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Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire
University College Cork, Ireland

Celtic Civilisation

International Students 2024-25

Roinn na Sean- agus na Meán-Ghaeilge
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Department of Early and Medieval Irish
University College Cork

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.

Modes of Teaching Delivery for Academic Year 2024-25

The most accurate and up-to-date timetabling and teaching arrangements will be available on the relevant CANVAS module pages after completion of programme and module registration. It is important that students be properly registered early so that they can access this information.

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.

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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 provides a comprehensive overview of the origins, ideology, society and history of the inhabitants of Ancient Ireland, and introduces the rich and violent world of early Irish literature. Ireland will be studied in the context of its legal and historical material, mythology, poetry and legends, exploring the links between the tales, the landscape and the people. Other sources such as ogham stones and manuscripts will be considered as well.

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 (West Wing 5)
& Thursdays 2pm – 3pm (O’Rahilly Building 212)

Spring Semester

Wednesdays 5pm – 6pm (West Wing 6)
& Thursdays 2pm – 3pm (O’Rahilly Building 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: Semester 1

Seminars and Tutorials: Mondays 2pm – 3pm (ORB 202)

Lectures: Mondays 3pm – 4pm (Boole 1)

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)

This module deals with the early heroic literature of the Celtic countries, with a focus 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: Semester 1

Wednesdays 12noon – 1pm (West Wing 5) & Thursdays 10am – 11am (West Wing 6)

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 their historical and cultural context, and to the evidence that they afford for conceptions of holiness.

Timetable: Semester 1

Thursdays 9am – 10am (Boole 6) & Thursdays 1pm – 2pm (ORB 202)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (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 earliest 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: Semester 1

Tuesdays 9am – 10am (ORB G20) & Tuesdays 11am-12noon (ORB G20)

Assessment: 2,000-word essay (60%) & 1,000-1,500-word essay (40%)

Reading: James Carney, *Early Irish Poetry*; 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 expected 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: Semester 1

Thursdays 3pm – 5pm (ORB 212)

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

Reading: Sheehan and Dooley, *Constructing Gender in Medieval Ireland*; Angela Bourke, et al., *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Literature*, vol. 4: *Irish Women's Writing and Traditions*; Charlene Eska, *Cáin Lánamna*.

CC3001 Legends of Medieval Wales: The *Mabinogi*

(5 credits, Autumn Semester)

An examination of the Welsh tales designated the *Mabinogi*, considered both as vehicles of Celtic tradition and as works of literature. The four Welsh tales known as 'The Four Branches of the *Mabinogi*' represent some of the finest narrative prose produced in medieval Europe. In a close reading of these stories 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: Semester 1

Wednesdays 1pm – 2pm (ORB G20) & Thursdays 10am – 11am (West Wing 3)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (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: Semester 1

Tuesdays 3pm – 4pm (ORB 244) & Tuesdays 4pm – 5pm (ORB 202)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (30%) & 1½hr Winter Written Examination (70%)

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: Semester 1

Mondays 12noon – 1pm (ORB 255) & Tuesdays 1pm – 2pm (ORB 145)
The tutorial hour and location will be organised at the beginning of term.

Assessment: 1hr in-class assessment (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: Semester 1

Thursdays 11am – 12noon (West Wing 4) & Fridays 9am – 10am (Boole 5)

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

Reading: Rachel Bromwich et al., *The Arthur of the Welsh*; John Carey, *Ireland and the Grail*; Sioned Davies, *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: Semester 1

Mondays 4pm – 6pm (Food Science Building, Room 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: Semester 2

Seminars and Tutorials: Mondays 2pm – 3pm (ORB 156)

Lectures: Mondays 3pm – 4pm (West Wing 6)

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: Semester 2

Wednesdays 12noon – 1pm (Kane G18) & Thursdays 10am – 11am (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: Semester 2

Tuesdays 9am – 10am (ORB 145) & Tuesdays 11am – 12noon (ORB G20)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (30%) & 1½hr Summer Written Examination (70%)

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 languages, and of the main developments undergone by them in the ancient and medieval periods. This course provides students with an overview of the history 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 in the Indo-European language tree and the emergence of Insular Celtic 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: Semester 2

Thursdays 3pm – 4pm (West Wing 9) & Thursdays 4pm – 5pm (West Wing 7)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (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: Semester 2

Wednesdays 1pm – 2pm (ORB G20) & Thursdays 9am – 10am (ORB 212)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (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. It deals with the genre of medieval Irish literature variously referred to as the Historical Cycle or the Cycles of the Kings. The material under investigation is datable to the period between the eighth and twelfth centuries A.D. and details aspects of the political scene in Ireland from the prehistoric period to the twelfth century. Attitudes to kingship and views of history in the tales are explored. Such prominent figures as Níall of the Nine Hostages (Níall Noígíallach), Conn Cétchathach (Conn of the Hundred Battles), Labraid Loingsech and Díarmait mac Cerbaill are discussed comprehensively. Many of the tales reflect political contention between the provinces and with Tara, and there are numerous origin legends of kingdoms and dynasties. The narratives vary in their attitudes to their subjects. Some consist of timeless story-themes, others focus on events like notable battles, and on the personal dramas within the public sphere. The past is viewed through the lens of the present in many such tales.

