

Department of English & Writing Studies

**Drama of the Irish Literary Revival  
English 3372F (001)**

Fall 2019

**Instructor:** Dr. Jo Devereux  
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UC 4433

**Course Location:** Physics and Astronomy  
Building 106

**Course Date/Time:** Tuesday 1:30-2:30 pm;  
Thursday 1:30-3:30 pm

**Prerequisites:** At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020-1999 or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.



**Course Description**

The Abbey Theatre in Dublin, site of new dramatic forms as well as political rioting, was at the centre of the Irish Literary Revival of the early twentieth century. This course examines the beginnings of the theatre in 1904 and explores the function of drama within the Irish literary tradition.

**Objectives:**

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Demonstrate increased proficiency in research into the drama of the Irish literary revival of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century and into later followers of this revival;
- Present their analysis of this literary and historical material in a clear, compelling, and concise prose style free from technical errors.

### Course Materials

#### **Required Text:**

*Modern and Contemporary Irish Drama*, edited by John P. Harrington. Norton, 2009.

### Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Essay 1, due Oct.17, 2019: 15%

Essay 2, due Nov.28, 2019: 30%

Two group scenes, each worth 7.5%, for a total of 15%, see below for dates

Attendance: 5%

Final Exam, Dec. 2019 (date TBA): 35%

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <https://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

### Additional Information

#### **Attendance:**

Regular attendance is expected for all classes. Absenteeism may result in debarment from the final exam and, thus, failure of the course.

#### **Essay Due dates, Late policy, Extensions, Plagiarism:**

All overdue essays will receive a penalty of 1% per day late.

Essays must follow current MLA format and must include a list of Works Cited at the end (see MLA information under Resources on OWL).

Essays must be on works studied in this section of the course.

#### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

#### **Plagiarism Checking:**

The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

#### **Email Policy:**

Email is meant for brief inquiries only. Please allow a day or two for a response. Email received over the weekend will be answered the following week.

#### **Participation/Performance Work (15%)**

Each Thursday, beginning in the first week of October, we will forgo the formalities of a traditional university lecture and get down to the business of performance. I will be dividing the class into four groups, and each week you, the students, will run our final hour.

Our performance hour will begin with a scene study presentation by the group designated, for that week, as THE COMPANY.

- It will be the Company's job to stage a scene based on one from that week's play, and to take up roles such as actors, director, dramaturge, and designers. The scenes you perform will be "poor" theatre in the best sense of the word: not a formal, heavily rehearsed performance, although you are free to bring props and costumes as you choose. Your primary task will be to work together to select a specific approach to the scene/play, and then be prepared to defend and explore your choices in class. This "thought work" is *the most important* component of your presentation!
- Those who aren't acting or directing in any given week must contribute behind the scenes, by helping to imagine potential visions for the scene, by imagining a design (be prepared to explain and discuss it!), or by applying dramaturgical (that is, critical, close-reading) skills to the text and then offering options to the actors and/or director.
- I would like each of you to try different roles over the course of the term: if you are shy, challenge yourself to try acting once; if you're a raging extrovert, challenge yourself to pull back a bit and let the quieter members of your group shine.
- The Company will need to read ahead, and agree on a scene (or scenes) to perform in advance of their scheduled Thursdays. You need not clear your scene selection with me in advance, but please choose something that will take approximately 10 minutes to perform.
- Be prepared to meet outside of class for an hour or two, at least a couple of times, before each performance, and establish an informal email discussion list among yourselves in order to hammer out your basic choices and ensure everyone knows their jobs.
- Coordinating your schedules will *not* be easy. In fact, it's part of the challenge. But your groups are large because performance cannot happen with just a couple of people: theatre is made in the messy coordination between different personalities with different schedules and different needs. Do your best to accommodate everyone, to get to know one another, and to support one another; by the end of the term, you'll be glad these people are your colleagues; they may even be your friends!
- After each performance, and a short break, the Company will be asked to get back on stage and participate in a question-and-answer period. Each member of the Company should try to contribute something during the Q&A, especially those whose work has been primarily behind the scenes. This is the time for you to explore in depth, with your colleagues, the terrific thought work that has gone into your presentation!
- The final part of the class will involve a post-performance "talk-back" or discussion.
- When the week's performance is over, the Company will take their break while the rest of us get into our designated groups. You will be given 10-15 minutes in your group to discuss the performance you've just seen, and to prepare two or three good challenging questions about the Company's performance choices.
- In order to ensure that your group's discussion runs smoothly, each of you will need to take some notes during the Company's performance, bring those notes with you to your group's "huddle," and be prepared to talk about them.
- NOTE that the questions you develop must delve below the surface of what the Company is doing. Colleague-critics are reviewers with a difference: your task is to explore what worked and what didn't, to probe the critical effects of the Company's choices, to offer alternative readings, and to examine how others in the class received the performance (it's a good idea to address some questions to your fellow audience members as well!). One important proviso: colleague criticism is designed to be helpful and respectful, not hurtful and derogatory.
- We hope to get a lively discussion going, and will bounce from group to group until either our time or your notes are exhausted. Support a strong, engaged class discussion!

