



Summer in England, Scotland and Ireland

EH 378H/ IS 305H Scots, Harry Potter, and Highlanders

Professor: Janet Morgan Haavisto, Ph.D.

Course Description:

This course is designed to encourage a clearer understanding of the influence the Scots have exerted on the world and on themselves through their attempts to define “Scottishness.” Beginning with the Harry Potter (J.K. Rowling), Stevenson, Scott, and Burns, we will examine the characteristics that Scots have traditionally prized and validated. These characteristics have led the Scots through centuries of uneasy interaction with England and into the devastation of the clans and the diaspora resulting from the aftermath of the Battle of Culloden and the Highland Clearances. Contemporary Scots, however, live in a very different world—one in which they have moved from a position of perceived superiority in a time in which Hadrian built a wall to contain the “savage to the north” to a world in which their economy is still linked to England’s and their cultural makeup includes the many groups (Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Indians, Asians, Africans, and yet more) who have entered the UK and who see themselves as “British.” This is a far cry from the Celtic prototype of earlier centuries. Through literature and cultural studies, we will examine efforts to redefine “Scottishness” and Scotland for the twenty-first century, along with the issues that must be addressed by all of the constituents in the enterprise.

At the end of the course students will be able to:

1. discuss the issues involved in the effort to define “Scottishness”;
2. define “devolution” and discuss the impetus for it as well as the ramifications of it for the parties involved and engage in the debate about the efficacy of it with particular focus on Scotland;
3. discuss the likely impacts on Scots’ definition of themselves and of the UK entry into the European Union;
4. distinguish among terms, such as, “United Kingdom,” “Great Britain,” “England,” “Briton,” “British,” “Celtic,” “Anglo-Saxon” “Gaelic”;
5. explain how early legends (such as, Rob Roy and Braveheart as well as the Arthurian tales and Robin Hood tales) have helped define and identify the characteristics commonly attributed to the “Scots”;
6. discuss the impact that cultural diversity (such as, Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, etc.) has had and will have on the inhabitants of the United Kingdom and how such cultural diversity has complicated an effort to define “Scottishness”;
7. discuss the issues of racism plaguing Scotland and the difficulties racism causes in the effort to define “Scottishness”;
8. distinguish among such terms as “Britishness,” “Englishness,” “Welshness,” “Scottishness,” “Irishness” and discuss why distinctions are made among such terms;
9. discuss some writers and their literature and the perspectives they shed on the issues of “Scottishness” and on attempts to accommodate Britons of many national and ethnic backgrounds;

10. discuss why Scots are still a formidable force in much of the world;
11. explore why in the effort to redefine themselves both strong identification with the United States and anti-Americanism figure into the Scots' effort to reposition themselves in the world of the twenty-first century.

Texts: Recommended but not required—Herman, Arthur. *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*.

Required:

- The Harry Potter series of 7 novels
- Robert Lewis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*
- Robert Lewis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*
- Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*
- Robert Burns' poetry

Course Requirements:

- Attendance at all on-site events and discussions is required.
- Participation in all on-site events and discussions is required.
- Assignments for classes must be done in time for you to be able to participate meaningfully in our discussions.
- You will maintain a daily journal throughout the course. In it you will record evidence you find of “Scottishness,” including evidence of uneasy accommodations of the notion. As you progress, you will find that your understanding of the issues involved in defining the term will both broaden and deepen. You will want to reflect on how your readings and experiences have affected your perceptions. You will also want to note the attitudes and comments you encounter about citizens of the United States, including who demonstrates the attitudes and makes the comments and whether they presume a definition of Americans as “Anglos”.
- You will write a paper in which you examine one aspect of Scotland and its people. We will discuss the parameters of that project in class.
- You will have assignments at each of our field trip sites.
- You will interview as many Scots as you can and write about your insights. We will discuss the interviews in class.

Grading:

Research Paper—including insight; organization; proper documentation of primary and secondary sources; accurate spelling, grammar, and syntax; depth of research; on-time submission; etc.

20 points

Journal entries—including insight and thoughtfulness, quality of entries, on-time submissions of entries when requested

20 points

Participation—including insight, interest in discussions, civility (not participating in side conversations during group discussions, politeness to fellow discussants, etc.)

20 points

Excursion Assignments—including insight, on-time submissions, response to the prompts (as opposed to writing entries that fail to address the issues in the prompts),

quality of writing (itemized above under paper)

20 points

Interviews of Scots—including insights, discussion of information you discovered and how it adds to your understanding, quality of writing (see above), quality of presentation in class discussions of your findings and insights

20 points