

Writing-Intensive Proposal: James Cahalan, Prof. of English

LSC # W1-208

Action \_\_\_\_\_

COVER SHEET: Request for Approval to Use W-Designation

TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

(XX) Professor & Phone James M. Cahalan, 724-357-2262 (W) 724-349-3338 (H)

(XX) Writing Workshop?

As Professor of English, I have extensive training and experience in teaching writing that began with the fall 1977 graduate seminar I attended on Teaching College Writing, and continued throughout my whole career. My publications include "Teaching Writing about Work: A Humanistic Pedagogy," *Journal of Teaching Writing*, 1986--based on my ENGL 202 Research Writing course at IUP. Currently I mentor teaching associates in Literature and Criticism, calling and chairing all meetings (every other week in the fall, monthly in the spring) at which we three mentors and nine TAs work extensively, in a workshop setting, on such tasks as grading sample student papers, discussing plagiarism, analyzing videotapes of writing classes, etc. I also continually observe and advise TAs in their teaching of ENGL 101 College Writing, ENGL 202 Research Writing, and ENGL 121 Humanities Literature, and I regularly teach ENGL 760 Teaching College Literature, in which theory and practice about writing and literature are major components.

(XX) Proposal for one W-course--for ENGL 387 Irish Literature: below.

(XX) Agree to forward syllabi for subsequently offered W-courses? Yes!

TYPE II. DEPARTMENT COURSE

- Department Contact Person & Phone
- Course Number/Title
- Statement concerning departmental responsibility
- Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

- Professor(s) & Phone
- Course Number/Title
- Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

SIGNATURES:

Professor(s) & Date /s/ James M. Cahalan 11/26/01

Department Chairperson & Date /s/ Suzanne Guel 11/27/01

College Dean & Date /s/ [Signature] 11/27/2001

Director of Liberal Studies & Date Mary J. Savelle 12/10/01



COMPONENTS OF A PROPOSAL FOR A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE:

Before you submit: Have you double-checked your proposal against "The Liberal Studies Committee's Most Frequently Asked Questions"? Yes.

WRITING SUMMARY - ENGL 387 Irish Literature

ENGL 387 Irish Literature is offered as a sample of how I am already committed to writing-intensive teaching, as part of my application for Professor Commitment. I select this course as my sample because I am teaching it now and have taught it all three times since it was approved as part of our revised B.A. program (in Spring 1998, Spring 2000, and now in Fall 2001). This course is now planned to be taught every third semester, and is one of the courses fulfilling our B.A. category in European Literatures. Most students in the class are junior and senior English majors; a few may be sophomores.

There are three basic types of writing which occur in this class:

- 1. WRITING TO RESPOND TO LITERATURE AS WE READ IT, in two different ways:
  - a. Weekly response statements and notes (due on Tuesdays), worth 20% of the overall final grade. Here I ask students to take notes (the more the better and the higher the grade) reacting to all of the readings assigned for Tuesdays (which are longer than those assigned for Thursdays), labeling them by page-a running log of their responses as they read. Then they write a one-page, single-spaced response statement to those readings, using their notes (which are then stapled to the cover statements) and replying to suggestions that I make in advance: "React overall for about half a page, and then focus on one poem in the other half that you particularly like" or "Trace a motif or two through the whole novel that you found yourself taking notes on," etc. Then in class, after I help students pair up according to shared favorite readings or similar themes that they focused on, I ask students to read a classmate's response statement, write a brief reaction to it at the bottom of the page and sign their name, and then talk about them together. I find that a few minutes spent to reading each other's writing in class is a very strong type of learning, and validates their response statements as the basis for what we do, rather than any kind of "busy work." These writings and discussions then become the basis for our whole-class discussions.
  - b. On Thursdays I give very short question-and-answer quizzes at the beginning of class (worth 10% of the overall final grade) that similarly serve to determine our subsequent class discussions. After students spend 10 or 15 minutes answering just three or four questions about the day's readings, the last one of which is often along the lines of "Name your favorite poem assigned for today and explain why you particularly liked it," they pair up, talk, and set us up for our whole-class discussion.
- 2. FORMAL ESSAYS. I assign two formal papers in this course:
  - a. A critical essay (20% of final overall grade) focused on one literary text, in which I ask students to analyze the text without getting into secondary sources much at all. They Email me their proposals and keep in touch with me that way as well as in class and my office as they work on these papers. Here I want them to establish their own critical voices, rather than get lost in what published critics have already said about the text. I use a

checklist (see below) to help them as I review the first draft of this essay, which they then revise.

