This course is designed to introduce you to the particular demands of working with literature, to improve your ability to read critically, and to help you use that ability as a basis for more effective writing, all in the belief that reading and writing skills go hand in hand. Over the course of the semester, we will read a broad range of twentieth-century Irish literature, with a focus on some of the ways in which these authors use rural and urban settings. Because this class really serves several purposes, we will look at these readings for their own sake and use them to improve your own writing skills, spending as much time on the latter as on the former. Although this class necessarily focuses on writing in the humanities, what you learn here can only help you in any course of study that you eventually choose. This syllabus is the plan for the semester, but it is open to change.

**Texts:**
- McCabe, Patrick. *Carn*.

**Requirements:**
- **Essay #1:** 15% (due Th February 5)
- **Essay #2:** 15% (due Th March 5)
- **Essay #3:** 15% (due T April 7)
- **Research Essay:** 25% (due Th April 23)
- **Participation and Journals:** 30%

**Essays:** You will write three short essays (6 pages each) for this class, one on each of the genres we will study. By the end of the semester, you will have written on all three genres. As each due date approaches, I will hand out a list of possible topics, but I will always encourage you to create your own topics, with the condition that you discuss them with me beforehand. Before each of these essays, I will have a conference with each of you. You will bring a rough draft of your essay to the conference, where we will work on focusing and revising it before you submit it. For your research essay (10-12 pages), you will revise the essay of your choice. As this assignment approaches, we will discuss it in more detail. All essays must be typed, double-spaced in a reasonable font like Times or Palatino. I will only accept printed papers -- not handwritten, not on a disk, and not over e-mail. As with the journals, I will not accept any late essays.

**Journals:** These will be 1-2 pages (typed, double-spaced in a reasonable font like Times or Palatino) in length. They are an opportunity for less formal writing, a space for you to take more chances than you otherwise would. You may also want to think of your journal entries as an opportunity to try out some ideas that you can later develop into an essay. Your journal entries
will not receive individual letter grades, but will be marked with a check plus, a check, or a check minus. Unsatisfactory journal entries (i.e., those that show little effort, thought, or care) will receive no credit. You must submit all journal assignments to LearnLink by 5 p.m. on the evening before we discuss the materials. You must also bring a hard copy to class on the due date. I will not accept late journal assignments. As with all submitted writing for this class, I expect you to proofread your journals. Your journals are part of your participation grade for this class.

Participation: I have designed this class not as a lecture but as a seminar where we will work on the readings together. In addition to your journals, each of you will make a brief presentation (approximately 2 minutes) on an entry in the Abrams Glossary. Working in small groups, you will make another presentation (approximately 10-15 minutes, February 12 and February 17) on one of the critical approaches at the back of The Dead. Also, throughout the semester you will engage in several peer editing exercises, where you will exchange your work with several other students.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes -- participation counts heavily, and you can hardly participate without attending. After three absences you will lose 2% from your final grade for each further absence. After 10 total absences, you will fail the class. If extraordinary circumstances arise -- death in the family, extended illness -- contact me as soon as possible.

Conferences: Apart from office hours, I will have at least three scheduled (and mandatory) individual conferences with each student, one before each of the first three essays. In these conferences, we will discuss the draft at hand as well as the progress of your writing over the semester.

LearnLink: Our class will have a separate folder on LearnLink, where I will post this syllabus (and any changes to it) as well as all further assignments, announcements, etc. In addition to the paper copy that you bring to class, you will submit all journal entries to this folder by 5 p.m. the evening before we discuss the material in class. LearnLink provides a convenient way for us to continue discussion outside of class, and I expect everyone to participate in this.

Grammar: We will spend very little class time on grammar. Instead, as certain problems recur in your writing, I will give you an assignment from The St. Martin’s Handbook which you will turn in with your next journal entry.

Plagiarism: This class will work under the definition of plagiarism presented in the student handbook. According to University regulations, if I suspect or can prove plagiarism, I am obligated to hand the matter over to the Honor Council. The penalties range from no credit for the assignment to expulsion.

Citation: For the essays, all citations should follow the MLA format, as presented in the St. Martin’s Handbook (pages 623-664).

Emory Writing Center: The Writing Center is a valuable resource for all undergraduates, and I urge you to use them. To make an appointment, go by the Center at 205A Callaway Center North and sign up on the schedule. You can also call the Center at 727-0886 to reserve time. Be aware that they get very busy around midterms and at the end of the semester. If you need to cancel your appointment, please let them know either in person or by phone so that they can make your time available to another student. When you come for your meeting, bring a typed draft of your paper with a pen and paper for taking notes.

