

## Sophister Module Description Template 2024-25

**Full Name:** W. B. Yeats

**Short Name:** Yeats

**Lecturer Name and Email Address:** Dr Tom Walker (walkerto@tcd.ie)

**ECTS Weighting:** 10

**Semester Taught MT/HT:** HT

**Year JS/SS:** JS

### **Module Content:**

The course will examine a range of Yeats's poetry, drama and prose. Structured loosely around different phases of the poet's career, seminars will emphasise key historical and cultural contexts, ranging from Yeats's use of Irish myth and folklore through to his engagements with eugenic theory and global politics. They will also attend to key questions of poetics and ideology, including Yeats's revisionary compositional practices, his use of poetic form, his attitude towards literary tradition, and how his work intersects with issues of race, religion, gender, and nation.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Have developed high-level transferable skills in critical analysis and writing.
- Have engaged with relevant theoretical and critical arguments.
- Have engaged with relevant historical and cultural contexts.

### **Learning Aims:**

- Evaluate a range of Yeats's poetry, drama and prose, gaining a clear sense of its development across his career.
- Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between Yeats's work and its key historical and cultural contexts.
- Show familiarity with key critical approaches to Yeats's work, as well as Victorian, Modernist and Irish poetry more generally.

### **Assessment Details:**

- Type of Assessment (Continuous and/or Exam): Continuous
- Number of Components: 2
- Word Count of Component(s): 2,000 and 4,000
- Percentage Value of Component(s): 25% and 75%

### **Preliminary Reading List:**

### **Primary Texts**

W.B. Yeats, *The Major Works*, ed. Edward Larrissy (Oxford World's Classics)

### **Selected Criticism**

Getting some biographical hold on Yeats is important. His life is consciously integrated into his work and he was a publicly prominent writer during much of his career. The best two accounts are: R. F. Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life*, 2 vols (1997 and 2002), and Terence Brown's more critically inclined (and somewhat shorter) *The Life of W.B. Yeats* (2001). Also still very illuminating and entertaining is Richard Ellmann's classic *Yeats: the Man and the Masks* (2nd ed. 1973). David Pierce, *Yeats's Worlds: Ireland, England and the Poetic Imagination* (1995) is also informative and well-illustrated. Good places to start to orientate oneself in relation to Yeats criticism are: John Kelly and Marjorie Howes, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to W.B. Yeats* (2006); and David Holdeman and Ben Levitas, eds, *Yeats in Context* (2010). A more detailed bibliography will be distributed at the beginning of the course.

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.