- b. I use the same checklist in reviewing the first draft of students' second, final critical essay (30% of final overall grade), in which I want them to keep going with their own critical voices but also, this time, read, incorporate, and cite secondary sources to help them bolster their cases. Also, the topic is broader and more flexible here; rather than focus on just one text, students often choose to compare different texts by more than one author, tracing a theme. Again they Email their proposals in advance and we consult constantly online, in class, and during my office hours as they work on these essays.

3. FINAL ESSAY EXAMINATION. In the final exam (worth 10% of final overall grade; sample included below), I ask students to write one or two essays, synthesizing what they have learned. Writing about literary texts different than those on which they focused in their formal papers, they explain what they liked the most and they track a theme through several different works.

#### Summary of Writing Assignments for ENGL 387 Irish Literature

Assignment	# of Assignmt.	Total # of Pages	Graded (yes/no)	Revisions (yes/no)	% Final Grade
quizzes	10	1	yes	no	10%
response statements and notes	12	1 + 1-10	yes	no	20%
formal papers	2	6-18 apiece	yes	yes	50%
final essay exam	1	5-10	yes	no	10%

#### COURSE SYLLABUS

##### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

ENGL 387 Irish Literature  
3c-01-3sh

Prerequisites: ENGL 202, 210, 211, 212, 213

An introduction to Irish literature since 1800, with particular emphasis on the Literary Revival in the early twentieth century. Key authors include Yeats, Joyce, Synge, O'Casey, Edgeworth, Somerville and Ross, Gregory, Beckett, and Heaney. The development of Irish writing will be examined within the contexts of Irish history, language, culture, and politics.

##### II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

To foster students' interdisciplinary appreciation of Irish literature within the broader contexts of Irish culture, and to learn how to analyze individual texts through very close reading, writing, and discussion.

III. COURSE OUTLINE - see attached.

IV. EVALUATION METHODS - see attached.

My mailbox: 110B Leonard      My office: 209D Leonard  
 My office hours: 7:45-9:45 and 11:15-12:15 Tuesdays and Thursdays (and often for awhile  
 after that on those days); W 5-6 p.m.  
 Telephone: 357-4934 (mine); 357-2261 (messages 8:00-4:30 M-F)  
 Email: JCahalan@grove.iup.edu      Home Page: <http://www.english.iup.edu/jcahalan>

- Texts: 1. FROM COPIES NOW: a booklet with some of our readings.  
 2. Edgeworth, Castle Rackrent ("Edgeworth" on schedule)  
 3. Synge, The Playboy of the Western World and Riders to the Sea ("Synge")  
 NOS. 4. Gregory, Cuchulain of Muirthemne ("Gregory")  
 2- 5. Somerville & Ross, Some Experiences of an Irish R. M. ("Somerville and Ross")  
 14 6. Yeats, Selected Poems and Four Plays ("Yeats")  
 all 7. O'Casey, Three Plays ("O'Casey")  
 from 8. Joyce, Dubliners ("Dubliners")  
 IUP 9. Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man ("Portrait")  
 store 10. Flann O'Brien, The Poor Mouth ("O'Brien")  
 11. Beckett, Endgame ("Beckett")  
 12. Ní Dhomhnaill, The Astrakhan Cloak ("Ní Dhomhnaill")  
 13. Brian Friel, Dancing at Lughnasa  
 14. Friel, Translations

#### Requirements:

1. Faithful attendance and active participation. My attendance policy rewards strong attendance; I typically note a percentage, according to which (for example) 100% attendance is factored into your participation grade--which will be 10% of your overall grade. If you show up all the time, participate actively, and stay on schedule, you should do well in this course.

Sorry to have to mention the rare problem case, but at the other extreme more than three absences will normally result in failure of this course (as will any plagiarism). Never miss a class without first calling me to explain the emergency circumstances and make appropriate arrangements. Advance notice and communication is the key. Call me at 357-4934 during office hours. Leave messages at 357-2261 between 8:00 and 4:30, indicating when and where you can be phoned. Email me in advance. Otherwise I'll record your absence as unexcused. If you have more than one unexcused absence before the withdrawal deadline (October 30), I am likely to ask you to withdraw from the course. I am not interested in collecting a note from a doctor if you did not contact me in advance. Be advised that "my ride is leaving" is never an acceptable excuse. Please come on time to class; I record lateness, and repeated lateness will be treated like absence. (It is always better, however, to come in late to class than to not come at all.)

