

**SCHOOL OF CELTIC STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY IRISH**

MEDIEVAL IRISH AND CELTIC STUDIES



FIRST YEAR STUDENTS HANDBOOK 2015–16

Welcome

Welcome to Maynooth University and to the Department of Early Irish (Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge). We are delighted that you have chosen our subject, Medieval Irish and Celtic Studies, and we hope that you will experience an enjoyable year as you explore Celtic Civilisation, especially aspects of Medieval Irish literature, law and history, as well as the origins, language, culture and society of the Celts in mainland Europe. Early Irish literature is one of the earliest in Europe to be written in a vernacular language, i.e. in a language other than the classical languages Latin and Greek. You will learn about the early stories, history, or women in early Irish and other Celtic societies.

The Department of Early Irish (Sean-Ghaeilge) is part of the School of Celtic Studies in the Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies and Philosophy of Maynooth University. The homepage of the department is located at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/early-irish-sean-ghaeilge>. The Department can be contacted by email at earlyirish@nuim.ie. There are three full-time members of staff:

Professor Dr. *David Stifter*
Room 22, Arts Building
email: david.stifter@nuim.ie
phone: 01/708 3710
Consultation hours: TBA

Lecturer Dr. *Elizabeth Boyle*
Head of Subject
Room 25, Arts Building
email: elizabeth.boyle@nuim.ie
phone: 01/708 6784
Consultation hours: TBA

Lecturer Dr. *Deborah Hayden*
Room 23, Arts Building
email: deborah.hayden@nuim.ie
phone: 01/708 3711
Consultation hours: TBA

Secretary

Mairéad Uí Fhlatharta
Room 20, Arts Building
email: earlyirish@nuim.ie
phone: 01/708 3666

Other Lecturers

Dr. *Eoin Grogan*

Room 53, Arts Building

email: eoin.grogan@nuim.ie

Consultation hours: TBA

Dr. *Denis Casey*

email: denis.casey@nuim.ie

Consultation hours: TBA

Important dates

Semester 1

21 September 2015 – 18 December 2015

21 September 2015:	Lectures commence
26 – 30 October 2015:	Study Week
18 December 2015:	Conclusion of First Semester Lectures
21 December 2015 – 1 January 2016:	Christmas Vacation
4 January – 7 January 2016:	Study Week
8 January 2016:	Examination period commences

Semester 2

1 February 2016 – 6 May 2016

1 February 2016:	Lectures resume
14 March – 18 March 2016:	Study Week
21 April – 25 March 2016:	Easter Vacation
6 May 2016:	Conclusion of Second Semester Lectures
9 May – 12 May 2016:	Study Week
13 May 2016:	Examination period commences

First Year – General Information

General

This subject is taken with two other arts subjects (excluding French, Greek and Roman Civilisation, Mathematical Physics, Chinese Studies, Accounting) and may be taken in first year alone or may be continued for the duration of the degree (three years or four years in case of the B.A. International). The course is taught through the medium of English and no previous knowledge of the Irish language is required. Texts will be read in English translations.

Queries

General concerns, problems or issues which may arise should be addressed to your First Year Co-ordinator, Dr. Elizabeth Boyle (elizabeth.boyle@nuim.ie). Whenever possible, queries pertaining to specific modules are best addressed to the lecturer in question during the consultation hours or after their lectures.

Lectures

You are required to register for modules amounting to 20 credits in total. Therefore you must register for and attend all four compulsory modules listed below. Each module is worth 5 credits and entails 24 lectures (2 hours per week), delivered over the duration of the relevant semester. Tutorials are offered for some modules; you must sign up for a suitable tutorial time slot as your attendance and participation in relevant tutorials contributes to the overall module assessment. All modules are of equal value in relation to the end-of-year mark. The interactive campus map allows you to easily locate all teaching venues: <http://campuslocator.nuim.ie/>.

If you cannot attend lectures for any reason, please contact the relevant lecturer and explain your case. We are very approachable and understanding. If you are ill, please provide us with a doctor's certificate stating the duration of your illness.

