

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

TAUGHT MA IN MEDIEVAL IRISH STUDIES



MA STUDENTS HANDBOOK 2019-20

Welcome

Welcome to Maynooth University and its Department of Early Irish (Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge). We are delighted that you have chosen to pursue a postgraduate degree in Medieval Irish Studies, and we hope that you will enjoy the year as you expand your knowledge and understanding of Medieval Irish literature, language and history.

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

Professor Dr. *David Stifter*

Room 18, Arts Building

email: david.stifter@mu.ie

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Consultation hours: TBA

Lecturer Dr. *Elizabeth Boyle* (Head of Subject)

Room 25, Arts Building

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Lecturer Dr. *Deborah Hayden*

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Lecturer Dr. *Niamh Wycherley*

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Consultation hours: TBA

Other Lecturers

Dr. *Chantal Kobel*

email: chantal@celt.dias.ie

Consultation hours: TBA

Prof. Dr. *Barry Lewis*

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Consultation hours: TBA

Secretary's office

Room 43, Arts Building

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Important dates

Semester 1

23 September 2019 – 20 December 2019

23 September 2019	Lectures commence
18 October 2019	Change of subject deadline for 1 st -year students
28 October – 1 November 2019	Study week
20 December 2019	Conclusion of first semester lectures
23 December 2019 – 3 January 2020	Christmas vacation
6–9 January 2020	Study period
10 January 2020	Examination period commences

Semester 2

3 February 2020 – 8 May 2020

3 February 2020	Lectures resume
14 February 2020	Deadline for change of 2 nd semester modules
16–20 March 2020	Study week
10 April 2020	Good Friday (no lectures)
13–17 April 2020	Easter vacation
4 May 2020	May bank holiday
8 May 2020	Conclusion of second semester lectures
11–14 May 2020	Study week
15 May 2020	Examination period commences

recommended submission of thesis:

1 July 2020	for graduation in Autumn 2020
October 2020	for graduation in 2021

Taught MA – General Information

Queries

General concerns, problems or issues which may arise should be addressed to your Postgraduate Co-ordinator, Dr. Deborah Hayden (deborah.hayden@mu.ie). Wherever 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 60 credits in total. The thesis you will be writing during this year amounts to another 30 credits. Modules typically merit either 10 credits for 24 lectures (on average 2 hours per week) or 5 credits for 12 lectures (on average 1 hour per week), delivered over the duration of the semester, but different ratios between credits and number of lectures may occur. Modules may also be delivered not in weekly, but in blocked form. The higher creditation per module, as compared to the undergraduate programme, is due to the fact that postgraduate students are expected to contribute a larger and more advanced workload to the modules. Students with no sufficient prior knowledge of Old Irish are required to register for the language modules SG601 and SG604. Students with a sufficient prior knowledge of Old Irish, i.e. students who passed SG172 or SG308 in their Maynooth undergraduate programme or who did an equivalent language course before the Taught MA, have to register for the Old Irish reading classes (SG64X) instead.

You must attend all classes, lectures and tutorials that you are registered for. 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.

Times and venues of most lectures will usually be decided at the beginning of the semester. Please note that even in the case of lectures that have already been assigned timetable slots before the start of the year, these may be subject to change at any time due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore it is important to check this information regularly. The campus map allows you to locate all teaching venues: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/campus-life/campus-map#expanded>.

Each module has a particular account allocated on Maynooth University's academic support system Moodle at <https://2020.moodle.maynoothuniversity.ie/>.

Assessment

The modules are examined through a combination of essays, continuous assessment and examinations; some modules are assessed by examination only. The exact details for their relative weighting differ from module to module, details of which are found in the module descriptors. The university-scheduled examinations will take place at the end of the relevant semester, after the end of the lectures. Other types of assessment (in-class exams, essays, etc.) fall within the semester; details will be provided by the lecturers. The Maynooth University Marks & Standards as detailed 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 for some modules. Recommended reading lists and essay titles will be communicated by the lecturers during each module involved. Essay cover sheets can be downloaded from the Department webpage at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/early-irish-sean-ghaeilge/our-courses>. They must be duly completed, signed and attached to all submissions. 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. 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 module descriptors below, or at the time specified by the lecturers during each module. Late essay submissions will incur a penalty of a reduction of 10 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 (20 December 2019 in semester 1; 8 May 2020 in semester 2).

