
SCHOOL OF IRISH STUDIES

Section 31.530

Principal

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For the complete list of faculty members, please consult the Department website.

Location

Sir George Williams Campus

Hall Building, Room: 1001

514-848-2424, ext. 8711

Objectives

The School of Canadian Irish Studies offers interdisciplinary programs in the history and culture of Ireland and Irish emigration and settlement, especially in Canada.

Courses in Irish history, literature, politics, language, ethnomusicology, film, theatre, economics, religion, women's studies and popular culture, introduce students to Ireland's rich culture and complex society. Because of the country's unique history, students are also introduced to issues pertinent in other regions of the world, such as colonization and post-colonialism, cultural nationalism, dual linguistic and religious traditions, famine and migration, rebellion and civil war, sectarian conflict and reconciliation, and economic development and globalization. Ireland therefore offers a case study relevant to other cultures and societies.

Students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines are attracted by the interdisciplinary and comparative programs of Canadian Irish Studies which prepare them either for graduate studies or to enter the work force in a wide range of fields from cultural production to media, public service to law, or education to international relations. With its own library and meeting room, the School creates an intimate and welcoming intellectual environment which is enhanced by a public lectures series as well as cultural and community events. Scholarships and opportunities to study in Ireland are available to students in the programs.

Programs

Students are responsible for satisfying their particular degree requirements.

The superscript indicates credit value.

42 BA Major in Canadian Irish Studies

Stage I

12 IRST 203³, 209³; IRST 210³/HIST 212³; IRST/HIST 211³

3 Film, Theatre, Music, Performance: IRST 270³, 343³, 344³, 346³, 347³, 371³, 373³

Stage II

3 IRST 300³

3 History and Diaspora Studies: IRST 303³, IRST 312³/HIST 330³; IRST 314³, 315³, 316³

3 Literature: ENGL 353³, 355³, 356³, 357³, 358³, 359³; IRST 354³

3 Film, Theatre, Music, Performance: IRST 343³, 344³, 346³, 347³, 371³, 373³

Stage III

3 400-level IRST elective credits

12 IRST elective credits at the 200, 300 or 400 level chosen in consultation with the Canadian Irish Studies advisor. At least nine credits must be at the 300 or 400 level

24 Minor in Canadian Irish Studies

12 IRST 203³, 209³; IRST/HIST 211³; IRST 270³

12 IRST elective credits

- 30 Certificate in Canadian Irish Studies**
15 IRST 203³, 209³; IRST/HIST 211³; IRST 270³, 303³
15 IRST elective credits

NOTE: For details on the course descriptions in the programs listed above, please refer to the individual departmental course listings, and the IRST courses listed below.

Courses

IRST 203 Introduction to Canadian Irish Studies (3 credits)

This course is a multidisciplinary introduction to the field of Canadian Irish studies, a discipline that embraces a broad range of historical and contemporary issues as they have manifested themselves on the island of Ireland, in Canada and throughout the world. In particular, questions related to individual and national identities in the context of history, language, culture, landscape, and religion are explored and debated.

IRST 205 (also listed as HIST 213)

The Irish in Montreal (3 credits)

Drawing on a diversity of historiographical materials, this interdisciplinary course examines the story of the Irish in Canada with a particular emphasis on Quebec, from the French colonial period through the City of Montreal's golden era of mercantile prominence in the mid-19th century to the break-up of its older Irish neighbourhoods a century later. Starting with the demographics of Irish immigration and settlement, it devotes special attention to social and cultural relations between the Irish and other ethnic groups.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for HIST 213 or for this topic under a HIST or IRST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 209 Highlights of Irish Literature (3 credits)

This course introduces students to the foundational texts and main themes of Irish literary studies by placing key texts and authors in their cultural and literary backgrounds and exploring their resonances through to the present day. Works selected may include those of W.B. Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Seamus Heaney, and Eavan Boland.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under an ENGL or IRST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 210 (also listed as HIST 212)

The Irish in Canada (3 credits)

From 17th-century fishermen and traders arriving in Newfoundland to displaced victims of the Famine in the 19th century, to contemporary immigrants from Ireland, the Irish have had a presence in all parts of Canada from the earliest days of settlement. This course examines the emigration and settlement patterns of Irish immigrants in the various regions of Canada across a period of three centuries, paying particular attention to their role in the social, economic, political, cultural, and educational development of Canadian society. The course explores the various strategies by which Irish immigrants both adapted to and transformed the particular host society in which they found themselves, and looks at other immigrant communities as a means of understanding the special contribution of the Irish to Canada.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for HIST 212 or for this topic under a HIST or IRST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 211 (also listed as HIST 211)

