STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK

COURSE OUTLINE

ENGL 306 – IRISH PRISON LITERATURE

Prepared By: Sean O'Brien, PhD

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS
HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT

MAY 2015
A. **TITLE:** Irish Prison Literature  
B. **COURSE NUMBER:** ENGL 306  
C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3  
D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** Yes  
E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks  
F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall or Spring  
G. **HOURS OF LECTURE:** 3 lecture hours per week  
H. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**  
This course uses works of literature to assist students’ understanding of Ireland, the British Empire and the history of modern imprisonment. Along with the church, the university and the army, the prison is one of the central institutions in Irish history, and literature has traditionally been a means by which prisoners protest, resist, and critique their harrowing experiences. This course examines work written by men and women during and after their incarceration.  

I. **PRE-REQUISITES:**  
ENGL 101 or 102; completion of 45 credit hours with a minimum 2.0 GPA  

J. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**  
By the end of this course, the student will be able to:  

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<th>Course Objective</th>
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| a. apply critical thinking skills by creating and answering questions raised by the readings. | 1. Communication  
2. Crit. Thinking  
4. Inter-Intrapersonal Skills |
| b. understand the history of the institutional prison through literature.         | 2. Crit. Thinking                      |
| c. analyze how Irish prison literature connects to historical and contemporary social, political, and cultural issues. | 1. Communication  
2. Crit. Thinking  
4. Inter-Intrapersonal Skills |
| d. demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of at least one of the humanities in addition to those encompassed by other knowledge areas required by the General Education program. | 1. Communication  
2. Crit. Thinking |

K. **TEXTS:**  

**L. REFERENCES:**

**M. EQUIPMENT:** Technology Enhanced Classroom with Xtron desk.

**N. GRADING METHOD:** A-F

**O. MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**
- Written Reports
- Written Exercises
- Critical Research Project
- Participation

**P. DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:** (must use the outline format listed below)

I. Introduction
   A. Why Humanities?
   B. Why Prison?
   C. Why Literature?

II. Irish History: An Overview

III. The Idea of the Prison

IV. The Prison in Eighteenth-Century Ireland
   A. Penal Laws
   B. Wolfe Tone
   C. Robert Emmet

V. Transporting Young Ireland
   A. Thomas Davis’ *The Nation*
   B. John Mitchel’s *Jail Journal*

VI. Fenians in Convict Prisons
A. Jeremiah O’Donovan Rossa’s *Recollections*
B. Michael Davitt’s *Leaves from a Prison Diary*
C. Tom Clarke’s *Glimpses of an Irish Felon’s Prison Life*

VII. Oscar Wilde
A. Letters to the *Daily Chronicle*
B. *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*
C. *De Profundis*

VIII. Easter 1916 and the War of Independence
A. Kathleen Clarke’s *Autobiography*
B. Con. Markievicz’s *Prison Letters*
C. Maud Gonne’s *Servant of the Queen*

IX. Partition and Aftermath: Brendan Behan
A. *Borstal Boy*
B. *Quare Fellow*

X. The Cage, the Kesh and the Troubles
A. Overview of the Troubles
B. The Hunger Strikes
C. Prisoners, Ex-Prisoners and the Good Friday Agreement

XI. Literary Confinement: Comparison with Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*