

**Undergraduate Certificate**  
**Certificate in Irish Cultural Heritage (Sem. 2, 2021-22)**



This 20 credit certificate on Irish Cultural Heritage is available to students visiting Maynooth University for a single semester and for the full academic year. This programme offers an inter-disciplinary evaluation of early Irish cultural history with particular emphasis on archaeological, literary, historical and linguistic evidence. Field experiences are a core component of this study and this will include on-site investigation of key monuments such as the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Newgrange and Knowth, the Hill of Tara and the monastic settlement of Clonmacnoise.

We specialise in early Ireland, from the arrival of the first people 10,000 years ago, up to the late medieval period. It offers inter-disciplinary teaching including **archaeology, history**, aspects of **early literature, folklore and landscape studies**. Modules, which are all taught through English, are delivered by academic experts in these areas while there is an exciting programme of **Field Seminars** (see over) that bring students to some of the most iconic archaeological and historical sites including the **Boyne Valley** and the **Hill of Tara**. Another aspect of the learning process is independent study involving visits to other Heritage sites and Cultural institutions like the 11<sup>th</sup> century cathedrals of Dublin and the National Museum of Ireland.

There are no prerequisites and **no exams**: all assessment is through written assignments. The Certificate is open to all International Students (and those currently not studying at MU) but **individual Modules can be taken** by those who would like a taste of Irish Culture.

**For more information contact:**

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**Provisional Timetable**

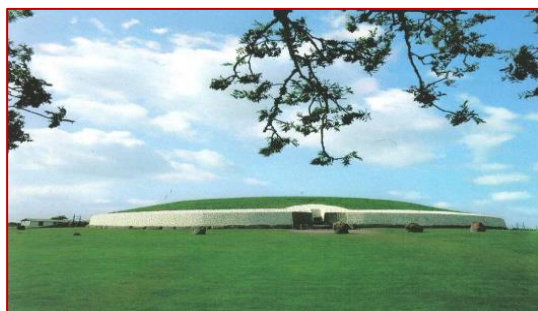
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00					
10:00			ID004X	ID001X	
11:00		ID003X	ID004X	ID001X	
12:00		ID003X			
13:00			ID005X	LC101X	
14:00		ID013X	ID005X	LC101X	
15:00		ID013X	LC101X		
16:00			LC101X		
17:00					

Students take **one core module** and choose a further **three optional ones (all are Five Credits)**:

- ID001X Introducing Irish Cultural Heritage (core)
- ID003X The Cultural Heritage of Newgrange (optional)
- ID004X Cultural Heritage & the Irish Literary Tradition (optional)
- ID005X Cultural Heritage & the Early Irish Heroic Tradition (optional)
- ID013X The Cultural Heritage of 'Royal Sites' (optional)
- LC101X Irish Language 1 (optional) (*Lárionad na Gaeilge*)

**Selection of Field Seminars**

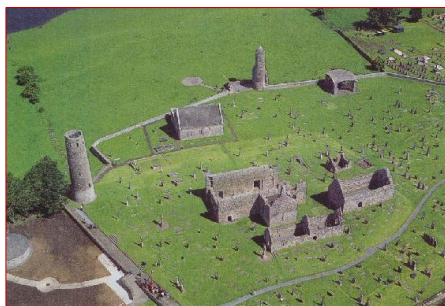
**Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth:** the Boyne Valley UNESCO World Heritage Site. The extensive Neolithic (3300–3000 BC) passage tomb cemetery includes the three largest artificial structures in Neolithic Europe (each 80 metres (262 ft) in diameter and containing about 200,000 tonnes of material). In addition to their use as burial places the tombs were the focus of an elaborate 'Cult of the Ancestors'. Long after its prehistoric abandonment the Knowth mound was fortified and became the residence of the kings of North Brega, one of the most powerful new families of the Uí Neill (O'Neill) dynasty descended from the legendary founder *Niall Noígiallach* ('Niall of the Nine Hostages').



**The Hill of Tara** is a low eminence (197m [646 ft]) with commanding views over the central midlands of Ireland. The site is the most iconic place in Ireland with a wealth of associated archaeology, history, myth and literature. The archaeological complex on the hilltop includes a small Neolithic passage tomb, impressive Bronze Age burial monuments, Neolithic and Iron Age religious sanctuaries, and the great so-called 'Royal' enclosure (*Rath na Ríogh*: the 'Fort of the Kings') and the 'Banqueting Hall'. In the early medieval period scholars gave names and ascribed histories to the various monuments at Tara (which would have looked exactly as they do now).



The great monastery at **Clonmacnoise** (*Cluain Mhic Nois*: 'meadow of the sons of Nos') is one of the most complete religious complexes of early medieval Ireland. Although reputedly founded in 548 AD by Ciarán most of the remains (high crosses, round tower, churches, early medieval graves) date to period between 900–1100 AD. Clonmacnoise became one of the most powerful, wealthy and influential monastic centres in Ireland on an important 'crossroads'. Since the early medieval period Clonmacnoise has been an important centre of Christian pilgrimage and spiritual devotion.



The prehistoric and medieval complex at **Emain Macha** (Navan Fort) contains archaeological sites dating from at least the Bronze Age (2200 BC –100 BC). This became the focus of important early medieval literary and mythological association identified as the 'capital' of the province of Ulster and the royal headquarters for a warrior aristocracy, led by King Conchobar and his chief hero, Cú Chulainn. His brave deeds feature prominently in the sagas of the Heroic Cycle, and most famously in the medieval story, the Cattle Raid of Cooley (*Táin Bó Cúailnge*).



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**Facebook:** Irish Cultural Heritage at Maynooth University

**Instagram:** muirishheritage