Texts:
All Souls, Michael Patrick McDonald
At Weddings and Wakes, Alice McDermott
Doubt, John Patrick Shanley
Long Day’s Journey into Night, Eugene O’Neill
Remembering Ahanagran: Storytelling in a Family’s Past, Richard White

Purpose:
This course will take an interdisciplinary look at the history of the Irish who settled in American cities in the mid-nineteenth century and explore how this immigrant group established foundation communities that became the model for successive generations of Irish and other immigrant groups who followed them to America. However, at the end of the twentieth century legislation in the US and social changes in Ireland resulted in a blip in the trajectory of uninterrupted legal migration producing an illegal community known as the New Irish. Using their own words through novels, film, memoir, and oral histories to complement the historical record we will investigate not only who the Irish are and the impact they have had on the urban landscape and American culture, but what it means to be an immigrant, legal and illegal, in the United States.

Course Requirements:
We meet once a week, attendance is mandatory and will be considered in the determination of final grades, along with class participation, the readings, and smaller writing assignments that stem from the class readings and discussion.
Work is assigned on a weekly basis and is outlined in the syllabus distributed at the start of the semester. The syllabus is also available on-line throughout the semester as are most readings, special assignments, and announcements for the class.
To improve students’ writing skills and prepare them for the final project, students will have the option to rewrite Essay #2 or Essay #3 after the initial submission based on comments from the professor to improve the essay for a better grade. All books are available at the bookstore, but feel free to use library loans or purchase the texts elsewhere. All other articles/readings will be found on line in NYU Classes.
All class submissions must be typed, double-spaced and meet the page/word count assigned for each project. Submissions will be graded on content, writing clarity, strength of argument, evidence and narrative cohesion.

Grade Distribution and Due Dates:
Essay #1 – 10%, September 18 (3 pages – 750 words)
Essay #2 – 15%, October 11 (5 pages -- 1,250 words)
Essay #3 –15%, November 1 (5 pages–1,250 words)
Final Project Proposal – 5% November 6 (1–2 pages)
Week 1
September 4
Introduction

Class:
What is objective of the course.
Discuss semester projects, expectations.
Review History of Irish in America 1600-1900
Changing economics/logistics of immigration – transportation and banking
Read Mary Anne Sadlier’s *Bessy Conway: The Irish Girl in America*
Read Records of Emigrant Savings Bank

**Read for September 11:**
Kate Feighery, “‘Everything Depends on the First Year’: Archbishop John Hughes and His Fundraising Plan for St. Patrick’s Cathedral,” *American Journal of Irish Studies*, pp. 57-76.
Peter Finley Dunne, selected Mr. Dooley essays (6-8 pages)

Week 2
September 11
The Irish in America
Class:
Who are the Irish in America?
Review experience of late 19th Century Irish and Irish Americans in US and their emerging institutions.
*Visit to Merchants’ House Museum (12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.)*

**Read for September 18:**
Annie O'Donnell selected letters on line (10 pages)
“Ubiquitous Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service in America, 1840–1930,” MIA, on line (pp. 332-353)
Charles Fanning, “Generation Lost,” *The Irish Voice in America*, pp. 238-256 (recommended)

**Essay #1 due: September 18**
Prompt: on line

**Read for September 25:**
*Long Day’s Journey into Night*, Eugene O’Neill, 165 pages
Week 3  
September 18  
Emerging Voices: Taking Control of the Narrative

Class:  
Review Museum visit  
Examine Annie O’Donnell’s life in the context of Margaret Lynch Brennan’s essay.  
Consider position of Irish American community at turn of twentieth century and their voices in American institutions.

Essay#1 Due

Assignment:  
Read for September 25:  
*Long Day’s Journey into Night*, Eugene O’Neill, 165 pages  

Prepare two discussion prompts for class based on the readings.  
Submit them to Prof. Almeida by Monday night, September 24.

Week 4  
September 25  
Discuss the emergence of Irish American Writers in the early 20th Century

Class:  
Examine *Long Day’s Journey into Night* and the American dream.  
How Irish Americans begin to tell their story.

Assignment for October 2:  
Richard White, *Remembering Ahanagran*, Introduction (pp. 1-6), Chapter 1 (pp. 9-14), Ch. 4 (pp. 30-38), Ch. 5 (pp. 39-46)

Essay #2:  
5 pages double spaced -- 1,250 words  
Due: October 9  
Prompt on line.

Week 5  
October 2  
Immigrant memory and it’s impact on life in America  
Richard White and his family history  
Oral History  
Class:  
Student led discussions on White.
Discuss the value of immigrant memory and the transition to life in America. Topics include Memory/Oral History as a Resource/propaganda tool, the value of family stories to ethnic identity. Screen Sleuthing Mary Shanley

Discuss final paper and possible topics, proposal and deadlines.

Assignment:
Consider topics for final project. Submit draft topic proposal to Professor Almeida by 10/16 for approval and before 10/23 trip to library.

Final Proposal Due: November 6.

Final Essay Assignment:
Your final paper must address some aspect of Irish American history/culture/identity between 1845 and today. Since we are dealing with fact and fiction you can incorporate novels, films, plays into your study, but they must be examined in light of the reality the fiction references. You can examine an event, such as the Easter Rising, an institution such as the Catholic Church, a profession such as law enforcement or the priesthood or domestic workers in the 1880s vs domestic workers in the 1950s. You can compare films or books on the broad topics and time periods, ie immigration in the 1920s vs the 1980s. You must include some primary sources in your research. If you are stuck on an idea or just are interested in an area, but don't know how to formulate it into a paper topic, let me know and I can help you crystallize your thoughts.
Due: December 11

Week 6
October 9
NO CLASS

Reading for October 16:
Daniel Hartigan memoir, pp. 1-30
Maeve Brennan, New Yorker Short Stories (10-15 pages total):
“The Divine Fireplace”
“The Stone Hot Water Bottle”
“View from the Kitchen”

Prepare for October 16:
Two prompts based on the week’s reading assignments
Due Monday, October 15

Reading Assignment for 10/23:
At Weddings and Wakes (280 pp.) by Alice McDermott

First draft of proposal for final project due October 16.

Essay #3 Due October 30: Prompt on line.
Week 7
October 16
1950s Ireland and Spike in Immigration to US
Maeve Brennan

Essay #2 Due

Class:
Discuss final paper and possible topics
Irish American ethnics and new immigrants
Screen Irish American documentary
Compare Maeve Brennan’s domestics to Annie O’Donnell letters

Read for October 23:
Finish Reading At Weddings and Wakes

Week 8
October 23: Late 20th Century Irish Immigration
Bobst Visit
Class:
Part 1 --
Discuss At Weddings and Wakes
McDermott’s technique and different points of view

Part 2 --
Visit to Library
Introduction to library services and search engines. Begin to research final paper topic.

Assignments for October 30:
Read Doubt : A Parable (73 pp.) by John Patrick Shanley
Read Tom Shelley, “Twentieth Century American Catholicism and Irish Americans,” MIA, pp. 574-609 on line.

Read for November 6:
All Souls (263 pp.) by Michael Patrick MacDonald

Week 9
October 30
Late 20th Century Catholic Church

Class:
What is Doubt
Discuss Church in the post Vatican II era
Changes in the Church from the 1850s
Interviews with Fr. G. Ryan and Fr. John Grange, parish priest the post-war Bronx
Screen 9/11 film with Fr. Mychal Judge.
Read:
Finish All Souls for November 6

Submit for November 6:
Draft two prompts based on Doubt and All Souls for class discussion on November 6.

Week 10
November 6
The Irish in the post-War Irish community:

Class:
Discuss All Souls, Doubt
Discuss impact of memoirs; difference between memoir and fiction; memoir and autobiography.
Discuss changes in Irish ethnic community focusing on Boston bussing and clerical abuse.
Discuss Film and how to interpret it. Screen scenes from Doubt.

Read for November 13:
Each student assigned an interview transcript from Joe Long collection, approximately 20-30 pp. each

Assignment for November 20:
Film Reviews by Students
Prompt: “How reliable is film as a reflection of a community?”
Prompt on line
Due: November 20, 3-5 pages, 750 to 1,250 words
For November 27: Oral, class presentations on film
Prompt on line
Films include: On the Waterfront, Going My Way, Brothers McMullen, Angels with Dirty Faces
Students assigned to specific films in class

Week 11
November 13

Class, Part I:
Discuss Meagher and Joe Long interviews
Discuss Church and Community issues/articles in the post war period

Class, Part II:
Tour of West Side/post war community
How neighborhoods evolve.

Read for November 20:
Excerpt from Rock the Sham (20 pages)
On line articles on New Irish (30 pages)
November 20
Film review due.

Class:
Who are the New Irish?
How do they compare to previous generations?
Immigration legislation in the 20th century
Listen to interviews with Sean Minihane, Sean Benson

Week 12
November 27
Film Critiques

Class:
Student presentations of film critiques (November 20 assignment)

Reading for December 4:
Stephen Erie, Rainbow’s End, Chapters 5, pp. 140-190 and Chap. 6, pp. 191-235
George Washington Plunkett, Plunkitt of Tammany Hall, ed. By William L. Riordon,

Week 13
December 4
The Irish and Politics: Then and Now

Class:
Discuss Plunkett, Erie, Trillin and significance of Al Smith, JFK to Irish America
What is value of ethnic/immigrant vote? What has changed?
Screen Up from the Streets

Week 14
December 11
Final Projects Due

Class:
Present final projects