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.

Experiential Learning

Experience More During Your Time at MU

The routes available to Maynooth students to experience more from their degree programme are diverse, enabling the development of rich learning experiences that connect classroom content with real-world experience. The Experiential Learning Office connects Maynooth students to a range of opportunities in the following areas.

Community Based Service Learning

Community Based Service Learning presents a credit-bearing academic experience that empowers students to engage with their surrounding communities, which often results in enhancing student's academic, civic, social and personal development, whilst they contribute to the common good. The experiential learning office facilitates academic staff in offering community based service learning experiences with their students.

Further information and contact:

website: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/experiential-learning-office>

email: Aisling.Flynn@mu.ie

phone: + 353 1 4747760

Semester 1

SG601 Old Irish Language 1 (10 credits)

The students are gradually familiarised with all aspects of Old Irish grammar. First, the phonology and orthography of Old Irish are introduced. After this, the inflectional classes of the nouns and adjectives, the present stem classes of the verbs, as well as central chapters of syntax, e.g. inflected prepositions and infixed pronouns, are the main focus of the attention.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 48 lecture hours + 12 tutorial hours

Time and Venue: to be arranged at first meeting, Mon 23 September, 11:00 [EHCR]

Lecturer: Prof. David Stifter

Assessment: 100% University scheduled written examination (180 min) January 2020.

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

SG613 Learned Literature of Medieval Ireland (10 credits)

A considerable part of the extant literature of medieval Ireland is dedicated to learned matter, that is, to subjects that could be termed academic or scientific in modern understanding. These subjects include grammar and the philosophy of language, biblical exegesis, geography, astronomy, history, law and legal commentary, and poetic composition. In this module, select examples of texts treating these topics will be read, critically analysed and evaluated in their literary and historical context.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours

Time and Venue: TBA

Lecturer: Dr. Niamh Wycherley

Assessment: 50% classwork (essays, presentations), 50% a university-scheduled written examination in January 2020.

SG616 Developing Research Skills in Medieval Irish Studies 1 (5 credits)

In a series of seminars, the students will develop their familiarity with the main research tools of medieval Irish studies, such as the use of handbooks, lexicons, dictionaries and electronic databases.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 12 lecture hours

Time and Venue: TBA

Lecturer: Dr. Elizabeth Boyle

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment (active participation in class, essays, presentation)

SG618 Introduction to Palaeography (5 credits)

This module introduces the students to basic concepts of palaeography: the development of scripts and writing styles, common abbreviations and notae, and codicology. The students will gain practical experience in reading medieval Irish manuscripts.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 12 lecture hours

Time and Venue: students are requested to contact the lecturer

Lecturer: Dr. Chantal Kobel

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment (reading and transcribing passages from medieval manuscripts for the class, in-class exam).

SG625 Middle Welsh (5 credits)

This module provides an introduction to the grammar of Middle Welsh, exemplified by short pieces of Middle Welsh text where appropriate.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 12 lecture hours + 12 hours of independent student activities

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: Prof. Barry Lewis

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment

SG341 Readings from Early Irish Literature 1 (5 credits)

This undergraduate module can be taken by postgraduate students to practice their Old Irish. A letter of permission by the Head of Department is required. In this module, an Old Irish text (*Scéla Muicce Maic Da Thó*) will be read in the original language. The students will have to prepare passages at home, and these will be discussed in detail in class.

Prerequisite: Some knowledge of Old Irish

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours

Time and Venue: Tue 12:00 [HJ] and Fri 12:00 [T4]

Lecturer: Dr. Elizabeth Boyle

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment (weekly reading and translating in class, in-class written exam).

