

HIS 411B The Great Hunger: Ireland, Empire, & Famine
Mondays and Wednesday, 3:30-4:45, Bryan 202



PROFESSOR: Dr. Jill Bender

OFFICE: MHRA 2116

STUDENT OFFICE HOURS: Mondays and Tuesdays, 1:00-2:00 p.m. (If these days/times do not work for you, please email me to make an appointment.) All meetings will be held virtually, via Zoom, for the Fall 2020 semester. Please note the Zoom link on Canvas.

EMAIL: jcbender@uncg.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

During the mid-nineteenth century, Ireland suffered a series of famines that nearly halved the island's population—in less than one decade, from 1846 to 1855, between 1.1 and 1.5 million people died at the hands of starvation or disease and another 2.1 million emigrated. The difficulties of these years were captured at the time and later recalled through art, literature, music, and more. Indeed, few (if any) events have had a larger impact on Irish history, politics, or national memory than "The Great Hunger." This course is designed to introduce students to the history of the Irish Famine and its repercussions. Together, we will examine the broad political, social, and cultural impacts of the Famine. Individually, students will conceptualize, research, and write papers on a related topic of their own choosing.

Student Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify an appropriate research topic and pertinent primary and secondary sources.
2. Critically analyze various primary sources within their historical context.
3. Evaluate historiographical debates within the field of Irish history.
4. Conduct original research by investigating and interpreting primary and secondary sources. [Historical Research]
5. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing. [Historical Interpretation]

Reading & Technology Requirements:

The following book is **required** and is available for purchase at the university bookstore.

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 8th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.

Please note, the assigned readings for this course are designed to provide insight into historical studies of the Irish Famine. If you are interested in a narrative of these events, I am happy to recommend a number of texts available at Jackson Library or online. In addition, I have placed the following on reserve for further reference:

Crowley, John, William J. Smyth, Michael Murphy, Charlie Roche, Helen Bradley, and Tomas Kelly. *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*. New York: New York University Press, 2012. (print reserve)

Ó Murchadha, Ciarán. *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony, 1845-1852*. London: Continuum, 2011. (e-reserve)

Following Week 6, many of our meetings—collective and individual—will take place virtually, via Zoom. As a result, students must have access to a strong internet connection, a computer or tablet with audio and microphone capabilities, and the latest Chrome browser (Canvas works the best with Chrome). Should you need technical assistance at any point, please contact the university's Information Technology Services (ITS) at 336/256-8324 or 6-TECH@uncg.edu. See the ITS website, <https://its.uncg.edu/help/>, for more information and hours of service.

COURSE FORMAT & REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Participation: The basic format of this course will consist of six weeks of group meetings during which we will discuss assigned readings on the Irish Famine (most readings will be made available via Canvas). Safety permitting, these early meetings will take place face-to-face. After the first several weeks, students will meet individually and collectively with the

professor—often via Zoom—to discuss and assist their progress on independent research projects. Attendance at and participation in both class and individual meetings is mandatory.

These early weeks will also include short, sourcing exercises designed to familiarize students with library resources.

- ◇ **Sourcing Exercise #1**
- ◇ **Sourcing Exercise #2**

Writing Assignments: The primary purpose of this course is to guide students as they write a 15-20 page, research paper. Writing a solid research paper takes time, planning, and rewriting (among other things). This is not a project that can be completed the night before it is due. In order to emphasize the importance of planning and editing, I have developed a number of short assignments that will walk you through the many steps involved in producing a research paper. Below I have identified these steps and provided brief descriptions of each assignment. More information will be provided as the semester progresses.

Step 1: Identify a research question

Identifying a research topic often begins with a question. Not a question that can be answered with a short yes or no or even a simple sentence. Instead, you want to ask a question that will provide deeper insight into the past. As you read the assigned readings during the first weeks of the semester, think about the questions that historians are asking about the Irish Famine. How do they answer these questions? What sources do they use to answer these questions? What is their argument? What questions are left unanswered? This final question—what questions are left unanswered—will point you in the direction of your own research question.

Writing Assignment #1, 3-5 Research Questions: Please write 3-5 research questions. When developing your list of possible questions, remember to consider the following: can this question be answered in one sentence or does this topic have potential to provide insight into the past? Is this topic feasible, both in regards to length and to sources? (SLO 1)

Writing Assignment #2, Paragraph: Write a short paragraph (4-5 sentences) explaining your proposed topic and include a related research question. (SLO 1)

Step 2: Building a research topic

Once you have a question in mind, you will want to start to find answers. The first step is to identify possible sources. What have historians already written about this topic? What sources have they used? What sources would allow you to find answers to your own question and are these sources available at Jackson Library, through appropriate internet archives, or via Interlibrary Loan?

Writing Assignment #3, Research Proposal and Bibliography: Your research proposal should identify 1) your topic 2) the historiographical discussion with which you plan to engage and 3) a proposed bibliography. (SLO 1, 3)

Step 3: Conducting Research

Once you have identified possible primary sources, you need to read and analyze them.

