Modern Ireland

From the Irish Revolution to Brexit

(1912-2018)

Module Overview

The module seeks to recreate the excitement, turmoil and difficulties of modern Irish history. It will outline and explain the course of the Irish Revolution (1912-23) that established an independent Ireland, and investigate the lasting legacies of that period that can still be felt today. The course will deal with numerous aspects of Irish history and culture, including the struggle for independence, the emergence of the Irish Labor and Feminist movements, the 1916 Easter Rising and the First World War, the War of Independence, Partition, the Irish Civil War, the Troubles in the North, and the social, political military, economic and cultural development of Ireland from independence until the present day, when Brexit is threatening to transform Ireland’s relationship with neighboring Britain yet again. Sources from this period will be discussed, including contemporary newspaper reports, documents from Irish archives, published collections of speeches and published memoirs or books by participants in the period, letters and diaries, as well as the extensive range of books in the UCD Library. In addition, students will engage with Irish culture in the forms of music, literature, film and theatre.

The module will also look at current challenges faced by Ireland, notably by examining the legacies of the conflict in Northern Ireland and the Peace Process culminating in the Good Friday Agreement, and the impact that the border continues to have on Irish life against the backdrop of the impending exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union. In sum, the module will assess continuity and change in Ireland over the last hundred years.

The module will be taught by the professors of the UCD School of History, the leading center in the world for the study of modern Ireland.
**Course Structure**
Teaching on this course will consist of two one-hour lectures and two-one-hour seminars per week over a period of six weeks. In addition, students will attend two two-hour tutorials per week that will be devoted to cultural aspects of Modern Ireland, ranging from historical walking tours of Dublin that tie in with the themes of the lectures / seminars; visits to Irish museums and archives, supervised readings and discussions of historical and contemporary Irish fiction (from James Joyce to Colm Tóibín and Anne Enright, the Booker-Prize-winning novelist who is also a Professor of Creative Writing at UCD) and non-fiction. Other seminars will be devoted to academic writing skills and assessment preparation.

**Walking Tour**
Students who take this module will be divided into smaller groups and brought on a historical walking tour of Dublin.

**Bloc seminar at The Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe**
The School of History has a long-standing relationship with the Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe where we often take groups of students for bloc seminars. The bloc seminar at the end of the Irish History course would consist of a five-day visit to Leuven, Belgium, with organized visits to some of the battlefields of the First World War and the EU quarters of Brussels, and daily lectures / seminars by European lawmakers (Members of the European Parliament) on Ireland and the EU, from accession to the common market to the threats posed by Brexit. All meals, accommodation, bus transfers, guided tours and lectures would be included, but students would have to book their own flights from Dublin to Brussels (which are fairly cheap).

**Assessment**
Students who take this module will write two 2,000 word essays:

1. What were the forces that shaped Ireland in the twentieth century?
2. How important is the Irish border to life in modern Ireland?
In addition, students will keep an assessed learning diary about the cultural component of the module.
All students will be given access to the reading material necessary to complete this essay and will be guided by tutors through the process.