2. Short quizzes at the beginning of class (with no make-up times) on most Thursdays beginning on September 6. 10% of grade.

3. Eleven one-page, single-spaced, word-processed responses to readings due every Tuesday that we meet between September 11 and April 25 (collected on October 2 and December 4). I will assign--and you may suggest, and we will negotiate--different focuses for these response statements. Be sure to list your name and the date at the top of each of these statements, and staple to each one the notes (on separate pages, either word-processed or written with a black pen on smooth-edged, looseleaf paper) that you keep, while reading, to prepare for writing it. I will assume that you don't mind if I copy your statement for the class unless you indicate at the top that you don't want me to do so, or unless you stipulate that you prefer to remain anonymous (in which case I'd copy it with the name left off the copies). 20% of grade.

4. A concise, original critical essay (proposal due September 27; draft, October 9; final draft, October 16) focused on one single text that we read (rather than on library research). 20% of grade. I suggest Emailing me your paper proposals (as texts of Emails, not as attachments) before they're due.

5. A more substantial, somewhat more wide-ranging critical essay (proposal due October 25, but again better to Email it before then; sources, November 8; draft, November 27; final draft, December 4), using both primary and secondary research. 30% of grade.

6. An essay final exam, Tuesday December 11, 12:30-2:30. 10%.

Grading scale: 90-100% A, 80-89% B, 70-79% C, 60-69% D, 0-59% F.

ENGL 387 Course Schedule, Fall 2001 Dr. Cahalan

(Response statements and notes [see no. 3 under requirements] due on each of the eleven Tuesdays that the class meets from September 11 through December 4.)

- T A 28 Introduction, history, and "The Loaded Weapon" video
- R A 30 Pieces by Carleton, Davis, and Mangan (Copies Now 1-13). Famine presentation.
- T S 4 Edgeworth (whole book).
- R S 6 Somerville and Ross 1-88. First quiz.
- T S 11 Somerville and Ross 89-223. First response statement due.
- R S 13 Gregory 1-103
- T S 18 Gregory 104-350
- R S 20 Synge (whole book).
- T S 23 O'Casey, The Shadow of a Gunman and Juno and the Paycock , 75-130 and 1-73
- R S 27 O'Casey, The Plough and the Stars, 131-218. Proposal for first paper due.
- T O 2 Yeats xvii-50 (and refer throughout to pages 233-57). Response statements due.
- R O 4 Yeats 51-93
- T O 9 Yeats 102-57, 172-77. Complete draft of first paper due.
- R O 11 Yeats 178-214.
- T O 16 Yeats 158-71 and 215-32; AE article, Copies Now 14-16. Final draft of first paper due.
- R O 18 Dubliners 1-63.
- T O 23 Dubliners 64-152.
- R O 25 Portrait iii-71. Proposal for second paper due.
- T O 30 Portrait 72-185. Individual course withdrawal deadline is 10/31.
- R N 1 Stabley 101 (library): John Huston's The Dead. Gather sources for your second paper.
- T N 6 Stabley 101: Into the West. Gather and organize sources for second paper.
- R N 8 O'Brien (whole book). Bring sources (and list of them).
- T N 13 Beckett (whole book).
- R N 15 Kavanagh poems, Copies Now 17-39
- T N 27 Heaney poems, Copies Now 40-103. Complete draft of second paper due.
- R N 29 Ní Dhomhnaill (whole book).
- T D 4 Friel, Dancing at Lughnasa (whole book). Final draft of second paper due.
- R D 6 Friel, Translations (whole book).
- T D 11 12:30-2:30 Final essay examination.

1. My grading is holistic--based on all criteria listed below rather than any "point" system. The two separate sets of criteria explained below emphasize the quite different kinds of qualities I take into consideration in evaluating your response statements as opposed to your two papers. Response statements and both papers must be completed in order to pass the course.

2. Here are my criteria for grading of your response statements (all of which taken together will represent 20% of the final, overall grade for the course, and should be kept in a folder):

A if all stipulated response statements are submitted, with extensive notes attached to each and your written responses well developed and very observant and thoughtful;

B if all response statements are submitted, with reasonably well developed notes and statements;

C if any response statements are missing or if they are generally not well developed or your notes very careful;

D if a significant number of response statements are missing or generally submitted in very short, perfunctory form;

F if an unacceptable number of response statements are missing or unsatisfactorily developed.