**Assessment:**

- Your group work is the core component of your participation grade; you will be judged on the amount of effort you put into the work—NOT on your acting skills—and on your willingness to push yourself in new directions, beyond your comfort zone. Note that you need not play a major role in each presentation: balance your commitments to the group work as needed, but ensure that you are contributing helpfully in some way each time your group is The Company, and that you challenge yourself to contribute during your group's discussions.
- Attendance. One of the keys to doing well at this assignment is attending regularly; the other key is being engaged when you attend. Attendance will be taken. Even if your group is not performing, your attendance is still required and appreciated.

**Essay 1:** Write on ONE play from the course.

Length: 1500 words

Format: MLA 8 for undergraduate research essays

Worth: 15%

Due: Oct. 17, 2019

Choose ONE of the following broad topics (**which you must narrow down very specifically to construct a clear argument**):

Nationalism

Traditional mythology

Male and female roles

Identity

Body versus spirit

Space or place

Voices

**Essay 2:** Compare and contrast TWO plays from either or both terms, using one of the topics listed above.

Length: 2500 words

Format: MLA for undergraduate research essays

Worth: 30%

Due: Nov. 28, 2019

As with the first-term essay, choose ONE of the broad topics listed above (**which you must narrow down very specifically to construct a clear argument**).

Again: do some preliminary research on this topic with reference to the plays you are exploring.

**You may write more than once on the same topic (for example, nationalism), but cover ONE play in Essay 1 and TWO different plays from your Essay 1 play in Essay 2.**

### Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at [http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

### **Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):**

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

### Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:  
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Timetable

***Week of Readings and Assignments***

Sept.5	Introduction
Sept.10-12	W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, "Cathleen Ni Houlihan"; Lady Gregory, "Our Irish National Theatre"; W.B. Yeats, "An Irish National Theatre"; Frank J. Fay, "An Irish National Theatre"
Sept.17-19	W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, "The Pot of Broth"; Colm Tóibín, ["The Collaborations of Yeats and Lady Gregory"]; Nicholas Greene, "Strangers in the House"; Antoinette Quinn, "Cathleen ni Houlihan Writes Back"
Sept.24-26	W.B. Yeats, "At the Hawk's Well"; Yeats, "An Introduction to My Plays"; R.F. Foster, ["At the Hawk's Well"]
Oct.1-3	W.B. Yeats, "Purgatory"; Terence Brown, ["Purgatory"]; <b>Group 1: Scene 1 Oct.3</b>
Oct.8-10	Lady Gregory, "Spreading the News"; Lady Gregory, "A Note on Spreading the News"; Judith Hill, ["Spreading the News"]; <b>Group 2: Scene 1 Oct.10</b>
Oct.15-17	Lady Gregory, "The Rising of the Moon": <b>Group 3: Scene 1 Oct.17; Essay 1 Due</b>
Oct.22-24	J.M. Synge, "Riders to the Sea": <b>Group 4: Scene 1 Oct.24</b>
Oct.29-31	J.M. Synge, "The Playboy of the Western World": <b>Group 1: Scene 2 Oct.31</b>
Nov.5-7	FALL READING WEEK: NO CLASS
Nov.12-14	Bernard Shaw, "John Bull's Other Island"; <b>Group 2: Scene 2 Nov.14</b>
Nov.19-21	Sean O'Casey, "Juno and the Paycock"; <b>Group 3: Scene 2 Nov.21</b>
Nov.26-28	Brian Friel, "Translations"; <b>Group 4: Scene 2 Nov.28; Essay 2 Due</b>
Dec. 3-5	Marina Carr, "By the Bog of Cats"

**Final exam: Dec. 2019**