Please note that, although most times and venues of lectures have been fixed before the start of the year, they may be subject to change at any time due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore it is important to check this information at the beginning of each semester.

Assessment

The modules are examined through a combination of essays, continuous assessment, examinations and class-work in the lectures and in the tutorials. The exact details for their relative weighting differ from module to module, details of which can be found in the descriptors of the modules. Assessment methods may be subject to change, in which case these amendments will be confirmed by the individual lecturer concerned

in class or electronically. University scheduled examinations will take place at the end of the relevant semester, after the end of the lectures. Maynooth University's Marks & Standards as detailed online at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/information-students> apply. Please note that according to these under normal circumstances the highest attainable mark is 80%.

Essays, academic sincerity and deadlines

You will be required to write essays (1,500–2,000 words approx.) for some modules. Recommended reading lists and essay titles will be communicated by the lecturers timely in class. Students are required to provide two copies of essay assignments, one for retention by the department, and one for retention by the student.

Is féidir leat na haistí a cheapadh as Gaeilge más mian leat.

These essays must be properly referenced and submitted prior to or on the dates outlined by the lecturers. You are responsible for the quality of any information used from other sources. All material consulted for essays must be credited with a recognised form of academic referencing. Unacknowledged reproduction of another's work or plagiarism is considered a serious offence, for which a student will receive no marks and the matter will be reported to the Head of Subject, Dr. Elizabeth Boyle. You are obliged to adhere strictly to the Maynooth University policy on plagiarism as detailed online at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/exams/information-students>. Any such offences will be prosecuted according to Maynooth University rules and regulations stated therein.

Essays must be submitted by the deadline dates outlined in the descriptors of the modules below, or at the time specified by the lecturers during each module. Late essay submissions will incur a penalty of 10% reduction of marks per day late of deadline. Assignments handed in more than 1 week after the due date will be awarded no more than 40% of the maximum mark possible. No essays will be accepted after the end of the lecture period of the relevant semester (18 December 2015 in semester 1; 6 May 2016 in semester 2). Please note that there is no repeat provision for solely essay-assessed modules in the autumn examination.

Essay cover sheets, which can be downloaded from the Department webpage at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/early-irish-sean-ghaeilge/our-courses>, must be duly completed, signed and attached to all submissions.

Moodle

Each module has a particular account allocated on NUI Maynooth's academic support system Moodle at <https://2016.moodle.maynoothuniversity.ie/>. Course material for each module and general information will be made available on the relevant Moodle pages. Make sure to familiarise yourself with this platform and get accustomed to using it regularly. This is a practical tool for communicating with your fellow students and lecturers about problems arising in the lectures, and/or for discussing questions.

Textbooks, Library

Relevant textbooks for each module will be recommended to you in the lectures. You can borrow these books from the John Paul II Library in the South Campus, or buy them in the Bookshop, North Campus. Visit the library early on in the semester and familiarise yourself with it, e.g. where you may find the relevant books and journals. Library tours are given by the staff for first-year students, and they will answer any questions that you may have.

Celtic Society

A Celtic Society is run by students of the subject. The Society will organise various events (lectures, trips, social evenings,...) throughout the year. More information can be found at *Celtic Society NUIM* on Facebook or *MICSS@NUIM* on Twitter, or contact the Society at

celticstudies@nuimsu.com

Semester 1

SG102 Celtic Civilisation 1 – The Ancient Celts (5 credits)

The development of ‘Celtic’ society during the Iron Age in Europe is introduced with the principal focus being on archaeological evidence, but important historical sources and linguistic studies are also explored. The conflicting explanations for the origins of the Irish and the presence of Celtic language and culture in Ireland is examined, special attention given to sites such as Emain Macha (Navan Fort) and Tara, and the phenomenon of ritual human sacrifice.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours + 5 tutorial hours

Time and Venue: Tue 10:00 [CS9] and Tue 17:00 [JH6]

Lecturer: Dr. Eoin Grogan

Assessment: Total marks 100%

Two essay assignments (1,500/2,000 words) worth 50 % each, details and deadlines to be announced in class.