Study and analysis of selected narrative texts in translation. All texts are read in translation.

Timetable: Semester 2

Mondays 12noon – 1pm (West Wing 8) & Tuesdays 3pm – 4pm (West Wing 7)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (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*; K. Murray (ed.), *Revisiting the Cycles of the Kings*.

CC3011 Early Irish II

(5 credits, Spring Semester)

Students wishing to take this module must have studied CC3010 or Early Irish previously. Further study of the basic rules of Early Irish grammar and syntax.

Timetable: Semester 2

Tuesdays 1pm – 2pm (ORB 145) & Tuesdays 4pm – 5pm (West Wing 8)
The tutorial hour and location will be organised at the beginning of term.

Assessment: 1hr in-class assessment (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 Early Irish Spirituality

(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: Semester 2

Thursdays 11am – 12noon (Kane G20) & Thursdays 1pm – 2pm (ORB 101)

Assessment: 1hr in-class essay/assessment (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*.

Module Descriptions

Full module descriptions are contained in the Modules for Visiting Students 2024/2025 which is available on the web at <https://ucc-ie-public.courseleaf.com/modules-visiting-student/>

SEMESTER 1/ AUTUMN SEMESTER

Provisional and Subject to Change

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| 9-10 | | CC2003 ORB G20 <i>Dr Emma</i> <i>Nic Cárthaigh</i> | | CC2002 Boole 6 <i>Prof John Carey</i> | CC3012 Boole 5 <i>Prof John Carey</i> |
| 10-11 | | | | CC1113 West Wing 6 <i>Dr Cian Ó</i> <i>Cionnfhaolaidh</i> <hr/> CC3001 West Wing 3 <i>Prof John Carey</i> | |
| 11-12 | | CC2003 ORB G20 <i>Dr Emma</i> <i>Nic Cárthaigh</i> | | CC3012 West Wing 4 <i>Prof John Carey</i> | |
| 12-1 | CC3010 ORB 255 <i>Dr Emma</i> <i>Nic Cárthaigh</i> | | CC1113 West Wing 5 <i>Dr Cian Ó</i> <i>Cionnfhaolaidh</i> | | |
| 1-2 | | CC3010 ORB 145 <i>Dr Emma</i> <i>Nic Cárthaigh</i> | CC3001 ORB G20 <i>Prof John Carey</i> | CC2002 ORB 202 <i>Prof John Carey</i> | |
| 2-3 | CC1110 ORB 202 <i>Dr Caitríona</i> <i>Ó Dochartaigh</i> | | | CC2250 ORB 212 <i>Dr Riona Doolan</i> | |
| 3-4 | CC1110 Boole 1 <i>Dr Caitríona</i> <i>Ó Dochartaigh</i> | CC3003 ORB 244 <i>Cian Ó</i> <i>Cionnfhaolaidh</i> | | CC2011 ORB 212 <i>Dr Emmet Taylor</i> | |
| 4-5 | CC3013 FSB 322 <i>Dr Caitríona</i> <i>Ó Dochartaigh</i> | CC3003 ORB 202 <i>Dr Cian Ó</i> <i>Cionnfhaolaidh</i> | | CC2011 ORB 212 <i>Dr Emmet Taylor</i> | |
| 5-6 | CC3013 FSB 322 <i>Dr Caitríona</i> <i>Ó Dochartaigh</i> | | CC2250 West Wing 5 <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 Legends of Medieval Wales: The *Mabinogi*
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

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------------|---|---|--|---|--------|
| 9-10 | | CC2006 ORB 145 <i>Dr Cian Ó Cionnfhaolaidh</i> | | CC2013 ORB 212 <i>Dr Emmet Taylor</i> | |
| 10-11 | | | | CC1112 Kane G02 <i>Emmet Taylor</i> | |
| 11-12 | | CC2006 ORB G20 <i>Dr Cian Ó Cionnfhaolaidh</i> | | CC3014 Kane G20 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i> | |
| 12-1 | CC3006 West Wing 8 <i>Dr Emmet Taylor</i> | | CC1112 Kane G18 <i>Dr Emmet Taylor</i> | | |
| 1-2 | | CC3011 ORB 145 <i>Dr Cian Ó Cionnfhaolaidh</i> | CC2013 ORB G20 <i>Dr Emmet Taylor</i> | CC3014 ORB 101 <i>Dr Emma Nic Cárthaigh</i> | |
| 2-3 | CC1100 ORB 156 <i>Dr Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh</i> | | | CC2250 ORB 212 <i>Dr Riona Doolan</i> | |
| 3-4 | CC1100 West Wing 6 <i>Dr Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh</i> | CC3006 West Wing 7 <i>Dr Emmet Taylor</i> | | CC2007 West Wing 9 <i>Dr Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh</i> | |
| 4-5 | | CC3011 West Wing 8 <i>Dr Cian Ó Cionnfhaolaidh</i> | | CC2007 West Wing 7 <i>Dr Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh</i> | |
| 5-6 | | | CC2250 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 Early Irish Spirituality