



University of
New Haven

Irish Music: A Cultural Heritage

SECTION I: Course Overview

Course Code: IRL332/MUS332

Subject Area(s): Music, Irish Language & Literature

Prerequisites: See Below

Language of Instruction: English

Total Contact Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Music is a key component in Irish culture and has a long and complex history leading up to what is globally recognized today as ‘Traditional Irish Music’. The course will explore the history and culture of Ireland through the medium of music, ranging from the 12th century to the present day, and will encompass numerous musical genres, ranging from traditional, classical, folk, ballad, dance music, and contemporary Irish music.

In addition to the academic study of music, you will engage with and experience learning in a very “hands on” method by your active engagement with all aspects of music and performance, including your attendance and participation at recitals, céilí (traditional Irish dancing), concerts, and various musical events in the city throughout your term. This course will also include practical workshops: a component that involves firstly, the construction of traditional Irish drums (Bodhráns), following which lessons will be provided under the tutelage of a renowned Bodhrán expert and secondly, instruction will be provided on the tin whistle, and the singing of traditional Irish songs, ballads, and airs. You need not have had previous musical training for this course and you can both excel and enjoy it without prior training in singing or playing an instrument.

A cornerstone of Irish music and the resulting place that it occupies in contemporary culture is built on the conflicting relationship between Ireland and England. This course will take you through a musical timeline that will illustrate how this relationship manifested itself through Irish music, Gaelic – the native Irish language, and other traditional art forms. In particular, you will discover (a) how the key events (famine, rebellion, independence) in Irish history were symbolized and represented in artistic pursuits, especially song and music, and examine how they augmented the 'oral tradition' of historical record keeping and (b) how cultural practices and the emergence of distinct musical genres through the ages played out in a developing Ireland. Both of these aspects of the course will examine music in both Gaelic (Irish Language) and English.

You will also study how Ireland’s rich literary heritage developed hand in hand with Irish music, song, and dance by (a) learning how the works and typologies of the great Irish writers influenced and was represented in

Irish music and (b) examining how the essence of Irish culture is an amalgam of various interlinked factors – music, literature, language, religion, and the arts in general.

The overarching goals for the course will be to introduce how music, song, and dance are intertwined with key cultural and artistic pursuits, particularly Irish literature, of distinct phases in the development of Irish history and through the workshops to provide an opportunity for you to learn how to play and construct traditional Irish instruments.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Cognitive / Knowledge skills

- Relate the role and significance of Irish music to the historical, social, and contextual background of its development.
- Visually and aurally identify a broad range of Irish instruments and playing techniques.
- Understand the impact that historic events and literature have on Irish music.
- Recognize how the key events (famine, rebellion, independence) in Irish history are symbolized and represented in music.
- Distinguish how cultural practices and the emergence of distinct musical genres through the ages evolved in a developing Ireland.
- Examine how the essence of Irish culture is an amalgam of various interlinked factors – music, literature, language, religion and the arts in general.
- Learn how the works and typologies of the great Irish writers throughout time influenced Irish music.

Analytical / Critical Thinking Skills

- Analyze the diversity of Irish music and its role in society.
- Develop an ability to critically evaluate the music experienced during the course.
- Demonstrate writing and composition skills of an appropriate academic level, including writing structure, mechanics and content that reflects the cumulative experience of your education to date.
- Respond to music on critical-analytical levels appropriate for academic discussion among peers.
- Analyze and critically evaluate the music experienced during the course.
- Integrate the relevant aspects of this course into other course(s) also taken in Ireland, and to make meaningful connections in relation to same.
- Recognize the importance of the differences in world cultures and their means of expression and cultural heritage through music and the arts.

Affective & Behavioral / Attitudinal Skills

- Develop creative and artistic skills through exposure to various traditional Irish instruments.
- Appreciate the role that Irish music occupies in Irish culture.
- Visually and aurally identify a broad range of Irish instruments and playing techniques.
- Articulate publically during class discussions, and present a creative project to the class on a particular aspect of Irish music that appeals to your imagination and enhances your overall cultural experience of Ireland.
- Acquire an interest in learning more about Irish music by asking questions, seeking answers, and undertaking independent research in response to music, musicians and, and works.
- Master the fundamental skills needed to play simple Irish tunes on a two traditional instruments.

PREREQUISITES

Prior to enrollment, this course requires you to have completed either **two** one-hundred or **one** two-hundred level courses in the subject area(s) of instruction.

SECTION II: Instructor & Course Details

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

Name: TBA
Contact Information: TBA
Term: SEMESTER

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class will meet twice weekly for 90 minutes each session. All students are expected to arrive on time and prepared for the day's class session.

CEA enforces a mandatory attendance policy. You are therefore expected to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions, including any field trips, site visits, guest lectures, etc. that are assigned by the instructor. The table below shows the number of class sessions you may miss before receiving a grade penalty.

ALLOWED ABSENCES – SEMESTER		
Courses Meeting X day(s) Per Week	Allowed Absence(s)	Automatic Failing Grade at X th absence
Courses meeting 2 day(s) per week	2 Absences	8 th Absence

For every additional absence beyond the allowed number, your final course grade will drop down to the subsequent letter grade (ex: A+ to A). As a student, you should understand that the grade penalties will apply if you are marked absent due to tardiness or leaving class early. In the table below, you will find the grade penalty associated with each excessive absence up to and including automatic course failure.

ATTENDANCE DOCKING PENALTIES								
Absence	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
Penalty	No Penalty	No Penalty	0.5 Grade Docked	1 Grade Docked	1.5 Grades Docked	2 Grades Docked	2.5 Grades Docked	Automatic Failure
HIGHEST POSSIBLE GRADE AFTER ATTENDANCE PENALTIES								
Grade	A+	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	F

CEA does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. As such, no documentation is required for missing class. Similarly, excessive absences, and the grade penalty associated with each, will not be excused even if you are able to provide documentation that shows the absence was beyond your control. You should therefore only miss class when truly needed as illness or other unavoidable factors may force you to miss a class session later on in the term.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes or modifications to this syllabus as needed

GRADING & ASSESSMENT

The instructor will assess your progress towards the above-listed learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted and will count towards your final grade. The following section (Assessment Overview) will provide further details for each.

Class Participation	10%
Class Quizzes	10%
Oral Presentation	10%
Workshop Performance	10%
Written Papers	30%
Final Creative Project	30%

The instructor will calculate your course grades using the CEA Grading Scale shown below. As a CEA student, you should understand that credit transfer decisions—including earned grades for courses taken abroad—are ultimately made by your home institution.

CEA GRADING SCALE			
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70 – 10.0	97.0 – 100%	4.00
A	9.40 – 9.69	94.0 – 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00 – 9.39	90.0 – 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70 – 8.99	87.0 – 89.9%	3.30
B	8.40 – 8.69	84.0 – 86.9%	3.00
B-	8.00 – 8.39	80.0 – 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70 – 7.99	77.0 – 79.9%	2.30
C	7.40 – 7.69	74.0 – 76.9%	2.00
C-	7.00 – 7.39	70.0 – 73.9%	1.70
D	6.00 – 6.99	60.0 – 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00 – 5.99	0.00 – 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal	N/A	0.00
INC	Incomplete	N/A	0.00

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Your course instructor will provide further details and instructions during class time.

Class Participation (10%): Student participation is mandatory for all courses taken at a CEA Study Center. The instructor will use the rubric below when determining your participation grade. All students should understand that attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively toward the participation grade.

CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADING RUBRIC	
Student Participation Level	Grade
You make major & original contributions that spark discussion, offering critical comments clearly based on readings, research, & theoretical course topics.	A+ (10.0 – 9.70)
You make significant contributions that demonstrate insight as well as knowledge of required readings & independent research.	A/A- (9.69 – 9.00)
You participate voluntarily and make useful contributions that are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	B+/B (8.99 – 8.40)
You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	B-/C+ (8.39 – 7.70)
You make limited comments only when prompted and do not initiate debate or show a clear awareness of the importance of the readings.	C/C- (7.69 – 7.00)
You very rarely make comments and resist engagement with the subject. You are not prepared for class and/or discussion of course readings.	D (6.99 – 6.00)
You make irrelevant and tangential comments disruptive to class discussion. You are consistently unprepared for class and/or discussion of the course readings.	F (5.99 – 0.00)

Class Quizzes (10%): There will be two short in class quizzes based on the readings, class materials, and discussions. You can expect one quiz to happen within the first 12 class sessions and the second one to be held in the last 13 class sessions. Quiz format will be written multiple-choice questions and a selection of more probing questions that require short, paragraph style answers.

Oral Presentation (10%): Either individually or with a partner, depending on class size, you will be asked to prepare an oral presentation. The topics and additional details of the presentation will be given at the beginning of the term and will pertain to the readings and/or class excursions.

Workshop Performance x2 (10%): To reward you for the effort made and the resulting output of our more “hands on” sessions, 5% will be awarded for your progress made at learning a selection of basic tunes in the tin whistle workshops and based on a final recital. 5% will be awarded for the construction of your Bodhrán and your ability to play it, again graded at a final recital on the last day of class.

Written Paper (30%): The instructor will assign you two creative essays of 2-3 pages over the course of the semester that will place you as a reviewer or critic of a musician(s) or musical event that you must critically evaluate. Additional information provided in class.

Final Creative Project (30%): Either individually or with a partner, depending on class size, you will be asked to make an 8 minute documentary video clip to the theme of “Reels, Rebels, Rock and Riverdance: an expression of Irish culture through song, music and dance”. The video, containing images, inserted video, voice-overs and the all-important backing track will explore your interpretation of Irish musical folklore. Your video will be screened to the class and will be accompanied by a 500 word written introduction.

REQUIRED READINGS

Reading assignments for this course will come from the required text(s) and/or the selected reading(s) listed below. All required readings—whether assigned from the text or assigned as a selected reading—must be completed according to the due date assigned by the course instructor.

- I. REQUIRED TEXT(S):** You may purchase the required text(s) prior to departure or upon program arrival. The required text(s) are listed below:

- Breathnach, B. *Folk Music and Dances of Ireland*. Mercier Press, Cork, 1997. Chapters 1-9. (152pp)
- Carson, C. *Last Night's Fun: In and Out of Time with Irish Music*. North Point Press, Dublin 1996 (108pp)
- Collins, M.E. *History in the Making: Ireland 1868-1966*. Educational Co. of Ireland, Dublin, 1993 (480pp)
- Long, H. *Soundscapes: Irish Music and Aural Awareness*. Waltons Publishing, Dublin, 2006 (164pp)
- Smyth, G. *Music in Irish Cultural History*. Irish Academic Press Dublin & Portland, OR, 2009 (196pp)
- Vallely, F., ed. *The Companion to Traditional Irish Music*. Cork University Press, Cork, 2011 (780pp)
- Williams, S. *Focus: Traditional Irish Music*. Routledge, New York, 2010 (312pp)

RECOMMENDED READINGS

The recommended reading(s) and/or text(s) for this course are below. These recommended readings are not mandatory, but they will assist you with research and understanding course content.

- O'Connor, N. *Bringing it all Back Home –The Influence of Irish Music 2nd Ed.* Merlin Publishing, Dublin, 2001

Original copies of the above-recommended textbook and other seminal support texts will be placed on reserve in the Dublin Academic Affairs office for long-term loan to students. Periodical literature, articles, documents, maps, digital images and other materials also required for your class are available in PDF or Word format and will be e-mailed to you on needs basis and will also be made available to you through the CEA Dublin Moodle page.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In order to ensure your success abroad, CEA has provided the academic resources listed below. In addition to these resources, each CEA Study Center provides students with a physical library and study areas for group work. The Academic Affairs Office at each CEA Study Center also compiles a bank of detailed information regarding libraries, documentation centers, research institutes, and archival materials located in the host city.

- **UNH Online Library:** As a CEA student, you will be given access to the online library of CEA's School of Record, the University of New Haven (UNH). You can use this online library to access databases and additional resources while performing research abroad. You may access the UNH online library [here](#) or through your MyCEA Account. You must comply with UNH Policies regarding library usage.
- **CEAClassroom – Moodle:** CEA instructors use Moodle, an interactive virtual learning environment. This web-based platform provides you with constant and direct access to the course syllabus, daily schedule of class lectures and assignments, non-textbook required readings, and additional resources.

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Moodle includes the normal array of forums, up-loadable and downloadable databases, wikis, and related academic support designed for helping you achieve the learning objectives listed in this syllabus.

During the first week of class, CEA academic staff and/or faculty will help you navigate through the many functions and resources Moodle provides. While you may print a hard copy version of the syllabus, you should always check Moodle for the most up-to-date information regarding this course. The instructor will use Moodle to make announcements and updates to the course and/or syllabus. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to all Moodle materials and that you monitor Moodle on a daily basis in case there are any changes made to course assignments or scheduling.

To access Moodle: Please log-in to your MyCEA account using your normal username and password. Click on the “While You’re Abroad Tab” and make sure you are under the “Academics” sub-menu. There you will see a link above your schedule that says “View Online Courses” select this link to be taken to your Moodle environment.

COURSE CALENDAR
Irish Music: A Cultural Heritage

SESSION	TOPICS	ACTIVITY	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS
1	<p>Course Introduction: Review Syllabus, Classroom Policies</p> <p>An Introduction to Irish Music: The Bardic tradition Characteristics of traditional Irish music Carving the “cultural pie” – where music fits</p>	<p>Course Overview Listening - Medley of tunes</p>	<p>Review Course Syllabus thoroughly Ensure students have reader & tin whistle Reading: Introduction</p>
2	<p>Irish Music: A universal language From mono-culture to multi-culture</p>	<p>Lecture & Discussion - “links to literature” & changing styles of music through Irish history</p>	<p>Smyth, pp1-14; Williams, pp3-52 Tin whistle practice</p>
3	<p>The Roots of Music The culture of global/“world” music Percussion instruments in Irish music</p>	<p>Study Excursion Lecture & Discussion - The role of the Bodhrán in Irish music</p>	<p>Smyth, pp84-101; Williams, pp79-102; Long, pp52-54; Valley, pp70-74 Tin whistle practice</p>
4	<p>Traditional Instruments (I): The harp Turlough O’Carolan O’Stravaganza – Irish/Italian Baroque connections</p>	<p>Lecture & Discussion - construction of Bodhráns (i)</p>	<p>Williams, pp53-79; Valley, pp329-41; Long, pp13-17, 68-70 Tin whistle practice</p>
5	<p>Traditional Instruments (II): The Belfast Harp Festival (& intricacies of traditional/Celtic music given conflict in Northern Ireland) The Collectors</p>	<p>Lecture & Discussion – construction of Bodhráns (ii) tin whistle tunes</p>	<p>Williams, pp129-156; Long, 17-18; Valley, pp60-66, 70-74, 91-93, 108-110, 155-159. Tin whistle practice</p>
6	<p>Traditional Instruments (III): The uilleann pipes The fiddle The tin whistle & low whistle The Bodhrán</p>	<p>Lecture & Discussion – Historical/political distinctions between Pipes – Uilleann (Irish/Nationalist) & Bagpipes (Scottish/Loyalist)</p>	<p>Long, pp18-31; Valley, pp219-20, 246-48, 256-64 Listening pieces (as assigned)</p>
7	<p>Traditional Instruments (IV): The accordion The melodian Concertina</p>	<p>Lecture & Discussion - Continue with Bodhrán construction (iii), & tin whistle tunes Listening - Jackie Daly Spillane</p>	<p>Long, pp32-52; Williams, pp129-156 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice</p>

	The banjo The mandolin The bouzouki		
8	Irish Music in the 19th Century: A classical inheritance Thomas Moore Moore's Irish Melodies Charles Villiers Stanford M.W. Balfe	Lecture & Discussion – Complete Bodhrán construction (iv) Oral presentation Continue with whistle tunes Listening - Thomas Moore melodies	Long, pp32-52; Williams, pp129-156 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice
9	A Classical Inheritance: Early historical influences Court Music Influences of the emerging European greats	Study Excursion National Concert Hall tour & performance by National Symphony Orchestra	Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice Revise class notes and printed materials & reading for upcoming quiz
10	The Irish Dance Tradition (I): A history of Irish Dance Types of dance Legislation re dancing Riverdance – a global phenomenon	Class Quiz (1) Lecture & Discussion Guest dancers Video screening of Riverdance Listening - Variety céilídh bands	Valley, pp180-202, 413-414, 577-79; Long, pp55-68 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice: (Moore's melodies) *Creative Project Written Proposals Due
11	The Irish Dance Tradition (II): Guest dancers	Céilí night (Irish Dancing): implement steps & patterns learned, observe protocols	Long, pp106-108; Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (Study Excursion) Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice Prepare for upcoming presentations/paper
12	Oral Presentations	Student Presentations	Paper 1 deadline
13	The Irish Song Tradition (I): Sean-nós Songs in Gaeilge (Irish language) The ballad tradition Song & ballad themes	Lecture & Listening – John Spillane, Iarla Ó Lionáird, Róisín Elsafty, Mary Black Bodhrán lesson (i) Tin whistle tunes, Singing	Williams, pp159-212; Long, pp79-96 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
14	The Irish Song Tradition (II): The folk revival Contemporary folk songs	Lecture & Listening – Guthrie, Christy Moore, Planxty, The Dubliners	Smyth, pp124-140, 141-157; Long, pp103-122 Listening pieces (as assigned)

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	The role of the song tradition in Irish music	Bodhrán lesson (ii), Singing	Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
15	<p>A Diasporic Legacy (I): Recording Irish music The contribution of Irish music to other traditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States • Canada • The Appalachians 	Lecture & Discussion - Bodhrán lesson (iii), Singing, Tin whistle tunes	Williams, pp103-128; Long, pp122-130 Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
16	<p>A Diasporic Legacy (II): The contribution of Irish music to other traditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newfoundland • Nova Scotia • Great Britain • Brittany 	Lecture & Discussion - ‘Inter-Celtique’ the link between Irish music and culture with that of Brittany, Cornwall, and other Celtic nations	Williams, pp81-102, pp103-128 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s) Prepare for upcoming paper
17	<p>The New Diasporic Opportunity- Exporting Irish Music: Impact of internet sources & publishing on distribution and promotion of Irish music Irish music in international films/movies The influence of Irish music on the world stage</p>	Lecture & Listening	*Paper 2 deadline Assigned readings: class/lecture notes Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
18	<p>The Living Tradition (I): Irish music after the famine Developments since the ‘60s From mono-culture to multi-culture and the emergence of fusion: Afro-Celt/Trad-rock /Trad-reggae etc.</p>	Lecture & Listening - Kíla, Afro-Celts, Mutefish, Flogging Molly, Dropkick Murphys, Moving Hearts Bodhrán lesson (iv) Tin whistle tunes and singing	Smyth, pp84-101; Long, pp113-122 Listening pieces (as assigned) incl. ‘The Gloaming’ (Martin Hayes, Denis Cahill et al.) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
19	The Living Tradition (II)	Instructor-led excursion to Traditional Irish music/ballad session	Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s) Prepare for upcoming quiz
20	<p>History in Music & Music – Early History (I): Seán Ó Riada & Mise Éire Marches, Tattoos and Battle Cries</p>	<p>Class quiz (2) “O Donnell Abú” discussion and portrayal of the 1798 Rebellion in music</p>	Collins, pp 7-35, 72-92, 153-169, 170-183 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)

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		Reflection on relationship between the Famine and Emigration on music	
21	History in Music & Music – Modern History (II): A call to Arms – the anti-British genre Domestic protest	Critical examination of the music of/relating to: Wolfe Tones, Blanket Men & Hunger Strikes, 1916, 1921 and Ireland’s struggle for Independence Social issues through music Recording modern history through song/music	Research lyrics to “Endless Art” by A House Smyth, pp65-83, 124-140, 141-157 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
22	The Literary Muse – Poem & Literature in Music (I): The Aisling format	Lecture & Discussion - Poetry and pentameter in music and song Irish love songs from Irish love poems distinguishing between the love of your country and the love of eros	Poetry: Padraig Pearse, Patrick Kavanagh Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
23	The Literary Muse – Poem & Literature in Music (II): Yeats, Joyce, and others	Lecture & Discussion - An examination of Yeats, Joyce and the literary greats influence on music Listening: The Waterboys – “The Stolen Child”- Frank Patterson / Ewan McGregor “The Lass of Aughrim”	“The Stolen Child”, ‘September 1913’ and ‘Easter 1916’ (W.B. Yeats); ‘The Dead’ (James Joyce); Smyth pp32-50, Collins, pp216-232 Listening pieces (The Waterboys, Frank Patterson, Ewan McGregor) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s) Prepare for upcoming paper & presentations
24	New Irish Music: Emerging Music, Dance, & Song	Lecture & Listening - The Ollam, Prodigy, Damien Rice, Mutefish, the ‘Celtic’ festival scene in Ireland & abroad	Smyth, pp158-171; Williams, pp213-233 Listening pieces (as assigned) Tin whistle practice & Bodhrán technique with assigned song(s)
25	FINAL PRESENTATIONS		

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SECTION III: CEA Academic Policies

The policies listed in this section outline general expectations for CEA students. You should carefully review these policies to ensure success in your courses and during your time abroad. Furthermore, as a participant in the CEA program, you are expected to review and understand all CEA Student Policies, including the academic policies outlined on our website. CEA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. For the most up to date policies, please review the policies on our website.

Class & Instructor Policies can be found [here](#)

General Academic Policies can be found [here](#)