Instructor: Laura McCloskey  
Term: Fall 2017, online course  
Email: lmcclosk@gmu.edu  
Office Hours: Blackboard Collaborate on Mondays from 11am-12pm, or by appointment

Description and Goals

This course explores the rich history, art, and culture of Ireland from the early Christian period in 700 to the aftermath of Richard II’s settlement of the country, ending in 1500 with the resurgence of Gaelic customs and traditions in the Pale, and England’s continued attempts to control the Irish economy and parliament. Beginning with a brief overview of the early medieval history of Ireland and links to its pre-Christian past, we will discuss the rise of monastic communities such as Clonmacnoise, Glendalough, and Iona, and their contributions to Irish social structures, systems of law, and artistic expression.

We will unravel the intricate designs of the Tara Brooch and the Ardagh Chalice, and then peer onto the elaborately illuminated pages of the Book of Kells to decipher the meaning of the knot-work that has had such an enduring presence in Irish cultural symbology. Next we will encounter the transformative period of the Viking raids and see how the fabric of Irish culture was changed through the upheaval of monastic settlements and the redefinition of port towns such as Dublin, as major points of trade. The brutal feats of legendary hero Brian Boru and his defeat in 1014 lead us into a new era of Christianization and a resurgence of papal control over Ireland that heralds an upsurge of church building seen in the magnificent St. Patrick’s and Christ Church cathedrals in Dublin. From there we will investigate the numerous English attempts to colonize and control Ireland; exploring the battles of Richard de Clare (Strongbow), the failed Scottish attempts to overtake the English, and finally, Richard II’s seeming success at conquering the country.

The resurgence of Gaelic culture and the Irish attempts at maintaining their own unique customs lead us into the final portions of the course, when we will study the aftermath of the English loss of control of all but Dublin and the surrounding “Pale” of Ireland, and finally, late-Norman and early-Tudor England’s subsequent legal efforts at controlling the country until around 1495.

Texts and Readings

There are three required texts for this course as well as numerous articles and book chapters available in Blackboard and JStor. The Bookstore regularly reports significant difficulty finding my requested books for this class, so I have included the online versions of each below. Not only are the online versions highly affordable, they are all very easy to obtain with either of the free Kindle or Nook applications.

REQUIRED:

(Nook Edition) http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/books/1116948750?ean=9781317901754

(Kindle Edition) http://www.amazon.com/Medieval-Ireland-New-Gill-History-ebook/dp/B00NNJP4Q0/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=medieval+ireland

(Kindle Edition) http://www.amazon.com/Archaeology-Medieval-Ireland-T-B-BARRY-ebook/dp/B000PMG3M2/ref=sr_1_27?keywords=medieval+ireland
RECOMMENDED:

  This text is strongly recommended as an additional resource for the early Medieval period. You could also use it as an alternate option to Crónin's book if you find his writing style difficult to comprehend. Some sections are available on GoogleBooks.


- Kinsella, Thomas, and Louis Le Brocquy. 2002. *The Táin: From the Irish Epic Táin Bó Cúailnge*. Oxford University Press. (Paperback or Kindle, but it's also available in the CELT library if you don't want to buy it) http://www.amazon.com/Tain-Translated-Irish-Epic-Cuailnge/dp/0192803735/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1451405317&sr=1-1&keywords=the+tain+bo

- Moss, Rachel. 2006. *Art and Devotion in Late Medieval Ireland*. Four Courts Press. (Hardcover)


  Very useful, especially for history students taking this course without a lot of art history background knowledge. Portions that are required for the course are already uploaded into Blackboard. Some sections are available on GoogleBooks.

  Any edition of this text is fine. I recommend it for its advice on how to come up with paper topics, research them, and then properly cite your sources.

- Finally, if you love the Medieval period and want to splurge on yourself, this is a fantastic book (it's also available in the GMU Fenwick Library). Portions are available on GoogleBooks:

**Assignments**

The bulk of your grade will be determined by your performance on the (cumulative) final exam and the research paper.

