtic Religion and Mythology

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

The ancient Celts were famous for their extravagant rituals and for their mysterious druid priesthood; but we have no first-hand evidence for their myths and beliefs. This module examines the rich legendary literatures of medieval Ireland and Wales in search of the pagan supernatural traditions on which they drew.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Wednesdays 12noon – 1pm in Kane G18 & Thursdays 10am – 11am in Kane G02

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class assessment (20%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** Jeffrey Gantz, *Early Irish Myths and Sagas*; John T. Koch and John Carey, *The Celtic Heroic Age*; Proinsias Mac Cana, *Celtic Mythology*.

---

### CC2006 Learning and Society in the Celtic Countries

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

A survey of the written sources concerned with the institutions of Church and State. Though the medieval Irish and Welsh law tracts are the most important primary sources for this module, this is not a course in legal history. The course focuses on the nature of learning and society in the Celtic countries in the Middle Ages, examines the major social documents from medieval Ireland and Wales, and provides an outline of the main features of medieval Irish and Welsh societies. All material will be studied in translation.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Tuesdays 9am – 10am in ORB 145 & Tuesdays 11am – 12noon in ORB G20

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** F. Kelly, *A Guide to Early Irish Law*; L. Breatnach, 'Law', in McCone & Simms (ed.), *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, 107-21. D.A. Binchy, 'Irish History and Irish Law I-II', *Studia Hibernica* 15, 7-36; 16, 7-45.

---

## CC2007 The Celtic Languages

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

An examination of the emergence of the Celtic family of languages, and of the main developments undergone by them in the ancient and medieval periods. This course provides students with an overview of the Celtic languages from the earliest Continental Celtic inscriptions down to the decline of the Celtic languages in modern times. Such topics as the place of the Celtic languages within the Indo-European language family and the emergence of Celtic in Britain and Ireland are addressed. This course enables students to recognise how the various Celtic languages are related to one another, but each language is also examined individually within its cultural context.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Wednesdays 1pm – 2pm in ORB G20 & Thursdays 4pm – 5pm in West Wing 7

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** G. Price, *Languages in Britain and Ireland*; M.J. Ball, *The Celtic Languages*; D. Greene, *The Irish Language*.

---

## CC2013 The Finn Cycle

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

Close reading, in translation, of tales and poems from the Finn cycle. Finn mac Cumail is perhaps the greatest hero of the Gaelic world: a warrior and seer celebrated from the oldest records down to our own day. This module surveys tales and poems (all read in translation) reflecting the early phases of the rich cycle of traditions concerning his adventures.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Thursdays 9am – 10am in ORB 212 & Thursdays 3pm – 4pm in West Wing 9

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** Ann Dooley and Harry Roe, *Tales of the Elders of Ireland*; John T. Koch and John Carey, *The Celtic Heroic Age*; Joseph J. Flahive, *The Fenian Cycle in Irish and Scots-Gaelic Literature*; Kuno Meyer, *Fianaigecht*; Kevin Murray, *The Early Finn Cycle*.

---

## CC3006 Irish Historical Tales

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

This module serves as an introduction to medieval Irish literary compositions about characters and events of the early historical era. The material under investigation is datable to the period between the eighth and twelfth centuries AD. Attitudes to kingship and views of history in the tales are explored. All texts are read in translation.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Mondays 12noon – 1pm in West Wing 8 & Tuesdays 3pm – 4pm in West Wing 7

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** M. Dillon, *The Cycles of the Kings*; D. Wiley, *Essays on the Early Irish King Tales*; Lee J. Rayner, *Legends of the Kings of Ireland*; T.P. Cross & C.H. Slover, *Ancient Irish Tales*.

---

## CC3011 Early Irish II

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)



Further study of the basic rules of Early Irish grammar and syntax.

Students must have studied CC3010 or Early Irish previously.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Tuesdays 1pm – 2pm in ORB 145 & Tuesdays 4pm – 5pm in West Wing 8

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class test (20%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** E.G. Quin, *Old-Irish Workbook*; J. Strachan, *Old-Irish Paradigms and Selections from the Old-Irish Glosses*; R. Thurneysen, *A Grammar of Old Irish*; R. de Vries, *A Student's Companion to Old Irish Grammar*.

---

## CC3014 Devotion and Belief in Early Ireland

---

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

This module examines a range of Irish religious writings from the early medieval period. Students use original sources, read in translation, in order to gain insight into the many-sided world of Christian faith in early Ireland. Themes include prayer, the saints, God's relationship with the cosmos, the continuing role of pagan tradition, and ideas concerning the afterlife and the end of the world.