January
Th 15 Intro

T 20 Carleton: “The Death of a Devotee” (Oxf. 52-72)
Abrams: Atmosphere (10-11), Short Story (193-195)
SMH: 1-18, 723-730
Journal: How much writing instruction have you had? What was it like? Was it formal or casual? Did you have to follow strict models (the infamous 5 paragraph essay) or did you have lots of room to explore? How do you prepare to write? What do you think of the suggestions in SMH?

Th 22 Lady Gregory: Spreading the News (MID 40-53)
Synge: Riders to the Sea (MID 63-72)
Abrams: Plot (159-163), comedy (28-31), tragedy (212-215), tragicomedy (215)

T 27 Kavanagh: The Great Hunger (Faber 26-55), “Epic” (76)
Abrams: Figurative Language (66-70), Genre (75-78), Rhyme (184-187)
SMH: 32-53
Journal: Pick a specific example of Kavanagh’s use of figurative language, and use it to compare his description of rural life with that of Lady Gregory or of Synge.

Th 29 conferences

February
T 3 library tour
Th 5 Stephens: “The Triangle” (Oxf. 271-276)
Boyle: “Pastorale” (Oxf. 363-375)
O’ Cadhain: “The Hare-Lip” (Oxf. 375-382)
Abrams: Character and Characterization (23-25), Point of View (165-169)
SMH: 54-73, 78-106
Journal: Each of these stories focuses heavily on one character. Pick one story and describe how the author uses narration to control this focus.
paper #1 due

T 10 Joyce: The Dead (Oxf. 228-266/The Dead 21-59)
Abrams: Persona, Tone, and Voice (155-157), Symbol (206-208)
Th 12 Joyce: The Dead
Abrams: Epiphany (57-8), Motif and Theme (121)
Journal: The ending of this story is particularly difficult to interpret -- what do you make of it? Has Gabriel changed (emotionally or otherwise) by the end of the story? Why or why not? If so, how?
Group Presentations

T 17 Joyce: The Dead
Abrams: Criticism (39-42)
Group Presentations

Abrams: Imagery (86-88), Lyric (108-109)
SMH: 156-191
T 24  O'Casey: *Juno and the Paycock* (*MID* 204-254)

*Journal:* How does O’Casey manipulate our feelings for Captain Boyle? How do you feel about him by the end of the play? What does he have in common with some of the other protagonists we have encountered?

**Th 26 Conferences**

**March**

T 3  O'Connor: “Guests of the Nation” (*Oxf.* 342-353)

*SMH:* 116-153, 362-372, 413-431

*Journal:* Like *The Dead*, this story has a strong conclusion -- it doesn’t just end, it concludes. How does O’Connor prepare us for this ending?


*Abrams:* Poetic Diction (163-164)

**Paper #2 Due**

T 10  Spring Break

**Th 12 Spring Break**

T 17  Behan: *Quare Fellow* (*MID* 255-311)

*Journal:* Why does the title character never even appear on stage? What is the effect of having the other characters talk about him so much, but never allowing us to meet him?


*Abrams:* Stanza (198-200)


*Plunkett:* “Weep For Our Pride” (*Oxf.* 425-436)

*Journal:* These two stories describe two very different experiences of school. Pick one brief passage from each and discuss how Plunkett and McLaverty use one of the literary devices we have discussed to portray these experiences.

**Th 26 Trevor:** “Death in Jerusalem” (*Oxf.* 455-470)

*SMH:* 552-607, 698-706

T 31  Friel: *Translations* (*MID* 319-374)

*Journal:* How should we react to Owen’s character? Should we like him, dislike him, reject him, sympathize with him? Analyze a specific point where you think that Friel influences our opinion of Owen one way or the other.

*SMH:* 607-664
April
Th 2  Conferences

T 7  O’Brien: “Irish Revel” (Oxf. 495-514)
     paper #3 due
Boland: handout
Journal: Although Boland and Heaney seem to write about different things, these poems also have some things in common. Use one poem by each author to discuss some of these similarities.

T 14  Conferences
Th 16 McCabe: Carn, Part One (3-115)
     Journal: What does McCabe, as a writer, have in common with the other authors we have read? How is Carn like the other towns and settings we have encountered?
     Abrams: Novel (130-135)

T 21 McCabe: Carn, Part Two (119-234)
Th 23 McGuckian, Last Day of Class
     Final Paper Due