

Sophister Module Description Template 2025-26

Full Name: Contemporary Irish Women Writers

Short Name: Contemporary Irish Women Writers

Lecturer Name and Email Address: Andy Murphy, andrew.murphy@tcd.ie

ECTS Weighting: 5

Semester Taught MT/HT: MT

Year JS/SS: JS

Module Content:

A notable feature of Irish literature in recent decades has been the emergence of an extraordinarily talented generation of women writers -- particularly from the north of Ireland. This module will explore the work of some immediately contemporary Irish women writers, considering common themes and concerns. The module will alternate between 'lighter' reading weeks, where we will look at selected short stories (or non-fiction prose) and 'heavier' weeks, when we will be looking at a complete novel.

In the next to last session of the module we will consider a book chosen by members of the seminar; students will vote on what book this should be.

The module will consist of 11 weekly sessions, with the following provisional timetable (but note that the specific texts listed here are indicative and may well change):

1. Introduction
2. Wendy Erskine, selections from her short story collections
3. Sinéad Gleeson, *Hagstone* (2025)
4. Lucy Caldwell, selections from short story collections.
5. Niamh Mulvey, *The Amendments* (2025)
6. Non-fiction: selections from Emma Dabiri, *Don't Touch My Hair* (2019) and Kit de Waal, *Without Warning & Only Sometimes* (2022)
7. Reading week
8. Anna Burns, *Milkman* (2018)
9. Sheila Armstrong, select stories from *How to Gut a Fish* (2022)
10. Jan Carson, *The Raptures* (2022)
11. Student choice
12. Wrap up

Learning Aims:

1. This module aims to foster independent thought among students and to prepare them for carrying out original research.
2. Students will consider the importance of the question of gender in the field of Irish literary studies.
3. Students will learn to plan and deliver a research paper on their own chosen topic.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will gain an understanding of the contemporary Irish writing landscape, with a specific focus on the work of women writers.
2. Students will engage with the question of what common themes and concerns can be found in the work of contemporary Irish women writers.
3. Particular attention will be paid to the engagement with politics and history in the work of the writers considered.

Assessment Details:

- Number of Components: 1
- Name/Type of Component(s): Essay on self-chosen topic
- Word Count of Component(s): 3,000
- Percentage Value of Component(s): 100%

Please note:

- Curricular information is subject to change.
- Information is displayed only for guidance purposes, relates to the current academic year only and is subject to change.