This one-semester module traces the development of the Big House genre in post-independence Irish writing. The module begins with an introductory class outlining theories of the genre, and contextualising subsequent readings with respect to nineteenth-century fiction and the poetry of W.B. Yeats. The module looks at a representative sample of texts over an eighty-year period, including works by canonical and less well-known writers; it also incorporates a variety of textual forms, including novels, short stories, essays and drama.

Lecturer Name: Paul Delaney
Email Address: delanep@tcd.ie
ECTS Weighting: 10
Semester/Term Taught: HT

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this one semester module a student should be able to:

1. Identify the principal characteristics of the genre of ‘Big House literature’ as it has been practised in post-independence Irish writing.

2. Recognise and distinguish between the major authors who have contributed to the development of this genre.

3. Situate this knowledge in a larger historical, cultural and literary context.

4. Employ a sophisticated range of interpretive strategies, using an advanced critical vocabulary, to engage in a close reading of a selection of texts.

5. Evaluate a body of writing in oral and written presentations, and transfer discipline specific competencies to cognate subjects and related professions.

Option Content:

Week 1  Introduction: contexts, themes and tropes
Week 3  Lennox Robinson, *The Big House* (1926)**
Week 4  Elizabeth Bowen, *The Last September* (1929)
Week 7   Reading Week
Week 10  Brian Friel, *Aristocrats* (1980)**
Week 11  John Banville, *Birchwood* (1973)
Week 12  Conclusion

(** scanned copies of these texts will be circulated in advance of class)

Assessment Details:  1 essay + 1 research exercise