3. The following are my criteria for letter grades on final drafts of your two papers (representing 50% of the final, overall grade for the course-- 20% for the first paper and 30% for the second one):

A for an excellent--imaginative and very well developed and written-- piece of writing that demonstrates valuable analysis of the literature as well as a varied and graceful style.

B for a good piece of writing: well developed, thoughtful, useful, and reasonably well written with only relatively minor errors and containing a competent style.

C for a fair piece of writing that fulfills the requirement but has significant flaws in thesis, development, and/or mechanics; if mechanical errors are the chief drawbacks, these are more major or frequent than in a paper that receives a B.

D for a poor piece of writing that barely fulfills the requirement or contains major errors or omissions in development and/or mechanics.

F for a piece of writing that does not fulfill the assignment or contains an unsatisfactory level of problems or omissions in any of the areas identified above.

Feel free to ask me for clarification about any of your grades or anything else at any time during this course. Response statements will first be collected on October 2 so I can give you early reaction to how you're doing with them, and I'll be looking at them in class right away, even before then. See syllabus for due dates of drafts of papers.

[Hang onto this checklist for the second paper, too!] You need to. . .

\_\_\_\_ Come up with a good title or improve the one you have. You want to be both clear and interesting; both identify your literary text and its author, and get the reader's interest with a descriptive phrase. Don't underline your own title; you can use block capitals, if you want to highlight your own title. Put your name and mine on the first page; securely staple the upper-left-hand corner. Use 1-inch margins.

\_\_\_\_ Number your pages in the upper-right-hand corner, beginning with the second page and running through the last, Work(s) Cited page.

\_\_\_\_ Improve your first paragraph. Again, you want to both get your reader's interest right away, and tell us where you're going; state your thesis by the end of the first paragraph.

\_\_\_\_ Develop your essay as a whole, and each of the paragraphs in it, in order to unfold your argument and evidence as fully as you can. Watch out for any 2-3-4-sentence paragraphs; those generally need to be developed more fully (or combined). On the other hand, don't go more than a double-spaced page at most without beginning a new paragraph.

\_\_\_\_ Interweave plenty of short, illustrative quotations from the text within your own sentences, block-indenting (without quotation marks) any quotation longer than four lines (but keeping such longer ones to a minimum, in favor of more shorter ones). Page numbers get cited parenthetically "like this" (21) for shorter quotations and like this, after the period at the end of the block. (21-22) for any longer, block-indented, still double-spaced ones.

\_\_\_\_ Add a lively, clear concluding paragraph that will pull your ideas in the whole essay together, maybe make use of one more particularly good quotation, and leave us as interested as we began, but more convinced.

\_\_\_\_ Make sure that the last page is labelled at the top, centered, and double-spaced throughout:

Work Cited	[if you cite only the text]	
or	Works Cited	[if you cite anything else]

and follows MLA format precisely. Here are a few examples (except that I don't double-space them here, since I don't have room):

Cahalan, James M. "Edward Abbey, Appalachian Easterner." Western American Literature 31 (1996): 233-53.

----- Modern Irish Literature and Culture: A Chronology. New York: Macmillan, 1993.

Churchill, Caryl. Cloud 9. 1979. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Johnston, Denis. The Old Lady Says "No!". 1929. Irish Drama 1900-1980. Ed. C6il6n D. Owens and Joan N. Radner. Washington, D. C.: Catholic UP, 1990. 350-404.

Synge, J. M. Riders to the Sea. 1904. The Playboy of the Western World and Riders to the Sea. New York: Dover, 1993. 59-71.

List the original date of the text first (except when the edition you're citing is the original one) and then the current publication information. I list my two items just because they're closest to me on the shelf and to remind you what to do (in your second paper) when you have two items by the same author. I would have added my Abbey article's issue number as 31.3 except that the journal is numbered consecutively throughout the year (issue 3 beginning at 195), so it's unnecessary and unwanted; if you use a journal in which each issue begins over at page 1, then you need the issue number. Do not include "and Co.," "Ltd.," and legal stuff like that from the publication page. Note the abbreviation of "University Press" as "UP." "J. M." and such is not spaced as "J.M." There are two spaces after every colon and full-stop period. Get and use the current MLA style manual!