**Timetable:** Spring Semester, Thursdays 11am – 12noon in Connolly C & Thursdays 1pm – 2pm in ORB 101

**Assessment:** 1hr in-class essay (20%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (80%)

**Reading:** John Carey, *King of Mysteries: Early Irish Religious Writings*; John Carey, *A Single Ray of the Sun: Religious Speculation in Early Ireland*; Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics*; Thomas O'Loughlin, *Celtic Theology*.

## SEMESTER 1/ AUTUMN SEMESTER

A small number of lectures (highlighted in yellow below) will be delivered solely online.  
All other lectures will be delivered face-to-face on campus. These will also be recorded and made available subsequently online for the benefit of students for whom physical attendance is not feasible.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9-10		<b>CC2003</b> ORB G20 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i>		<b>CC2002</b> <b>ONLINE</b> <i>Prof John Carey</i>	<b>CC3012</b> <b>ONLINE</b> <i>Prof John Carey</i>
10-11				<b>CC1113</b> West Wing 9 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i> <b>CC3001</b> <b>ONLINE</b> <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
11-12		<b>CC2003</b> ORB G20 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i>		<b>CC3012</b> <b>ONLINE</b> <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
12-1	<b>CC3010</b> West Wing 3 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i>		<b>CC1113</b> Western Gateway Building 107 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i>		
1-2		<b>CC3010</b> ORB 145 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i>	<b>CC2011</b> ORB 101 <i>Dr Cairíona Ó Dochartaigh</i>	<b>CC3001</b> <b>ONLINE</b> <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
2-3				<b>CC2250</b> ORB 212 <i>Dr Riona Doolan</i>	
3-4	<b>CC1110</b> Áras na Laoi G18 <i>Dr Cairíona Ó Dochartaigh</i>	<b>CC3003</b> ORB 156 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i>		<b>CC2002</b> <b>ONLINE</b> <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
4-5	<b>CC3013</b> FSB 322 <i>Dr Cairíona Ó Dochartaigh</i>	<b>CC3003</b> West Wing 8 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i>		<b>CC2011</b> ORB 212 <i>Dr Cairíona Ó Dochartaigh</i>	
5-6	<b>CC3013</b> FSB 322 <i>Dr Cairíona Ó Dochartaigh</i>		<b>CC2250</b> WGB G04 <i>Dr Riona Doolan</i>		

CC2250 Ancient Ireland  
CC1110 The Ancient Celts: Origins  
CC1113 Celtic Literature  
CC2002 Celtic Saints  
CC2003 Exile and Longing: Early Celtic Lyric Poetry  
CC2011 Gender, Image and Identity in Medieval Ireland

CC3001 The Mabinogi: Legends of Medieval Wales  
CC3003 Ireland and Scotland: The Gaelic World in the Middle Ages  
CC3010 Early Irish I  
CC3012 The Roots of the Arthurian Legend  
CC3013 Medieval Manuscript Culture

## SEMESTER 2/ SPRING SEMESTER

### *PROVISIONAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE*

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>9-10</b>		<b>CC2006</b> ORB 145 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i>		<b>CC2013</b> ORB 212 <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
<b>10-11</b>				<b>CC1112</b> Kane G02 <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
<b>11-12</b>		<b>CC2006</b> ORB G20 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i>		<b>CC3014</b> Connolly C <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
<b>12-1</b>	<b>CC3006</b> West Wing 8 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i>		<b>CC1112</b> Kane G18 <i>Prof John Carey</i>		
<b>1-2</b>		<b>CC3011</b> ORB 145 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i>	<b>CC2007</b> ORB G20 <i>Dr Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh</i>	<b>CC3014</b> ORB 101 <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
<b>2-3</b>				<b>CC2250</b> ORB 212 <i>Dr Riona Doolan</i>	
<b>3-4</b>	<b>CC1100</b> Elect L2 <i>Dr Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh</i>	<b>CC3006</b> West Wing 7 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i>		<b>CC2013</b> West Wing 9 <i>Prof John Carey</i>	
<b>4-5</b>		<b>CC3011</b> West Wing 8 <i>Dr Kevin Murray</i>		<b>CC2007</b> West Wing 7 <i>Dr Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh</i>	
<b>5-6</b>			<b>CC2250</b> West Wing 6 <i>Dr Riona Doolan</i>		

CC2250 Ancient Ireland  
 CC1100 The Ancient Celts: Legacy  
 CC1112 Celtic Religion and Mythology  
 CC2006 Learning and Society in the Celtic Countries  
 CC2007 The Celtic Languages  
 CC2011 Gender, Image and Identity in Medieval Ireland

CC2013 The Finn Cycle  
 CC3006 Irish Historical Tales  
 CC3011 Early Irish II  
 CC3014 Devotion and Belief in Early Ireland