Tutorials: Arrangements for tutorials will be made at the beginning of semester 1.

SG113 Celtic Civilisation 2 – Warriors and Cattle-Raids (5 credits)

This module will introduce students to the medieval Irish saga literature which comprises the so-called ‘Ulster Cycle’. This body of literature centres on the deeds of the warriors of Ulster and is set in an imagined pre-Christian Irish past. Particular attention will be given to the different recensions of the epic *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (‘Cattle-raid of Cooley’), and its associated tales. The circumstances within which this literature was composed, and its debt to biblical and classical literature will be considered. Literary, moral, political and historical interpretations of the tales will be explored. Students will gain an understanding of the composition and reworking of ‘Ulster Cycle’ tales throughout the Middle Ages and there will be discussion of the reception and adaptation of this literature in the modern era.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours + 5 tutorial hours

Time and Venue: Mon 11:00 [AX1] and Wed 14:00 [CS2]

Lecturer: Dr. Elizabeth Boyle

Assessment: Total marks 100%

(a) 50% Essay (1,500 words).

(b) 50% University scheduled written examination in January 2016.

Tutorials: Arrangements for tutorials will be made at the beginning of semester 1.

Semester 2

SG109 Celtic Civilisation 3 – Gender and Sexuality in the Celtic World (5 credits)

This module takes an interdisciplinary approach to questions of gender and sexuality in the Celtic-speaking world from the earliest sources in the Classical period through to the thirteenth century. Literary and documentary sources – such as legal texts, saga literature, ethnographical writings and hagiography – will be examined in conjunction with material and visual culture in order to investigate a range of issues, including the status of women in Celtic societies, laws relating to marriage, paternity and sexual offences, and depictions and subversions of masculinity and femininity in medieval Celtic saga narratives.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours + 5 tutorial hours

Time and Venue: Tue 10:00 [JH5] and Tue 17:00 [CS2]

Lecturer: Dr. Elizabeth Boyle

Assessment: Total marks 100%

(a) 50% Essay (1,500 words).

(b) 50% University scheduled written examination in May 2016.

Tutorials: Arrangements for tutorials will be made at the beginning of semester 2.

SG110 Celtic Civilisation 4 – Introducing Celtic History and Languages (5 credits)

A series of lectures on Celtic History will introduce students to the primary sources for, and historiographical approaches to, the history of the Celtic-speaking peoples from antiquity to the late Middle Ages. Through a combination of geographically-defined lectures (on the Continental Celts, Picts, Britons and Gaels) and thematic lectures (on social organisation, religion, and economic history), students will gain a basic familiarity with the chronology of Celtic history and the major sources and scholarly debates. The second thematic cluster is an overview of the Celtic languages from antiquity to the present, focussing on their external history, their modes of transmission and their most salient linguistic characteristics, and linking the development and fate of the Celtic languages with the historical development of their speech communities. No previous knowledge of a Celtic language is required.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours + 5 tutorial hours

Time and Venue: Mon 11:00 [JH5] and Wed 14:00 [AX1]

Lecturers: Dr. Denis Casey and Prof. David Stifter

Assessment: Total marks 100%

(a) 50% Essay (1,500 words) detailed in class.

(b) 50% University scheduled written examination in May 2016.

Tutorials: Arrangements for tutorials will be made at the beginning of semester 2.

Timetable (2015–6): Medieval Irish and Celtic Studies, 1st Year
Semester 1

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00					
10:00		SG102 [CS9]			
11:00	SG113 [AX1]				
12:00					
13:00					
14:00			SG113 [CS2]		
15:00					
16:00					
17:00		SG102 [JH6]			

Timetable (2015–6): Medieval Irish and Celtic Studies, 1st Year
Semester 2

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00					
10:00		SG109 [JH5]			
11:00	SG110 [JH5]				
12:00					
13:00					
14:00			SG110 [AX1]		
15:00					
16:00					
17:00		SG109 [CS2]			