\_\_\_\_ Fix something else I noticed in your draft:

Add (in pen) a response to this at the bottom (and on the back as need be) of your response statement for today: Pick one page from Portrait 405-526 that you particularly relate to (whether positively or negatively or some of both), and then "translate" it into your own terms: for example, how might the conversation run among you and your classmates at IUP in 1998 (as opposed to Dublin's Royal University in 1901); what was your vision at your own equivalent of Stephen's Dollymont Strand (at the end of Book IV); for women (or men!), how might you (as opposed to Stephen) react to some event or remark; how might you "forge in the smithy" of your soul "the uncreated conscience" of your people; or how might you otherwise "translate" or change Stephen's experience into your own? Dash off just a few quick ideas--not an essay--spending just 5-10 minutes on this response.



SAMPLE QUIZ

ENGL 387 Irish Literature

Eighth quiz 11/15/01

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Summarize Kavanagh's "The Great Hunger" in a few words. What's the basic theme of the poem? What kind of location, lifestyle, and work does it describe? What does the speaker of the poem say, essentially?

2. According to Kavanagh in "Who Killed James Joyce?", who did "kill" James Joyce? Explain.

3. Excluding those two poems, name your favorite poem by Kavanagh (other than "The Great Hunger" and "Who Killed James Joyce?") from those assigned for today and explain what you liked about it.

Answer both of the two questions below, spending an hour on each question, allowing a few minutes to plan your answer and then the rest of the hour writing it; first it would be wise to decide which three authors you're going to choose to answer the two questions. Write your two essays in the order in which I ask the two questions below (because I think that answering the first one will help prepare you to answer the second one). Be sure to switch to the second question by 1:30, but don't switch early and spend more time on the second question than the first (don't assume that the first answer requires less time than the second, just because it asks you to write about one author instead of two; I want you to spend the same amount of time on each). Also, **don't write about the authors you wrote about in your papers**, and write about different authors in the two questions, so that you'll be **writing about a total of three authors** in this exam. If you wish you may consult your books, but don't get bogged down looking in them. If you have any question about what you're supposed to do, just ask me.

12:30-1:30

1. Choose **one author** we read and explain how his or her work(s) --either one major work or a few different shorter ones (poems, stories, essays, or one-act plays)--exemplify major features and themes of Irish literature. How would you know that the text(s) by this author were Irish if encountered "in a dark alley"? It would help to place the work(s) you write about in some historical, cultural, and biographical context, and then address some of the features and themes that you see running through Irish literature, as shown by this author.

-----

1:30-2:30

2. Select **two other authors** we read in this course whose works strike you as quite different from each other. You might choose two authors from different periods (such as the nineteenth century versus the twentieth century) or contrasting areas of the country (a city versus a rural area), or two writers of different genders (a woman versus a man) or distinct literary modes (an absurdist versus a realist)--or any combination of these examples of difference or any other sharp contrast that occurs to you. The choice is up to you; just explain the contrast(s) in your essay. Outline the differences between these two authors' works; as in your first answer, you may either focus on one major work by each author, or on a few texts. After spending much of the hour delineating the differences between these two authors' texts, conclude your essay by indicating how both of them are nonetheless Irish (perhaps returning to the definition of Irish features and themes that you outlined in your first essay).

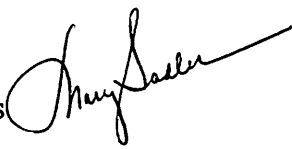
**Liberal Studies Office**  
**110 Gordon Hall ext. 7-5715**

**Dr. Mary Sadler**  
**email: msadler**

---

Date: December 10, 2001

To: Dr. James Cahalan  
English Department

From: Dr. Mary Sadler, Director Liberal Studies 

Subject: Liberal Studies – Type I Writing Approval

I am pleased to report that the Liberal Studies Committee approved your proposal for Type I Professor Commitment status on December 3, 2001. Type I approval allows you to designate any course you teach as writing-intensive provided it meets the Liberal Studies criteria for writing-intensive courses. When you teach other courses and designate them as writing-intensive, we ask that you provide the Liberal Studies Office with a copy of the syllabus for our files.

Thank you for submitting a proposal. We appreciate your commitment to improve student writing.

CC: Dr. Brenda Carter, Dean  
Dr. Gail Berlin, Chair