**Here is how your grade will be calculated:**

Quizzes- 20% (2 x 10% each)

Final exam- 20%

Online reflections- 10% (5 posts x 2% each)

Research paper draft- 10%

Online discussions- 10% (5 discussions x 2% each)

Final research paper (8-10 pages)- 20%

Syllabus quiz and mid-semester check- 10% (5% each)

Optional extra credit- 5%

**Quizzes**

There will be two quizzes: one quiz midway through the class and one before the final exam to make sure you are following the chronology, terms, and themes of the course.

Quizzes will normally consist of ten multiple choice questions, two short answer responses, vocabulary matching or picture identifications, and an extra credit section. Lockdown Browser is required and each quiz is timed for two hours. You may not consult notes, books, classmates, the Internet, etc.

**Final Exam**

The exam will be a combination of multiple choice questions and short answer responses. In addition, you will have to write two brief essays chosen from a list of topics. Lockdown Browser is required and the exam is timed for three hours. You may not consult notes, books, classmates, the Internet, etc.
Research Paper
For the research paper you will need to develop and execute an original thesis related to a theme from class.

Topics could address: A specific art piece, period, or movement. Political or religious figures from a specific time period. Weaponry, military tactics, or invasions from other countries (period-specific or comparative over time). Literature, poetry, or other writings. If you have a specific topic, person, or issue you would like to address, just let me know in your abstract so I can make sure it isn’t too narrow or unwieldy.

You will need to use at least 5 sources: 3 of which cannot be class texts, include at least 1 primary source. MLA or Chicago style (not APA), 12pt font, double-spaced, 8-10 pages excluding bibliography.

- “Draft:” paper abstract, outline, or draft. At minimum, I need to know your thesis, supports, and at least 3 of your references (2 must be books or articles - not websites). Submit on Blackboard.

- Final paper: 8-10 pages (not including bibliography or any images you wish to include). Use a citation style that is familiar to you – in this discipline, that’s usually either MLA or Chicago… whatever style you choose, do it correctly. At least 5 scholarly sources. Submit on Blackboard.

*NOTE: If you have taken either Celtic Art or Visualizing Irish Nationalism with me already, you are welcome to build upon the paper you used in that class as long as it is applicable to what we are studying in this course. If you choose that option, your final paper will need to be 16-20 pages in length and include at least 10 sources (essentially doubling your original paper). Contact me early in the semester if you are considering this option and we can discuss how you could modify your thesis or supports. This is a useful option if you really liked your earlier paper and wanted to keep researching your topic or if you are preparing for graduate school and want to create a substantial writing sample.

Individual Blackboard Reflection Blogs
Prompts for individual comments related to the previous or current week’s lecture, readings, or course progress will be loaded to the Blackboard blog tab. You must complete all 5 reflections to receive full grade points for this category. Reflections should be at least one paragraph in length (7-8 well-planned, cohesive sentences) and clearly demonstrate to me that you are actively engaging with course lectures, themes, and readings.

Blackboard Discussion Forum Participation
Prompts for discussions will be loaded to the Blackboard discussion board tab. While the course can largely be self-paced, the topics build on each other; taking content week-by-week helps you break it into manageable chunks. There is a good deal of complicated vocabulary in the course – engaging with others while practicing the terms is a great way to build fluency. (It also ensures that you’re on target for what will be tested at each quiz.)

Your initial post is due the Wednesday of the requisite week and your response to at least one other student is due by that Sunday. Both your own post and your response to someone else need to be well-planned and comprehensive. Include 7-8 sentences (a full paragraph). In your post, address the prompt; in your reply to someone else, reference their post and thoughtfully discuss their content: do you have any questions, did they make a particularly good argument, etc. DO NOT just say something like "what a good post, I agree!" - you will not earn points unless there is substance in your reply.

You must complete all 5 discussions to receive full grade points for this category; you will not get any points for that week if you do not complete both your post as well as a response to someone else.

Late Work
Individual Reflection Blogs can be completed for full points any time until the last day of class, December 9. After that date, you will not receive credit for any late reflection posts. Discussion Forum posts and replies must be completed by the end of the week in which they are assigned in the class schedule. You will not receive points for late posts or replies because this distracts from the point of the assignment (similar to how you cannot receive participation points in a face-to-face class when you are absent). Quizzes and the final exam will be unavailable at the end of the week in which they are assigned. Extensions will only be granted if you have a legitimate and documentable excuse (doctor note, note from an employer, etc.). For all other assignments, I will deduct 10% off your grade for that assignment for every week it is late (weeks end on Sunday and begin on Monday - e.g. submitting your paper abstract on the Monday after it was due will result in a 10% deduction).
Grading

I use a 100 total point system for the entire semester.

