The University of Tennessee at Martin
Department of English and Modern Foreign Languages

English 401/601: Studies in British Commonwealth Literature
“Troubles: Contemporary Irish Literature, 1945-2005”
TR 2:30-3:45 (3 credit hours) Room: HU 120
Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Longacre
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Office Hours: MWF 1:00-3:00; TR 10:00-11:00; and by appointment
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Course Description
In 1921, after a brief but brutal conflict with English forces, Ireland finally achieved a long sought independence after approximately 700 years of British influence and dominion. Separation from the British Empire would not be so easy however . . . Six counties in the northeast of the island, populated by a loyalist and Protestant majority, opted to remain a part of the United Kingdom, thus partitioning the small island into two separate countries: the independent Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, which remains a part of the United Kingdom. This division created a tense and uneasy atmosphere that has persisted up to the present day.

This section of English 401 will explore issues of Irishness in the light of this fractured national identity in the later 20th century. We will focus on four of the most prominent Irish writers from the post-World War II period: Seamus Heaney (a Nobel prize winning poet), Edna O’Brien, John Banville, and Eavan Boland. We will read authors from Northern Ireland and the Republic, poets as well as novelists, providing a variety of perspectives on a complex but fascinating chapter in Anglo-Irish history. In addition to our primary texts from the four authors listed above, we will also watch one or two contemporary Irish films (The Magdalene Sisters and/or In the Name of the Father), discuss the influence of Irish musicians (such as U2) on the world stage, and read a play by Brian Friel called Translations. Failté!

Note: if you are enrolled in Eng 601, and taking this course for graduate credit, you will need to come meet with me individually so we can discuss a few additional course requirements.

Course Prerequisites
Satisfactory completion (C or higher) of ENGL 112 or equivalent. ENGL 250 and/or 251, while not required prerequisites, will support and compliment your experience in this particular course.

Required Texts
3. New Collected Poems by Eavan Boland
4. The Book of Evidence by John Banville
5. The Sea by John Banville
6. Translations by Brian Friel

These six texts are required for this course. Some other texts will be made available on reserve at the library, online via Blackboard, or as photocopied handouts passed out in class. These too are required
reading when indicated. I strongly recommend a book like *A Short History of Modern Ireland* (available at the bookstore) for additional context and reference purposes. Other optional, recommended, texts might also be made available on Blackboard or on reserve at the library.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**
Course requirements will include 2 short (3-4 pp. each) essays, 1 longer, thesis-driven, research-supported essay (8-10 pp.), a position paper posted to Blackboard (300-500 words), a comprehensive final exam, participation on Blackboard discussion boards, and attendance and participation in all class activities and discussions. ALL major writing assignments and the Final Exam must be **completed** in order to pass this course. Your grade will be broken down in the following manner:

2 Short Essays (@ 10% each) 20%
1 Term Paper (8-10 pages) 20%
Comprehensive Final Exam 25%
Weekly Blackboard responses to discussion post 10%
1 Blackboard discussion post (300-500 words) 10%
Class Participation (may include quizzes and/or brief presentations) 15%

Final grade evaluation is based upon the standard University of Tennessee-Martin scale:
A=90-100%  B=80-89%  C=70-79%  D=60-69%  F=anything below 60%

Since this class encourages a “roundtable” type discussion, your reading participation is essential to both the success of the class and to your own work. Thus, during the course of the term, you will sign up to post a short position paper (300-500 words) on Blackboard that will raise possible issues for class discussion on that day’s reading. All members of the course will read this paper before the class meeting and post at least one thoughtful response (approximately 50-100 words) to the questions raised by the moderator or other members of the class. The moderator must post his/her paper at least 48 hours before the class meeting, and all other contributions must be posted no later than one hour before the class meeting. I will pass around a sign-up sheet on the first or second day of class.

**Paper Format**
All essays for this course MUST BE TYPED and **will be deducted from** if they do not meet the following format criteria: Use one inch margins all around, a four-line heading on left side (on the top of page one that includes name, course, assignment, date), a title, and a 12pt (or 11pt) font in one of the following flavors: Arial, Cambria, Times New Roman, Garamond, or Calibri. Everything, including heading, title, and quotes are double-spaced. All prose quotations of over four lines and poetry over two must be blocked and indented one inch. You are encouraged to use headers, layout, tables, and illustrations in your documents; they simply must conform to consistent conventions (see your handbook for ideas). For documentation, use the MLA style, and refer to the *MLA Handbook* for guidelines.

**Class Participation and Attendance**
Class participation is an important part of this course; attendance is mandatory, and four unexcused absences will constitute a deduction of one letter grade from your final grade (i.e. a “B” becomes a “C”); six unexcused absences will result in a deduction of two letter grades (i.e. “B” becomes “D”), and eight unexcused absences **will result in automatically receiving an “F” for the course**. See me if you are having problems attending the class. No late daily grade assignments will be accepted. For late essay assignments, students will receive a deduction of one letter grade (10%) per day late. Late daily grades cannot be made up for any reason. Please contact me if you are having on-going problems at any point during the semester. **THESE POLICIES WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.**

**Writing Center**
The Writing Center is always available to assist you with your writing assignments (for this and other classes). I STRONGLY recommend you take advantage of this free resource whether you think you need to or not (did I mention it is free?) It is located in Humanities room 209. Phone: 881-7277. Email: owl@utm.edu. Web: http://www.utm.edu/organizations/wcenter/