History of Ireland (3 credits)

After establishing some broader historical context, this survey course traces modern Irish history in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Special attention is given to the development of Irish nationalism and relations with Great Britain.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for HIST 211 or for this topic under an IRST 298 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 228 (also listed as THEO 228)

Celtic Christianity (3 credits)

This course follows a historical line to show the connections of the pre-Christian Celtic beliefs with the early Christian Church of Celtic countries. It focuses on the spirituality of the Celtic people in the context of Celtic history and culture.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for THEO 208, 228 or 327, or for this topic under an IRST 298 or THEO 298 number, may not take this course for credit.

IRST 230 Irish Mythology and Folklore (3 credits)

This course explores Irish culture through folklore and myth — in particular, their manifestations in Irish music, literature, performing arts, and cinema. It addresses the significance of myth and folklore in written and oral history, traditions, and iconography. The course focuses on the forms, functions, and influences of Irish legends, myths, and folktales that attract learned and popular interest in Ireland and abroad.

IRST 233 The Irish Language and its Culture I (6 credits)

This course provides a general introduction to Irish linguistic and cultural practices in modern and contemporary Ireland. It explores the principles of the Irish language and introduces students to the language through folklore, song, poetry, film, drama, and storytelling.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for MIRI 290 may not take this course for credit.

IRST 270 *Irish Traditional Music: A Global Soundscape* (3 credits)

Covering a tapestry of cultural history from the ancient Celts to modern mega shows like *Riverdance*, this multidisciplinary course focuses on Irish traditional music performed in Ireland, as well as throughout the world. Drawing on historiographical and ethnomusicological theory, the course uses recordings and documentary films to explore how globalization has interfaced with this traditional genre to create a thriving transnational arena of performance and creativity.

IRST 298 *Selected Topics in Canadian Irish Studies* (3 credits)**IRST 299 *Selected Topics in Canadian Irish Studies*** (6 credits)

Specific topics for these courses, and prerequisites relevant in each case, are stated in the Undergraduate Class Schedule.

IRST 300 *Research Methods in Irish Studies* (3 credits)

Prerequisite: IRST 203, 209, 210, 211; IRST 270 or 343 or 344 or 371 or 373; or permission of the Department. Irish Studies span a spectrum of disciplines from the humanities, fine arts and the social and political sciences. Conducting research within this diverse domain requires a broad-based set of applied and theoretical skills. This interdisciplinary course prepares upper-level undergraduates for research in Irish studies, for academic and field situations in Ireland, and in Irish diasporic settings overseas. While cross-disciplinary methodologies are emphasized throughout the course, particular attention is given to research planning and logistics, archival investigation, cross-cultural interviewing, "participant observation" fieldwork training, applied theoretical modelling, and thesis management.

IRST 303 *The Global Irish* (3 credits)

This interdisciplinary course examines the Irish experience of emigration, exile, resettlement, and diaspora, emphasizing the Great Famine and its legacy in shaping Irish communities in Canada and elsewhere. It highlights debates about the impact of the Famine, the significance of Grosse-Île in Irish and Irish-Canadian cultural memory, the relationship between Irish emigration and nationalism, immigrant women and how Irish communities adopted a self-image of exile.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under a HIST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 312 *(also listed as HIST 330)****The Great Irish Famine*** (3 credits)

Prerequisite: 24 credits or permission of the Department. This course examines the social, political, economic, and cultural dimensions of the Great Irish Famine. Beginning with a thorough examination of society and politics in the pre-Famine period, the course explores the causes and course of the 1845-50 Famine, with emphasis on social conditions, mass mortality, emigration, and British government responses to conditions in Ireland. The outcomes and long-term consequences of the Famine for Irish society, politics, Anglo-Irish relations, and the Irish Diaspora are also explored. Some attention is also given to historiographical debates and Famine memory.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for HIST 330 or for this topic under a HIST or IRST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 314 *Independent Ireland from the Civil War to the Celtic Tiger* (3 credits)