_Gentle warning:_ It is easy to let things slip in an online class. I strongly urge you to make a solid plan for each week and follow it to the best of your ability.

The exam and quizzes are out of 100 points each and then I convert your scores to the equivalent percentage (10% or 20% as noted above). I do this because it allows you to have more chances to earn points and demonstrate your knowledge within the sections of each quiz or exam. Note that this means I go back and manually enter your grade into Blackboard.

**Grading Scale**

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| IN    | incomplete (You must request an IN no later than two weeks before the end of the semester and be passing the course at the time of your request; deadlines for IN work follow the Registrar's calendar.)

**Extra Credit**

The Washington D.C area is host to numerous Irish festivals and events throughout the year. If you attend one of these events during the spring semester, please write a review of the event and discuss any cultural or historical links you noted that are relevant to the themes of the course. Please include your ticket or a program as proof of your attendance. Additional on-campus self-enrichment opportunities are also provided on our Blackboard page. You are welcome to find other Ireland-related events on your own; please email me for approval. Your experience does not have to be limited to the Medieval period.

This review is due by the last day of class and should be 1-2 pages in length.

What I need in your synopsis:
- What did you do/see and when was it?
- How was it related to images, ideas, or themes we have discussed? OR, if you attended a campus event, what was your impression of the event?
- What are your "take-aways" from the event - how has it impacted you?

Some good local options for Irish events:
- Mason Center for the Arts: [http://cfa.gmu.edu/](http://cfa.gmu.edu/)
- Irish Embassy: [http://www.irelandemb.org](http://www.irelandemb.org)

**Class Policies**

**Participation/Attendance**- I have built in numerous participation checkpoints for you in the curriculum: given the unique nature of online instruction, participation is more important than ever – it shows me that you are following the course themes and truly comprehending material. The Mason online catalog states: “Students are expected to attend class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation.” Patterns of non-participation in self-reflection or group work will be noted and points deducted accordingly. If you are ill for two weeks or more (consecutively) or you have other personal matters that will require you to frequently miss participation deadlines, you should let me know immediately and provide a doctor note or other acceptable documentation.
Disability Assistance- Mason has a wonderful Office of Disability Services on the main floor of SUB I; if you have a
documentable learning disability, I urge you to pay the ODS a visit early in the semester. I am happy to work with you to
accommodate your needs, but I will need written documentation from the ODS. http://ods.gmu.edu/

Writing Center- If you need some assistance in writing your research paper or would like to attend study skills workshops,
please do not hesitate to take advantage of the resources on campus. The Writing Center is in Robinson Hall A room 114.
http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/

Academic Workshops - Academic Workshop schedules can be found in Learning Services within Counseling and
Psychological Services on the 3rd floor of SUB I. http://caps.gmu.edu/

Office Hours - I will be online and available via Blackboard Collaborate from 11am until 12pm on Mondays. If that time does
not work for you, I am flexible – just let me know a day ahead of time when you would like to chat via back-and-forth email.
Please be aware that I live in Dublin, Ireland; be considerate of the time difference – Ireland is five hours ahead.
If you have a request for an incomplete or an assignment extension, I will only address those matters via Mason email.

Email and Course Communication - Because this is an online course, it is critical that you have a reliable way to obtain
course information. Please be sure that you check your GMU email account regularly or have your GMU email messages
forwarded to your preferred email account. Every week I will send out an email to the entire class to remind you of items that
are due, answer any common questions that have come up in the past week, or include other pertinent announcements. If I
need to send a message to you individually, I will send it to your GMU email account. Please note that if you have trouble with
your GMU email, you can also use the messaging feature in Blackboard if necessary.

Honor Code
Abiding by the Mason Honor Code is essential if you plan on passing this course.
The Honor Code, as stated in the catalog:
“Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in
matters related to academic work.”