**Special Needs**  
Any student eligible for and requesting academic accommodations due to a disability is requested to provide a letter of accommodation from the Student Success Center within the first two weeks of the semester. **I cannot provide any special accommodations without proper documentation.**

**Plagiarism**  
Plagiarism consists of the unacknowledged use of the work of another. It is the student’s responsibility to understand what consists of plagiarism, so if you have any questions about how to cite sources properly or about what constitutes plagiarism, then please do not hesitate to ask me. Plagiarism is a very serious offense and will in turn be dealt with severely. There is a **no tolerance** policy regarding plagiarism in this course. **Essays that are plagiarized or contain plagiarism, whether accidental or intentional, will automatically receive a “0” and I will report the incident to Student Affairs.** In addition, I reserve the right to fail the student for the course and/or recommend suspension from the University at my discretion. If you have ANY questions about this policy or about plagiarism, please ask me at any time and I will be glad to help. All papers will be submitted electronically through SafeAssignment on Blackboard; failure to do so will result in an automatic zero for the assignment.

**Electronic Devices**  
All cell phones, iphones, ipods, and any other electronic devices that prove distracting must be turned off and put away during our class meetings. In general, please show the proper respect to me and to your classmates. Let’s have good, passionate, yet civil discussions. **If an electronic device such as a cell phone or an unauthorized laptop computer is out and turned on during a quiz or an exam, I reserve the right to take up the quiz or exam, automatically administer a zero for the assignment, and excuse the student from class.**

**Note on Course Expectations:** This is an upper-division English course, therefore I expect to see quality, revised, college-level writing on all major writing assignments, and I expect all written work to be professional and polished in appearance and formatted correctly according to MLA style (see above). We will not spend much (if any) time in class discussing writing, so if you need assistance in this area it will be up to you to seek help. Never hesitate to come see me if you are having any problems or if you would just like to discuss an idea or have a question about a text. Also, again since this is an upper-division course, I expect you to come to class having **completed** the assigned readings and I expect you to engage with the texts at a higher level then your lower-division counterparts (i.e. if you are not in the habit of annotating your texts and taking good notes when you read, then you should get into this habit immediately). Finally, I expect you to be in class on time, prepared, attentive, engaged with the material, and I also expect you to participate in our discussions. I look forward to exploring some great literature and having some stimulating engaging discussions!

**Elastic Clause**  
This syllabus is subject to change throughout the course of the semester. Students will be notified if any changes occur. You are responsible for knowing the assignment and for being prepared at the beginning of class. Readings are due on the day that they appear on the schedule and occasionally may be met with quizzes (especially if I get the impression that students are not keeping up with the readings).

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE FOR ENG 401/601: “Troubles: Contemporary Irish Literature”—Dr. Longacre/Fall 2013**
OG=Opened Ground: Seamus Heaney Selected Poems; CG=Country Girls Trilogy; NCP=Eavan Boland: Selected Poems; and X=handout or electronic text

Aug.  27 Syllabus and Introductions; Irish History and Contexts; “Under Ben Bulben,” Yeats—X
      29 Krapp’s Last Tape, Beckett—X

Sep.  03  CG: The Country Girls, pp. 3-100
      05  CG: The Country Girls, pp. 101-175
      10  OG: from Death of a Naturalist, pp. 3-15 and “Crediting Poetry,” pp. 415-430
      12  OG: from Door into the Dark, pp. 19-41
      17  CG: The Lonely Girl, pp. 179-279
      19  CG: The Lonely Girl pp. 280-377
      24  NCP: from 23 Poems, p. 3; New Territory, pp.5-31
      26  NCP: The War Horse, pp. 38-68

Paper #1 is due through SafeAssignment on Blackboard by 11:59pm, Friday 9/27

Oct.  01  CG: Girls in Their Married Bliss
      03  CG: Girls in Their Married Bliss, conclusion plus “Epilogue”
      *I will be out of town on 10/03; you will be responsible for viewing the film, The Magdalene Sisters
      08  OG: from Wintering Out, pp. 45-76
      10  OG: from North, pp. 93-135
      15 FALL BREAK—no classes
      17Translations, Friel
      (NOTE: October 18th is the Last Day to Drop a Class and receive a “W”)
      22  NCP: Night Feed, pp. 89-124
      24  NCP: The Journey, pp. 125-162
      29 The Book of Evidence, Banville
      31 The Book of Evidence, Banville

Paper #2 is due through SafeAssignment on Blackboard by 11:59pm, Friday 11/01

Nov.  05  OG: from Field Work, pp. 139-178
      07  OG: from Station Island, pp. 201-246
      12 NCP: Outside History, pp. 163-200
      14 NCP: In a Time of Violence, pp. 201-243
      19 The Sea, Banville
      21 The Sea, Banville
     
      26 OG: from The Haw Lantern, pp. 269-300
      28 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY—no classes

Dec.  03 Selections from Heaney and Boland, TBD
05 Reflections; Course Evaluations

Term Paper is due through SafeAssignment on Blackboard by 11:59pm, Friday 12/06

Final Exam: Friday, December 13th 10:00-12:00