Transformative Women in Irish History, Politics and Literature  
Fall 2016 Syllabus

Wednesdays, 5:30 to 8:15 pm

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Office Hours:  
Wednesday 10-12 pm and 2-4 pm  
By appointment  

8.24.16  
(Syllabus subject to change)

Objectives:

This course will examine women in Irish History, Politics and Literature who play, or have played, transformative roles in Ireland, Northern Ireland and around the world. The course will focus on women who have set an example by their leadership. We will look at the period from St. Brigid (Brigit) in the 5th and 6th centuries, to late 18th century opposition to British rule over Ireland and Ireland’s desire for independence, to modern day.

Outcomes:

After completing this course, students will be able to appreciate how key Irish and Northern Irish women have been affected by, and transformed, the following in their home countries and around the world:

Bread and Butter Issues

Poor living conditions in rural and urban areas (clean water, adequate and nutritious food, safe housing, and sanitation)

Land rights, rents and tenancies (right to own or use land without high rents and without risk of eviction)
Employment and labor (the right to work, fair wages, equal pay for women and men and safe work places)

Education (religious vs. nondenominational vs. Irish language, women vs. men, quality)

Lack of adequate health care and health education

*Meitheal*: An Irish word that means coming together to help others in need—a sense of community spirit and self-reliance

**Civil and Human Rights**

Inequality within society: economically, culturally and politically

Women’s rights of equality with men (employment, vote, own or inherit property, open a bank account in their own name, obtain a passport, sit on juries, pursue certain professions, obtain (or keep) a civil service job after marriage and run for political office)

Perceptions of women by men and by other women

Dignity, respect, and protection from sexual abuse and violence

Dealing with conflict within society

Peace and reconciliation

Human rights (what governments violate)

Civil rights (what governments and others violate)

The effect of the civil rights movements of Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and others around the world

A universal ethic of human and civil rights, human responsibilities and human connectedness

Learning how to accept differences among people around the world and not be judgmental based upon different socio-economic, religious, cultural, traditional or political views

Methods to counter religious and cultural hatred, sectarianism, discrimination, racism and xenophobia (fear of strangers or foreigners) and protection of minority communities

Inclusivity
Legal and Constitutional Rights

Access to the courts for access to justice for poor people, and especially women, and the right to a fair trial

Use of constitutional law and the legal justice system (courts) to win cases for human and civil rights as well as social change

Use of international and public pressure to bring about social, economic or political change (particularly pressure from the United States on England with respect to Ireland)

Using community support and the desire for change to bring about change

The effect of colonialism and imperialism

Nationalism and patriotism

Use of constitutional, legislative and political means vs. revolutionary, violent means to achieve nationalist or patriotic goals, such as independence from an occupying country and freedom from oppression

Giving Voice to the Voiceless

Freedom of assembly, speech, religion and of the press

Willingness to go outside one’s comfort zone and speak or write publically about the “truth”, even when what one says will not be well received by individuals, businesses, organizations or governments (what former Irish President Mary Robinson called “speak truth to power”)

In earlier days, this speech could have been considered seditious or treasonous, resulting in imprisonment or death

Experience and position that gives one the “moral authority” to highlight injustices and impress upon people with power the need for change and reform

Give a “voice” to people who feel their voices are not being heard, and give them a place at the negotiating table or in government so they are not oppressed and do not resort to violence

Political and Social Issues

Ireland’s independence from England

Northern Ireland’s partition from Ireland and membership within the United Kingdom
Ireland’s membership in the European Economic Community and the European Union
Ireland’s role in changing thought on climate change and social justice
Ireland’s role as a neutral country since Ireland became a free state in 1921
Ireland, the UK and the European Union after the Brexit Referendum Vote

**Deadlines:** See Readings and Discussion Topics for deadlines

**Key Women: Chronological**

1. St. Brigid (born in approximately 450 AD and died in approximately 523-525 AD)

2. Anna Parnell and the Irish Ladies’ Land League (1852-1911; sister of Charles Stewart Parnell; founded the Ladies’ Land League in New York and Ireland)

3. Irish Literary Revival
   a. Maud Gonne (1866-1953; English born heiress; actress; suffragette; social reformer; Irish revolutionary; married Sean McBride; Irish author WB Yeats wanted to marry her and wrote about her in his poetry and wrote plays for her to perform in the Irish theatre)
   b. Lady Augusta Gregory (1852-1932; playwright; Abbey Theatre; provided a place for many young authors and artists to write and collaborate at her home in Coole Park, Galway)

4. Revolutionary Women
   a. Countess Markiewicz (1868-1927; Irish independence; Easter 1916 Rising; first Irish Minister of Labour)
   b. Margaret Skinnider (1893-1971; Irish independence; Easter 1916 Rising; born in Scotland and fought as a sniper for Irish independence; math teacher)
   c. Kathleen Clarke (1878-1972; Irish independence; first woman mayor of Dublin; wife of Thomas Clarke of the Easter 1916 Rising)
   d. Hannah Sheehy Skeffington (1877-1946; Irish independence; suffrage for women)
   e. Grace Gifford Plunkett (1888-1955; Irish independence; married 1916 Easter Rising rebel Joseph Mary Plunkett in Kilmainham Gaol before his execution)
5. Northern Ireland Peace Process
   a. Mairead Corrigan Maguire (1944- ; Peace People; Nobel Peace Prize Winner)
   b. Betty Williams (1943- ; Peace People; Nobel Peace Prize Winner)
   c. Mo Mowlam (1949-2005; English Labour Party politician; served in Cabinet as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland; worked on Northern Ireland Peace Process)
   d. Inez McCormack (1943-2013; Northern Ireland trade union leader and human rights activist)

6. Irish Women Presidents
   a. Mary Robinson (first woman president of Ireland) (1942- )
   b. Mary McAleese (second woman president of Ireland; from Northern Ireland; 2 terms) (1951- )

7. Irish Ambassador to the United States Anne Anderson (current) (1952- )

Class Structure:

Classes will be comprised of a mixture of lecture and class participation through use of the Socratic method of question and answer, as well as group discussion. The class will be conducted primarily as a seminar. Class participation is crucial to achieving the objectives. Students will be responsible for making a presentation about one or more of these key figures.

Primary Texts for the Course: (provided by professor)

Maguire, Mairead Corrigan. The Vision of Peace: Faith and Hope in Northern Ireland (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999) (other publishers’ editions also available)


Secondary Texts for the Course that could be used for Research Papers (not required reading):

Overviews:


### Particular People:

**President Mary McAleese:**


**President Mary Robinson:**


**Kathleen Clarke:**

**Maud Gonne:**


**Constance Markievicz:**


**Grace Gifford Plunkett:**


**Mo Mowlam:**


**Particular Organizations:**


**Easter 1916 Rising:**


**Irish Civil War and the Irish Free State:**


**Grading for Undergraduates and Graduates:**

- Participation: 10%
- Journals: 20%
- Paper: 30%
- Final: 40%

**Attendance:** Attendance is required. Please arrive *early for each class*, stay the entire period and be prepared. Given the schedule, there are three *excused* absences (only very good reasons with advance notice to the professor). Grades will be reduced 5 points for each additional absence except for extraordinary reasons.

**Class Participation:** Class participation throughout the course will comprise 10% of the grade for undergraduates and MLA students. Each student will be responsible for being a discussion leader for assigned readings and interviews, with advance notice. The instructor and the student discussion leaders will determine the topics to be covered in that class, identify additional resources available to enhance the primary topics and lead the class discussion. For all classes, students are expected to have read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss it as well as to ask questions and provide insights regarding the readings and themes. If a student is not prepared for his or her presentation or for each class, points will be subtracted from the grade for participation.

**Respect for One Another:** Each person in class likely will approach the issues from a different perspective. Diverse perspectives and opinions are encouraged. Each student should treat every other student and the instructor with respect, both personally and for the perspective or opinion stated. Each student should feel comfortable participating in class and should be prepared to conduct a dignified discussion.

**Grades:** *Turn in assignments by 5 p.m. on the due date by email to irishstudies@stthom.edu. No late assignments will be accepted. Please contact me if you do not receive a confirmation email for your assignments within 3 days.*

As a prerequisite to receiving a passing grade, all assignments must be timely. If an absolute extreme emergency arises, a late assignment may be accepted at the professor’s discretion, but grades will be reduced by 5 points a day for every day it is late after the due date. If there is an extreme emergency, please advise me as soon as possible.
Computation of Grades:

Grade Scale:

93 – 100 = A  90 – 92 = A-
87- 89 = B+  83 – 86 = B  80 – 82 = B-
77 – 79 = C+  73 – 76 = C  70 – 72 = C-
67 – 69 = D+  60 – 66 = D  0 – 59 = F

I do not curve tests or grades. You can enhance your grade (to no higher than an A) with Extra Credit or Bonus Points.

Bonus Points/Extra Credit: Up to five extra credit or bonus points may be obtained for special projects approved in advance, such as (i) a 2-4 page typed paper on a film, novel or other work; or (ii) a book review, as outlined below.

Papers: Develop at least one of the key themes covered in the class. For each theme, state a succinct thesis that boils down the issue experienced and researched and the results of the experience/research. Follow my Guidelines for Writing Papers. Papers must be documented properly using MLA Style Manual, the Style Manual for Political Science or the Chicago Style Manual. Use endnotes or footnotes, as you prefer, and include a list of works cited at the end. Quality of writing and documentation is paramount. With all papers, take time to research, analyze, outline, write, edit, rest and edit again.

Journals: Journals are required on the primary assigned readings. Journals on the text should have an objective section and a subjective section. The objective section should summarize at least two key points from the assigned readings. The subjective section should provide the student’s reaction to the key points discussed in the objective section, applying critical analysis to the objective points discussed in the journals or making connections with points in the other readings, in class discussions or information obtained from the media, other courses or other world contexts.

Format: The first page of the journal should have the student’s name, a heading for what chapter is covered in that section of the journal (chapter number and name) and the date the journal is submitted. All journals should be typed, double spaced, using 12 point Times New Roman font with only one double space between paragraphs. The journals should have page numbers located at the bottom of the page, centered, on pages 2 through the end (please use the insert page number feature instead of the footer feature to create your page numbers). Journals should be submitted in a Word document (.doc or .docx), with one-inch margins all around. Journals should be named as follows: Gallagher, Lori, Journal 1, complete date (month, day, year). Name each subsequent journal by the Chapter (Journal 2, 3, etc.) and date.
Journals should be at least 2 pages for each chapter, exclusive of cover pages (if any), bibliographies (if any) and endnotes (if any). Ideally, there will be at least one full paragraph (5 sentences or more) for each of the 2 objective points and for each of the 2 subjective points.

**Book Reviews: Extra Credit:** Students can write a book review for extra credit: (i) Start with a short introductory paragraph on the author and key facts about the author that explain the author’s background and expertise; (ii) state a succinct thesis that boils down the issue researched and the results of the research; (iii) identify the major purpose of the author; (iv) in the next section, discuss the major ideas that support the thesis; (v) look for important conclusions and not just facts (take notes as you read so you do not forget the important impressions you have as you read); (vi) comment on how the book contributed to your understanding of transformative Irish women or Irish and/or Northern Irish history, politics, literature, law or culture and how valuable the book was in relation to the course; and (vii) conclude with a final reaction to the book, what you liked or did not like about it, and what else you wanted to know after reading the book. **Book reviews must be your original reading and writing; plagiarism of book reviews will be grounds for receiving an F in the course.**

**Common Courtesy/Security:** Please do not use beepers, cell telephones, iPhones, Palm Pilots, Blackberries, or similar devices for telephones, text messages or emails in class and turn them off upon arrival. If an outside emergency arises, please have outside parties contact campus security at (713) 525-3888 and security will contact us in class.

**Academic Honesty:** The UST Handbook and the Undergraduate Catalog contain sections on academic honesty/dishonesty, including plagiarism. (See Online Catalog)

Every offense against academic honesty seriously undermines the teaching-learning process for which the University exists, and such offenses will be dealt with expeditiously according to the following criteria.

**Definition:** Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. Cheating on an examination or test; for example, by copying from another person’s paper or using unauthorized materials before or during the test;

2. Plagiarism, which represents as one’s own the work of another, whether published or not, without acknowledging the precise source;

3. Knowing participation in the academic dishonesty of another student, even though one’s own work is not directly affected; or

4. Any conduct which reasonable persons in similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest in an academic setting.
Extra care must be taken in using the Internet. All work presented for this course must be your own work.

Any paper produced for credit for this course must be submitted only for this course and not have been used for any other course. Submitting the same or nearly the same paper to more than one instructor without prior approval of both course instructors constitutes academic dishonesty.

Penalty: The penalty for an incident of academic dishonesty is, at the discretion of the faculty member, either a mark of zero for the work in question or the grade of “F” for the course.