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Academic Integrity: http://oai.gmu.edu/
FAQ regarding the Honor Code: http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/

General Semester Dates to Note:

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Important Mason Deadlines
☑️ Last day to add classes: September 5, 2017.
Check PatriotWeb to be sure that you are registered for this class.
☑️ Last day to drop classes: September 29, 2017.
☑️ Selective withdrawal period (undergraduates): October 2 - October 27, 2017.
## Class Schedule and Readings

(Each week has an accompanying Module, including a narrated Powerpoint file for the lecture.)

I include the Annals of Ulster on most course days as a way to help you see how medieval historians and monks chronicled Irish history as it was occurring; it is not necessary for you to take notes or memorize portions of this text.

### WEEK 1: August 28 - September 3

**Introduction; Early History**

**Readings:**
1. Syllabus
2. Richter: pgs 1-43 (Part I: Early Ireland)
3. Familiarize yourself with Cróinín's book (abbreviations, chapter titles, framework of events, and the glossary)
4. Familiarize yourself with the layout of our Blackboard page

**Assignments DUE by 11:59pm on Sept. 5:**
1. Syllabus Quiz
2. Individual Reflection 1

**Optional activity (no points assigned):**
- Post an introduction on the Discussion Board.

### WEEK 2: September 5 - September 10

**The Celts, Pt. 1: Spirituality and Systems of Belief**

**Readings:**
1. Laing: Britain and Ireland (on Blackboard)
2. Chadwick (on Blackboard): Chapter 1: Discovering the Celts
3. Harding: An Art with No Genesis (on Blackboard)

**Assignments DUE by 11:59pm on Sept. 10:**
1. Discussion 1

### WEEK 3: September 11 - September 17

**The Celts, Pt. 2: Artistic Styles and Motifs**

**Readings:**
1. Green (on Blackboard): Chapter 4: Nature in Art: Abstraction, Realism, and Fantasy
2. Harding: La Tène and non-La Tène in Ireland (on Blackboard)
3. Rynne: La Tène and Roman Finds from Lambay (on Blackboard or in JStor)

**Assignments DUE by 11:59pm on Sept. 17:**
1. Individual Reflection 2

### WEEK 4: September 18 - September 24

**The Rise of Christianity in Ireland**

**Readings:**
1. The Annals of Ulster- U431-U750, in the CELT Library
2. Richter: pgs 50-64 (The Formation of the Early Irish Church)
4. Cróinín: Chapter 1: The Beginnings of Irish History

**Assignments DUE by 11:59pm on Sept. 24:**
1. Discussion 2

### WEEK 5: September 25 - October 1

**Monastic Settlements and Celtic Christianity**

**Readings:**
2. Monks’ Rules of Columbanus (CELT Library)

**Recommended:**

**Assignments DUE by 11:59pm on Oct. 1:**
1. QUIZ 1

### WEEK 6: October 2 - October 8

**Illuminated Manuscripts**

**Readings:**
1. Green: Ch. 4 (on Blackboard)
2. Shapiro: III: Image and Ornament (on Blackboard)
3. Cróinín: Chapter 7: The first Christian Schools

**Recommended:**
- Hourihane: "The Book of Kells: New Light on the Temptation Scene Celtic Antecedents to the Treatment of the Human Figure in Early Irish Art; Deciphering the Art of Interlace" (GoogleBooks)
- Shapiro: VI: The Religious and Secular Grounds of Insular Art (on Blackboard)

**Assignments DUE by 11:59pm on Oct. 10:**
1. PAPER ABSTRACTS DUE
2. Individual Reflection 3
### WEEK 7: October 10 - October 15

**The Táin: Recording Oral Traditions and the Influence of Mythology; Library Presentation**

**Readings:**
1. The Annals of Ulster- in the CELT Library
2. Crónín: Chapter 8: The Golden Age
4. Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster- in the CELT Library

**Recommended:**

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Oct. 15:**
1. Discussion 3
2. Mid-semester check

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### WEEK 8: October 16 - October 22

**High Crosses, Round Towers, Kings and Christianity; The Start of the Viking Wars 800-920**

**Readings:**
1. Richter: pgs 85-113 (Writing on the Subject of Kingship through the middle of The Age of Vikings)
2. Crónín: Chapter 3: Kings and Kingship

**Recommended:**
- Hinton: Ch 3- Kings and Christianity; Ch 4- Alfred et al: From the Mid-Ninth Century to the Mid-Tenth

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Oct. 22:**
1. Discussion 4

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### WEEK 9: October 23 - October 29