SG643 Readings from Early Irish Literature 3 (10 credits)

In this module, the poem (or the two poems?) on the first page of the 9th-century Milan manuscript, Ambr. C301 infr., will be read in the original language. The students will have to prepare passages that will be discussed and analysed in class.

Prerequisite: SG172, SG308, SG604 or an equivalent knowledge of Old Irish

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: Prof. David Stifter

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment.

Special Option in Semesters 1 & 2

FM805 Outreach & Communication (5 credits)

For details see the University Course Finder:

<http://apps.maynoothuniversity.ie/courses/?TARGET=CS&MODE=SEARCH>

Teaching & Learning Methods: to be announced

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: a Graduate Office lecturer

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment.

Semester 2

SG604 Old Irish Language 2 (10 credits)

This module introduces the students to advanced aspects of Old Irish grammar, esp. the formation of non-present tenses and moods, and advanced aspects of syntax, esp. dependent clauses.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 48 lecture hours + 12 tutorial hours

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: Prof. David Stifter

Assessment: 100% University scheduled written examination May 2020.

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

SG614 Medieval Irish Sagas and Mythology (10 Credits)

Using the celebrated narrative tradition of medieval Ireland only as a quarry for heroic, mythological or pagan motifs, or as an entertaining window on the past, is turning a blind eye on the contemporary intellectual, literary and historical fabric into which those tales were woven by their composers. In this module, the students will read selected pieces of the Irish saga tradition and subject them to a full textual analysis and interpretation.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: Dr. Elizabeth Boyle

Assessment: 50% classwork (essays, presentations), 50% a university-scheduled written examination in May 2020.

SG615 Palaeography and Manuscript Culture (5 credits)

The students are introduced to the Irish manuscript tradition, especially those manuscripts that are relevant for medieval literature of Ireland. The students will learn how to read and transcribe medieval Irish manuscripts.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 12 lecture hours

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: Dr. Chantal Kobel

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment (practice in reading and transcribing medieval Irish manuscripts).

SG626 Middle Welsh Reading (5 credits)

Reading of select Middle Welsh texts, prose and/or poetry.

Teaching & Learning Methods: 12 lecture hours + 12 hours of independent student activities

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: Prof. Barry Lewis

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment

SG342 Readings from Early Irish Literature 2 (5 credits)

This undergraduate module can be taken by postgraduate students to practice their Old Irish. A letter of permission by the Head of Department is required. In this module, an Old Irish text will be read in the original language. The students will have to prepare passages at home, and these will be discussed in detail in class.

Prerequisite: Some knowledge of Old Irish

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours

Time and Venue: Wed 10:00 [T4], Wed 11:00 [T4], Thu 12:00 [AX1], Fri 12:00 [RW.01] (to be arranged)

Lecturer: Dr. Nora White

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment (translating in class, in-class written exam).

SG644 Readings from Early Irish Literature 4 (10 credits)

In this module, text that belonged to the lost manuscript *Cín Dromma Snechtai* will be read in the original language. The students will have to prepare passages that will be discussed and analysed in class.

Prerequisite: SG172, SG308, SG604 or an equivalent knowledge of Old Irish

Teaching & Learning Methods: 24 lecture hours

Time and Venue: to be arranged

Lecturer: Prof. David Stifter

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment.

After Semester 2

SG606 Thesis (30 credits)

The students produce a thesis of c. 15.000 words in independent work on a research topic that they have developed in consultation with the supervisor. This is done through private study of a literary, linguistic or historical topic deemed suitable by the Head of Department and regular consultation with a designated supervisor.

The students should be able to demonstrate that they are able to

- Engage proficiently in reading and writing on topics related to Early Medieval Ireland.
- Critically appraise primary and secondary literature relating to Early Medieval Ireland.
- Demonstrate effective and efficient research, writing and study skills.

Assessment: 100% on the basis of the form and contents of the thesis to be presented at the beginning of July after semester 2.