Writing Assignment #4, Primary Source Analysis: Write a 1-2 page analysis of a primary source document related to your research paper. Please identify, contextualize, and analyze the source. In particular, explain how this source advances your argument. Include a copy of the primary source with your analysis. (SLO 2)

Step 4: Creating an argument

Once you begin your primary research, what answers do you find? What patterns can you detect in the sources? And what is the best way to present this argument? Often, this step involves significant outlining and writing as you think about and reconsider the best ways to organize your evidence so that it makes sense to a larger audience.

Writing Assignment #5, Outline: Your outline should include an introduction that 1) introduces the topic in an engaging manner 2) sets out the argument (including historiographical contribution) and 3) prepares the reader. Your full outline should then include detailed bullet points and section paragraphs that make the development of the argument clear. (SLO 1, 3, 4, and 5)

Writing Assignment #6, Presentation: During week 11, each student will be required to create a presentation based on their research and upload these presentations to Canvas for feedback from their peers. These presentations provide an excellent opportunity to both synthesize and articulate your findings. More information will be provided during week 9. (SLO 1, 2, 3, and 4)

Step 5: Writing and writing and writing

Writing a research paper rarely (never?) occurs in one go. Rather, you will want to write a draft, receive peer reviews, and rewrite (editing in response to reviews). Furthermore, reviewing each other's work will strengthen your own writing by providing you with an opportunity to consider other arguments and how to present your questions and critiques in a helpful and constructive manner.

Writing Assignment #7, Polished Rough Draft: Your polished rough draft should be as close to a final draft as you can produce without formal feedback (10-12 pages, minimum), and should include endnotes/footnotes and a bibliography. (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

Writing Assignment #8, Peer Review: Please provide a one-page, typed review of your peers' papers (each student will review two papers) and provide copies to me as well. Be kind, but also offer constructive feedback—What are the paper's strengths? Where is there room for improvement? Can the argument be clearer or better supported in places?

Final Papers (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5): Students will produce a 15-20 page research paper based on primary and secondary sources. Although paper topics will vary according to individual student interests, all papers must relate to the course theme of the Irish Famine. The final paper with bibliography and notes will be **due by 11:59pm, Wednesday, December 2nd**.

Due Dates: The assignments for this class are designed to build upon each other and guide students toward the production of an original research paper. As a result, it is essential that students turn in all assignments, on time. Should you anticipate any difficulty meeting these deadlines, please contact the professor as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity Policy: Please cite sources using footnotes or endnotes. Plagiarism is a breach of the university's academic integrity policy. For more information on this policy, see <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/violations-and-sanctions/plagiarism/>.

Final Grades will be calculated according to the following:

Participation and Attendance (both in class and during individual meetings):	10%
Sourcing Exercises #1 and #2	5%
Writing Assignments:	50% (total)
#1 3-5 Research Questions & #2 Paragraph	5%
#3 Research Proposal and Bibliography	10%
#4 Primary Source Analysis	5%
#5 Outline	5%
#6 Presentations	10%
#7 Polished Rough Draft	10%
#8 Peer Reviews	5%
Final Paper:	35%

Grading Scale

A: 93-100	B: 83-86	C: 73-76	D: 63-66
A-: 90-92	B-: 80-82	C-: 70-72	D-: 60-62
B+: 87-89	C+: 77-79	D+: 67-69	F: 0-59

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS). If you wish to request accommodations, please start the process by contacting OARS at 215 Elliott University Center, 336-334-5440, oars@uncg.edu.

UNCG Covid-19 Policies

As UNCG returns to face-to-face course offerings in fall 2020, the campus community must recognize and address concerns about physical and emotional safety. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Wearing a face covering that covers both nose and mouth
- Observing social distance in the classroom
- Engaging in proper hand washing hygiene when possible
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19
- Staying home if you are ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for maintaining appropriate social distance during class and facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seat at every class meeting and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking and social distancing requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow these basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and social distancing requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors

or the student may also contact OARS (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu.

COVID-19 Spartan Shield Video

UNCG Chancellor Frank Gilliam has challenged us to create a Culture of Care at UNCG where we all wear face coverings and social distance, less to protect ourselves but rather more to protect everyone around us. It shows that you care about the well-being of everyone around you. We have created this video featuring your student body presidents to better explain how and why this is so important. Please watch this video before the first day of classes:
<https://youtu.be/Mb58551qxEk>

CLASS MEETINGS

***This schedule is subject to change at the professor's discretion**

Week 1

Aug 19: Hunger and Famine Theories

Read:

- Malthus, Thomas. *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1798. Excerpt from chap. 7, ebook.
 - [Smith, Adam. *An Inquiry in the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1853. 214-215.
\[http://www.gutenberg.org/files/38194/38194-h/38194-h.htm#BOOK_IV\]\(http://www.gutenberg.org/files/38194/38194-h/38194-h.htm#BOOK_IV\).](#)
 - Sen, Amartya. *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981. Excerpts from chap. 1.
-

UNIT I: EXAMPLES

Week 2

Aug 24: Pre-Famine Ireland

Read:

- Ó Murchadha, Ciarán. "An Emerging People: The Pre-Famine Irish." In *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony, 1845-1852*. London; New York; New Delhi; Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2011. 1-26.