**Brian Boru 940-1014; The Artistic Legacy of the Vikings**

**Readings:**
1. The Annals of Ulster- in the CELT Library
2. Crónín: Chapter 9: The Viking Age
3. Richter: pgs 114-117 (end of The Age of Vikings)
4. Barry: Ch. 2 Pre-Norman Settlement c. 1000-1169

**Recommended:**
- Duffy: Ch. 4 Adventus Anglorum (GMU Library)
- Hinton: Ch 5 An Epoch of New Dynasties
- Jstor article: Motes and Norman Castles in Ireland, by: Goddard H. Orpen, The English Historical Review, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Apr., 1907), pp. 228-254

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Oct. 29:**
1. Individual Reflection 4

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### WEEK 10: October 30 - November 5

**Norman Invasion, Dublin 1066-1166; Anglo-Norman Medieval Towns and Society**

**Readings:**
1. The Annals of Ulster- to U1201, in the CELT Library
2. Richter: pgs 121-140 (Ireland Under Foreign Influence: the 12th Century)
3. Crónín: Chapter 4: Land, settlement, and economy
4. Barry: Ch. 5 The Growth of Medieval Towns

**Recommended:**
- Duffy: Ch. 4 Adventus Anglorum (GMU Library)
- Hinton: Ch 5 An Epoch of New Dynasties
- Jstor article: Motes and Norman Castles in Ireland, by: Goddard H. Orpen, The English Historical Review, Vol. 22, No. 86 (Apr., 1907), pp. 228-254

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Nov. 5:**
1. QUIZ 2

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### WEEK 11: November 6 - November 12

**Irish Reaction to Invasion; Church Politics and Cathedrals**

**Readings:**
1. Crónín: Chapter 5: Law, family, and community; and Chapter 6: The consolidation of the church
2. Excerpts of Medieval Irish poetry (Blackboard)
3. Barry: Ch. 6 The Archaeology of the Medieval Church

**Recommended:**
- Duffy: Ch. 4 From Kingdom to Lordship (GMU Library)

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Nov. 12:**
1. Individual Reflection 5
**WEEK 12: November 13 - November 19**
**Dissecting Strongbow; The Gaelic Resurgence**

**Readings:**
1. Cróinín: Chapter 10: Ireland 1014-1200
2. Simms: The Norman Invasion and the Gaelic Recovery (on Blackboard)
3. Gerald of Wales: Excerpts - *The History and Topography of Ireland* (Blackboard)

**Recommended:**
- Richter: pgs. 140-172 (Ireland from the Reign of John to the Statutes of Kilkenny)
- Duffy: Ch. 5 Colonial Domination and Native Survival (GMU Library)

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Nov. 19:**
1. Discussion 5

**WEEK 13: November 20 - November 26**
**NO CLASS - HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

**WEEK 14: November 27 - December 3**
**Later Middle Ages**

**Readings:**
1. Richter: pgs 172-189 (The End of the Middle Ages)
2. Barry: Ch 7 The Later Middle Ages: Growth or Decline?

**Recommended:**
- Hinton: Ch 7 Material Culture and Social Display (GoogleBooks or GMU Library)

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Dec. 3:**
1. Complete the online course evaluation.

**WEEK 15: December 4 - December 9**
**Richard II, Henry VII 1394-1507; Conclusions and Review**

**Readings:**
1. Richter: pgs 189-193 (The Enduring Tradition)
2. Arnold: Vikings to 1700 (Blackboard)

**Recommended:**
- Hinton: Ch 8 The Wars and the Posies; Envoi (GoogleBooks or GMU Library)
- Duffy: Ch. 6 A Colony in Retreat (GMU Library)

**Assignment DUE by 11:59pm on Dec. 9:**
1. RESEARCH PAPER DUE
2. EXTRA CREDIT DUE

**WEEK 16: Final Exam**

**FINAL EXAM: COMPLETE THE FINAL STARTING WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13 (12AM), BUT NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20 (11:59PM).** *Because you have a week to plan for and take the exam, no extensions will be allowed unless you have a legitimate, documentable emergency that precludes you from taking the exam during that entire period of time. Plan ahead and take it sooner rather than later.*

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Bibliography of course texts listed above in addition to those required for the class: