English 2090: Irish Ghost Stories

Course Syllabus
Summer 2017
Cork, Ireland
Dr. Robin Werner

English 2090: Irish Ghost Stories explores one of the most consistently popular genres of Irish literature and folklore. This course will center in on the Irish tradition of the ghost story, encouraging students to consider these texts from both a cultural and a psychological perspective. Students will read a wide variety of tales. Most of these tales take the form of short stories or novellas, enabling us to cover a range of approaches. By the end of the semester, students will be able to effectively analyze the elements of the fiction genre and discuss the historic, cultural and psychological implications of these texts. They will conduct independent research to produce thoughtful and insightful writing on the theme of the course.

Student Learning Outcomes:
On successfully completing this course, students will be able to:
- Critically read and analyze a range of texts
- Apply psychological concepts to fiction
- Gain a basic understanding of Irish history in the 19th and 20th centuries
- Relate texts to their historic contexts
- Articulate their thoughts orally and in writing

Texts:
- Additional texts online or in pdf’s emailed to students—please bring hard copies of these texts.

Grading:
Students are expected to participate in class discussion, give a presentation, write an annotated bibliography of their research, and produce a thoughtful paper/story. For the paper, students will be required to do research into the author(s) they cover and the historic/cultural context. The paper has two options: 1. Students will do a critical literary analysis of at least one (no more than three) of the texts we will read. OR 2. Students will create their own Ghost Story in the style of one of the author’s we will read.

Grade Breakdown:
Class participation and attendance: 20%
Annotated Bibliography: 10%
Paper: 30%
Midterm Exam: 15%
Presentation: 10%
Final Exam: 15%
Proposed Schedule of Reading Assignments:
(Students should read as many of the texts as possible before arriving in Cork)

Wednesday 6/22-Thursday 6/23: Folklore and the Ghost Story

**Vejvoda** “‘Too Much Knowledge of the Other World:’ Women and Nineteenth-Century Irish Folktales” (emailed to students)

**Croker: “St. Martin’s Eve** (518-524 in Davies)


all online at: [https://ia801608.us.archive.org/18/items/TalesOfTheFairiesAndOfTheGhostWorld/TalesFairyGhostWorld_Curtin_218pgs_text.pdf](https://ia801608.us.archive.org/18/items/TalesOfTheFairiesAndOfTheGhostWorld/TalesFairyGhostWorld_Curtin_218pgs_text.pdf)

Monday 6/26-Wednesday 6/28: 1850-1880s

**Freud:** “The Uncanny” (emailed to students)

**Lefanu:** “Madam Crowl’s Ghost” (178-196 in Davies), “Squire Toby’s Will” (197-238 in Davies), “An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street” (252-280 in Davies), “Ghost Stories of Chapelizod” (281-316 in Davies)

**Riddell:** “A Strange Christmas Game” (453-466 in Davies), “Hertford O’Donnell’s Warning” (emailed), “Forewarned, Forarmed” (emailed), and “The Old House in Vauxhall Walks” (429-452 in Davies)

Monday 7/3-Wednesday 7/5: 1880s-1900

**Mulholland:** “The Haunted Organist of Hurly Burly” (538-555 in Davies) and “The Ghost at the Rath” (556-582 in Davies)

**Wilde:** “The Canterville Ghost” (391-428 in Davies)

**Stoker:** “The Judge’s House” (349-373 in Davies) and “The Secret of the Growing Gold” (374-390 in Davies)

**Yeats:** “The Curse” (335-341 in Davies) and “Hanrahan’s Vision” (342-348 in Davies)

**Review for Exam**

Thursday: 7/6—Midterm Exam and Annotated Bibliography Due
Monday 7-10-Wednesday 7/12: 1900-1919

James: “The Treasure of Abbott Thomas” (http://www.thin-ghost.org/items/show/159),
“Two Doctors” (http://www.thin-ghost.org/items/show/160)

Discuss Writing Projects

Monday 7/17-Thursday 7/20: 1920s-Post WWII


Bowen: “The Storm” (emailed), “The Cat Jumps” (emailed), “The Demon Lover” (emailed), and “Hand in Glove” (emailed)

Student Presentation of Research/Stories
Review for Final

Thursday 7/20: Peer Review and Final Exam

Friday 7/21: Final Assignments Due