Aug 26: Getting our Bearings: The Great Irish Famine

Read:

- Gray, Peter. "The Great Famine, 1845-1850." In *The Cambridge History of Ireland*, vol. III, 1730-1880. Edited by James Kelly, 639-665. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Week 3

Aug 31: Who is to blame for the Hungry Years?

Read:

- Haines, Robin. "Introduction: Charles Trevelyan and his critics." In *Charles Trevelyan and the Great Irish Famine*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004.
- Nally, David P. "Introduction: Colonial biopolitics and the functions of famine." In *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Irish Famine*. South Bend, IN: Notre Dame Press, 2011.

Sept 2: Blame and Historiography

Read:

- Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, ch. 2 and pgs. 24-31.
- Individually selected readings

Due: Sourcing Exercise #1

Week 4

Sept 7: No Class

Sept 9: Young Ireland and the Famine

Read:

- Davis, Richard P. "Introduction: The Historical Context of Young Ireland." In *The Young Ireland Movement*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan; Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books, 1987.
- Kinealy, Christine. "Invisible Nationalists: Women and the 1848 Rising in Ireland." In *1848, the year the world turned?*, edited by Kay Boardman and Christine Kinealy, 130-145. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2007.

- Excerpt from: Mitchel, John. *The crusade of the period: and Last Conquest of Ireland (perhaps)*. New York: Lynch, Cole & Meehan, 1878. (Available through HathiTrust and accessible through Jackson Library.)
- **Due:** Sourcing Exercise #2

Week 5

Sept 14: Famine, Migration, and Diaspora: Britain and the United States

Read:

- Kinealy, Christine. "Their Sorrowful Pilgrimage: Emigration, 1847-1855." *This Great Calamity: The Irish Famine, 1845-52*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1994.
- Miller, Kerby A. "Introduction." In *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- [Irish Emigration Database](#)

Sept 16: Famine, Migration, and Diaspora: Canada and Australia

Read:

- Connors, Libby and Bernadette Turner. 'I cannot do any more': resistance, respectability and ruin—recapturing the Irish orphan girls in the Moreton Bay districts." In *Irish Women in Colonial Australia*. Ed. Trevor McClaughlin. St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1998. 105-122.
- King, Jason. "The Famine Irish, the Grey Nuns, and the fever sheds of Montreal: prostitution and female religious institution building." In *Women and the Great Hunger*. Hamden, CT: Quinnipiac University Press, 2016.
- [Documents on the Grey Nuns](#)
- Newspaper articles on the Irish Orphans: [Australia](#), [Ireland](#), or [Britain](#)

UNIT II: RESEARCHING, ORGANIZING, AND WRITING

Week 6

Sept 21: Library Workshop

Read: Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, pgs. 82-89

Due: Writing Assignment # 1, 3-5 Research Questions. Please type your questions and bring them to class.

Sept 23: *No Class—Independent Research*

Week 7

Sept 28: Individual Meetings (via Zoom)
Due: Assignment #2, Paragraph. Please upload to our course Canvas site by 11:59pm.

Sept 30: Individual Meetings (via Zoom)
Read: Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, pgs. 89-102 and ch. 6.

Week 8

Oct 5: Proposing a topic (via Zoom)
Due: Assignment #3, Research Proposal and Bibliography. Please upload to course Canvas site by 11:59pm.

Oct 7: Discuss Research Proposals (via Zoom)

Week 9

Oct 12: Outlining your research (via Zoom)
Due: Assignment #4, Primary Source Analysis. Please upload to course Canvas site in advance of class (by 3:30pm).

Oct 14: *No Class Meeting*

Week 10

Oct 19: *No Class Meeting*
Due: Assignment #5, Outline. Please upload to Canvas by 11:59pm.

Oct 21: Individual Meetings (via Zoom)
Read: Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 69-81 and ch. 7.

UNIT III: WRITING, REVISING, AND POLISHING

Week 11

Oct 26: *No Class Meeting: Presentations Due*
Due: Writing Assignment #6, Presentations. Please upload to Canvas by 11:59pm.

Oct 28: *No Class Meeting*

Due: Comments on peer presentations

Week 12

Nov 2: Optional Individual Meetings (via Zoom)

Nov 4: *No Class Meeting: Rough Drafts Due!!*

Due: Assignment #7, Polished Rough Draft (complete with notes and bibliography). Upload your draft to the course Canvas site by 11:59pm.

Week 13

Nov 9: *No Class Meeting*

Nov 11: Discuss Rough Drafts (via Zoom)

Due: Assignment #8 Peer Review. Please upload your peer review to Canvas in advance of our class meeting (by 3:30pm).

Week 14

Nov 16: *No Class Meeting (I will be available for individual meetings)*

Nov 18: *No Class Meeting (I will be available for individual meetings)*

Week 15

Nov 23: Final Comments and Conclusion

****FINAL PAPERS DUE**** Please upload a copy to Canvas by 11:59pm on Wednesday, December 2, 2020.
