

Carleton University
Winter 2023
Department of English

ENGL 2908A Celtic Literatures
Spending Time with Seamus Heaney

Prerequisite: Second year standing or permission of the department
Mondays and Wednesdays 4:05-5:25pm. In-person, please confirm location on Carleton Central.

Professor Collett Tracey
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Office: 1910 Dunton Tower Phone: 520-2600 ext. 2328
Office Hours: TBD

Important note:

For information on deadlines for withdrawal from courses, please consult the Academic Year section of the Undergraduate Calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>).

“Between my finger and my thumb/The squat pen rests./I’ll dig with it.”
(From “Digging” by Seamus Heaney)

Far from being an overview of Irish literature, this course will focus exclusively on the work of one great writer, and that is Seamus Heaney. Over the course of his life, he was a professor of poetry at both Harvard and Oxford Universities. He was also an award-winning translator, a prose writer, and a broadcaster. However, it is his poetry that we will be studying in this course.

Critics have compared Heaney to W.B. Yeats, Patrick Kavanagh, Robert Frost, Ted Hughes and William Wordsworth. His subject matter ranges widely. In some poems he is playful with language and its possibilities. In others he is entirely personal. In others he is political, addressing the conflict he experienced during the Troubles in Northern Ireland and elegizing the friends and acquaintances he lost to the violence. His work navigates ideas of love, loss, the natural world, childhood and memory. His power is that he does so in a simple and direct way that speaks to every day people provoking thought and a visceral reaction.

Required Text:

Heaney, Seamus. *100 Poems*. Available at the University bookstore.

Grading:

There will be three forms of evaluation. Given that there is no final examination, a significant percentage of your final grade will be based on attendance and participation. The rest of the grade will be based on a seminar presentation and an essay, which will be submitted during the final class. Grades for term work will be based on insightfulness, originality, focus, organization of ideas, clarity of expression, scholarly rigor, correct use of MLA style, spelling, and grammar.

Attendance and Participation & short reflective piece: 30%

Seminar Presentation: 30%

Final Essay (due on the last day of class): 40%

Class Participation/Attendance:

Critical reading, writing and analytical skills cannot be learned from books alone. Asking questions about the readings and contributing to class discussions will help you better understand the material, hone your critical and interpretive skills. Therefore, you are expected to attend all classes. Attendance will be taken on a random basis and absences will be noted. **Students who miss four or more classes per term without an acceptable reason will not be able to pass the course.** You are also expected to bring the assigned text having read it and being prepared for discussion. If you do have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from another student. **Unless absolutely necessary, due to a disability, cellphones and laptops must be turned off during class time.** To promote active reading, I encourage you, though, to take notes by writing in the margins of your books and poems, and by marking off key passages that stimulate thought or discussion.

Short Reflective Piece:

Within the first six weeks of the course, you will be required to choose a poem that resonates with you and write a reflective response to it that is 1 to 2 pages in length.

Seminars:

You will be divided into small groups to facilitate more in-depth discussions about various texts. You will be required to do an in-class seminar in which you share, as a group, your collective understanding and research of a theme or issue. This can be done from a creative or academic point of view. With the understanding that some students are more extroverted or introverted than others, you will be able to participate in a way that is comfortable for you. However, whether or not you are actually presenting on the day of the seminar, you will be required to attend class and respond to questions from other class members. Each member of the seminar group will be asked to grade their peers on their contributions to the seminar, and themselves. The final grade, assigned by me, will take these evaluations into account.

The Essay:

You will be encouraged to devise your own essay topic in consultation with me. It should reflect ideas and material relevant to the issues that we will be discussing. Your essay can be an in-depth study of a single text or a thematic exploration across more than one text. The usual essay rules apply: you will be expected to demonstrate a level of engagement and research that goes beyond the content covered in seminars, and the essay must be presented in correct MLA scholarly format. The essay must be typed and paginated. You should always keep a digital copy of your essay.

Handing In Assignments:

Assignments are due in class on the dates indicated. ***Please do not slip the assignment under my office door; it is an easy way for it to get lost.*** Emailed or faxed assignments are NOT acceptable and will not be marked.

Late Penalty:

Deadlines must be met. Late essays are not normally accepted unless you have a valid reason, and you give me advance notice of a particular reason which can be validated with appropriate documentation. Extensions may be granted in some instances, but only for compelling reasons.

Contact:

The best way to get in contact with me is by email at Colletttracey@CUNet.carleton.ca. I will respond to emails in a timely fashion (usually within 24 hours, though it could be longer on weekends) and especially to those that ask clear, precise and specific questions. - I am also available to meet with students to discuss any aspect of the course during my office hours, and if you are unable to make it to my office hours, we can reschedule a time to meet that is convenient to both of us.

Course Calendar:

January:

- Introductions, Course Expectations
- Introducing Seamus Heaney
- Introduction to reading poetry
- Poems

February:

- Poems

March:

- Poems

April:

- Summing Things Up
- Conclusion and Review
- Final Paper Due on the last day of class**

Plagiarism & Instructional Offences:

The Undergraduate Calendar defines an act of plagiarism as an attempt “to use and pass off as one’s own idea or product the work of another without expressly giving credit” to the original author. Any act of plagiarism will be prosecuted to the full extent of the guidelines set out in the Undergraduate Calendar. Penalties may include expulsion from Carleton University.

The Undergraduate Calendar specifies that the act of submitting “substantially the same piece of work to two or more courses without the prior written permission of the instructors from all courses involved” constitutes an Instructional Offence punishable under the guidelines set out in the

Undergraduate Calendar. Please note: “Minor modifications and amendments, such as changes of phraseology in an essay or paper, do not constitute a significant and acceptable reworking of an assignment.” No piece of work written for another course will be accepted for credit in this course.

Student Mental Health:

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Pandemic Measures:

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks: Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines: While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

Requests for Academic Accommodations:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence:

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities:

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>