This course examines political, social and cultural life in the post-revolution southern Irish state formed by the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921) and Irish Civil War. Key themes include state formation and post-civil war politics; Fianna Fáil and "the republicanization" of society; church and state; Irish neutrality and Anglo-Irish relations; the political and social character of "De Valera's Ireland"; post-war economic and social change; external relations and influences; the Republic's responses to Northern Ireland and the post-1968 Troubles; globalization and the rise and fall of the Celtic Tiger economy.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under a HIST or IRST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 315 *The Troubles in Northern Ireland* (3 credits)

After surveying the historical roots of the divisions in Northern Irish society, the course traces the successive phases of the prolonged "Troubles" (1968 to 1998): the Catholic civil rights movement; the period of armed conflict between the IRA, loyalist paramilitaries, and security forces; and the recent peace process, as well as post-conflict issues including power-sharing, peace and reconciliation, and constitutional change. Attention is also given to cultural expressions of the Troubles and its legacies.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under a HIST or IRST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 316 *The Irish Revolution, 1913-1923* (3 credits)

This course explores the political, military, social, and cultural dimensions of the turbulent period in Irish history that dissolved over a century of Anglo-Irish Union and established two new states. The course necessarily focuses on *Sinn Féin* and the Irish Republican Army's efforts to achieve independence from Britain, but considerable attention is also given to Ulster Unionist resistance to separatism. Additionally, other forces and dynamics that shaped this seminal period are explored, such as sectarian violence in Northern Ireland; conflict between rival nationalist factions in the south; labour and socialist agitations; agrarian discontents; and the women's suffrage and feminist movements.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under a HIST or IRST 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 333 *The Irish Language and its Culture II* (6 credits)

Prerequisite: IRST 233; MIRI 290; or permission of the School. Under pressure for over 200 years from the expanding use of English, Irish is still considered by many a crucial underpinning of Irish national identity. This course assumes elementary knowledge

of the Irish language as a platform for students to access cultural forms (memoirs, poetry, short stories, sean-nós songs, films) and media such as radio, newspapers, television, and podcasts. In particular, the course examines how language is intimately tied to place and landscape (*dinnsheanchas*: the Irish lore of place names) and how it both actively and subliminally remains a potent force in Irish cultural life.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under an IRST 399 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 343 *Cinema in Quebec and Ireland* (3 credits)

This course offers a comparative study of Quebec and Ireland's cinema. As cultures, Quebec and Ireland share a history of Catholicism, a relationship with British colonialism, anxiety around language, and unresolved debates about nationalism and state formation. But these points of contact are problematic. This course teases out the complexities and importance of some of these points of contact and divergence so as to engage, in a fully realized way, in a comparative analysis.

IRST 344 *Classics of Irish Theatre* (3 credits)

This course traces a colourful history from the mid-19th century to the present, exploring, amongst other works, the melodramas of Dionysius Boucicault; the pithy plays of Oscar Wilde; the arguably propagandistic work of WB Yeats and Augusta Gregory; the existentialism of Samuel Beckett; the Hiberno-Greek tragedies of Marina Carr; and the Tarantino inspired comedies of Martin McDonagh. Illuminating the politics — national, postcolonial, gendered and global — present in Irish theatre, this course shows that when theatre holds a mirror up to the Irish nation, a wider world is reflected back.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under an IRST, PERC or THEA 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 346 *Irish Performance Studies* (3 credits)

Contemporary Irish culture and identity are associated with various images and forms of behaviour. With the aim of exploring contemporary Irish identity in our globalized era, this course examines performances of Irishness — from Montreal's St. Patrick's Day to alternative queer beauty pageants in Dublin, from history-making Irish political speeches to modern day street protests — and addresses questions of cultural identity, cultural authenticity and cultural evolution.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under an IRST, PERC or THEA 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 347 *Contemporary Irish Theatre* (3 credits)

This course offers a panorama of Ireland's vibrant contemporary theatre landscape. It puts the exciting experimental developments of recent years under the spotlight, engaging with Irish drama that blurs the line between reality and fiction, that immerses its audiences in morally challenging worlds, and that pushes the boundaries of theatre as a medium. From the collectively devised works of Charabanc to Verbatim plays about the Northern Irish troubles, from activist theatre to street theatre, this course explores what happens when theatremakers step outside of conventional spaces and working methods to make art for our mediatized, technologized and globalized era.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under an IRST, PERC or THEA 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 354 *Irish Children's and Young Adult Literature* (3 credits)

This course examines the figure of the child and the teenager in Irish culture through an exploration of Irish children's literature, texts written for adults such as Patrick McCabe's *The Butcher Boy*, and Irish films that focus on childhood. By focusing on a variety of genres, Irish childhood is explored from a range of perspectives such as the importance of the mythological and fantastic tradition on conceptions of the child and childhood, the significance of place and landscape, the gendering of Irish childhood, and the rise of young adult literature, as well as questions of sexuality, ethnicity, globalization, nostalgia, and national identity.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for "Narrating Irish Childhoods" under ENGL 359 or IRST 398 may not take this course for credit.

IRST 371 *Irish Cultural Traditions in Quebec* (3 credits)

Music, song, and dance have consistently acted as conduits for the integration of the Irish immigrants into Québécois society. This interdisciplinary course explores the history of Irish traditional music in Quebec since the 18th century. Using archive recordings, ballads, and dance music, the course traces the history of Irish settlement in Quebec, and focuses specifically on the diaspora of Irish music makers to the province. In exploring this eclectic soundscape, particular emphasis is given to Irish music communities in rural and urban Quebec, from the Gaspé through Quebec City and Montreal, to the Gatineau and Ottawa Valleys.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under an ANTH, HIST, IRST or SOCI 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 373 *Irish Traditional Music in Canada: A Cultural History* (3 credits)

The cultural history of Irish traditional music in Canada is inextricably linked to a matrix of Irish immigration and settlement that began in the late 1600s and that stretched from Newfoundland to the Yukon, from Hudson Bay to the Great Lakes, evidenced in music played by Irish, French, Scottish, and First Nation communities across Canada today. Exploring the music history of the Irish in the Atlantic provinces, Lower and Upper Canada, and the Western provinces, this course draws on analytical models in history, anthropology, and cultural studies, as well as ethnomusicology and music criticism.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under an ANTH, HIST, IRST or SOCI 398 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 390 *Field Studies in Ireland* (3 credits)

Prerequisite: Enrolment in a program in Canadian Irish Studies, submission of a detailed proposal and permission of the School. This course is designed to allow students to conduct focused study of a given subject (e.g. literature, history, language, music, film) in an Irish context. The experience in Ireland may be in the context of a structured school environment or may take the form of a more independent exploration. Based upon preparatory readings and assignments done at Concordia, students enrich their learning experience in Ireland, followed by assignments completed upon their return to Concordia. All course content and requirements are established in consultation with the School.

NOTE: Students may take this course two times for credit provided the subject matter is different.

IRST 398 *Special Topics in Canadian Irish Studies* (3 credits)**IRST 399 *Special Topics in Canadian Irish Studies*** (6 credits)

Specific topics for these courses, and prerequisites relevant in each case, are stated in the Undergraduate Class Schedule.

IRST 403 *The Irish in Quebec: Ethnic Fade and Cultural Memory* (3 credits)

Prerequisite: IRST 210 or 303; or permission of the Department. This course examines the role of cultural memory in relation to the adaptation and integration of Irish communities into host societies in Quebec and Canada. An advanced interdisciplinary course, it draws on theoretical and methodological currents in memory studies, historical anthropology and soundscape studies to explore social, cultural and political aspects of the Irish diaspora in Canada and, more specifically, in Quebec since the late-18th century.

IRST 412 *Rebellions in Ireland and the Canadas* (3 credits)

Prerequisite: IRST 210 and 211; or permission of the Department. This seminar explores the traditions of rebellion that strikingly marked the histories of Ireland and Canada. The Irish Rising of 1798 and the 1837-38 Rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada involved class struggles, religious tensions, and attempts to define the democratic futures of both nations. Through a variety of readings about the rebellions, students explore their similarities and differences, consider their respective historiographical controversies, investigate the transatlantic links that existed between Irish and Canadian insurrectionists, and reflect upon each rebellion's historical legacy.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for this topic under a HIST 398 or 412 number may not take this course for credit.

IRST 498 *Advanced Topics in Canadian Irish Studies* (3 credits)**IRST 499 *Advanced Topics in Canadian Irish Studies*** (6 credits)

Specific topics for these courses, and prerequisites relevant in each case, are stated in the Undergraduate Class Schedule.
