
In the area below, provide basic, standard course information ahead of registration period to help students make informed course choices. Click the EDIT button and input your responses by over-writing the field description below each bolded heading. Consult the [IT Help knowledge base](#) or reach out to FAS Academic Technology at atg@fas.harvard.edu for assistance.

Course goals:

To provide an introduction to the history and culture of modern Wales. An interdisciplinary approach will be followed, reading literature, historiography and political polemic in the context of film and music. By the end of the course students will be familiar with key aspects of modern Welsh history and culture and will have examined themes and questions involving colonialism/postcolonialism, the articulation of national identity, and ways of contextualizing texts.

Course format:

While very short lectures (of about 10-20 minutes each) might punctuate some classes, most class time will be spent on discussion of the assigned readings (and in some cases, of the assigned films and songs). A short 'questions and themes' document will be circulated ahead of time in order to help while preparing for each class.

Typical enrollees:

There is no typical enrollee and all are welcome. As the course will include literature, history, music and film, there should be something for everybody, and the final project can be tailored to suit a student's specific interests and strengths.

When is course typically offered?

Only this one time.

What can students expect from you as an instructor?

I am extremely enthusiastic about the subject and love engaging students in discussion. As I have spent more than half of my life living and working in Wales, in addition to treating subjects as an academic I'll be able to share some personal experiences as well when appropriate.

Assignments and grading:

Attendance and Participation (40%): Students are expected to attend class regularly, to have done the readings, viewing and listening required for the day and to participate in the discussion.

A Mid-term Assignment due by 5.00 (17.00) on Friday, February 29th. (20%). Read (1) Gwyn A. Williams, *When Was Wales?*, chapters 10-13 (pp.220-305), (2) Chris Williams, "Problematizing Wales: An Exploration in Historiography and Postcoloniality" and (3) Richard Wyn Jones, "In The Shadow of the First-born: The Colonial Legacy in Welsh Politics" in *Postcolonial Wales*. Write an assessment, weighing these three pieces against each other and suggesting strong and weak points in the arguments of the three scholars. If you desire, you can refer to other readings from the course (but are not expected to do this). Length: between 1,000 and 1,500 words.

Final Project (40%): The nature of the project must be agreed with the instructor by the end of **week 8**. It is due **11.59 (23.59) on Wednesday, May 8th**. In most cases, this will be a written paper of between 2,500 and 4,000 words. It will most likely be a research or analytical paper and can be on any relevant topic (modern Welsh history, literature, music, culture,

politics, etc.). However, if you are interested in bringing a very different discipline to bear on the subject and we can agree on the suitability, than an alternative format is possible.

Sample reading list:

please see 'Sample Reading List' on the 'Files' page of this Canvas site.

Enrollment cap, selection process, notification:

Past syllabus:

no past syllabus.

Absence and late work policies:

Absences will be considered exceptional and should be explained by justifiable reasons. Late work must be agreed ahead of time (with justifiable reasons provided).

T,TH 10:30–11:45 Kates Room, Warren House

Office Hours:

Wednesday 10.00-12.00, Warren House 301

jerry_hunter@fas.harvard.edu

Please get in touch if you have any questions or concerns about the course!

To help focus your reading/watching/listening and prepare for discussion, **Questions and Themes™** will be posted ahead of each class. Please look at this short document before (or while) doing the work for class.

Week 1:

Tuesday, January 23: The Death of Arthur and the Birth of a Nation.

Thursday, January 25: glorifying “two archetypical myths”: the *gwerin* (folk) and the working class.

Reading for Thursday: (1) pp.234-40 in Gwyn A. Williams, *When Was Wales?* (pdf of pages available in “week 1” folder on files page; book also available on line through Library Resources).

(2) the poems “This Poor Man” and “Gwladys Rhys” by W. J. Gruffydd in *The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English*, pp. 160-2 (and *Twentieth-Century Welsh Poems*, p. 38, for an alternative translation of “This Poor Man”); “Daffodil” by I.D. Hooson in *Twentieth-Century Welsh Poems*, p. 37

(3) the song “Hen Wlad fy Nhadau” from the playlist.

(4) Jane Aaron and Chris Williams, preface, *Postcolonial Wales*

Week 2:

Tuesday, January 30: A Small Nation and the Great War.

Reading for Tuesday: (1) in John Davies, *A History of Wales*, pp.494-510

(2) in Kate Roberts, *Feet in Chains*, chapter 23, pp. 228-234 (see material in Week 2 folder for context)

(3) the poem "War" by Hedd Wyn (pdf in week 2 folder)

(4) the poem "Hedd Wyn" by R. Williams Parry in *Twentieth-Century Welsh Poems*, pp.46-7.

Thursday, February 1: Hedd Wyn – enshrining an iconic view of Welsh war experience.

Watching and listening for Thursday: the film *Hedd Wyn* and the song "Ellis Humphrey Evans" by the band Mim Twm Llai.

Optional extra reading: Kate Roberts, *Feet in Chains*; Chapter 6, "The Crisis of War", in K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980*

Week 3:

Tuesday, February 6: Making the Medieval Modern.

Readings for Tuesday: The poems "Madog" and "Cynddyllig" by T. Gwynn Jones in [Twentieth-Century Welsh Poems](#), pp. 3-12 and 21-33. (see contextual material in week 3 folder as well).

Thursday, February 8: A Woman Made of Flowers - Medieval Narrative and Modern Drama

Reading: *Blodeuwedd* (or "A Woman Made of Flowers") by Saunders Lewis in Joseph P. Clancy (translator), [The Plays of Saunders Lewis](#), volume one, pp. 45-97. (If you are not familiar with the Boldeuwedd story, you might want to read that part of "The Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi" – also known as "The Tale of Math son of Mathonwy" – in Sioned Davies (translator), *The Mabinogion*, available through Library Resources, or in one of several other translations available in the library.)

Optional extra reading: (a) Jerry Hunter, "Llywelyn's Breath, Arthur's Nightmare: The medievalism within Welsh modernism" (b) *Siwan* (or "The King of England's Daughter") by Saunders Lewis in Joseph P. Clancy (translator), *The Plays of Saunders Lewis*, volume one, pp. 98-152.

Week 4:

Tuesday, February 13: The Interwar Wars.

Reading: (1) in John Davies, [A History of Wales](#), pp.510-79

(2) the poems "Scene in a Café" and "The Deluge 1939" by Saunders Lewis in [Selected Poems: Saunders Lewis](#), pp. 4 and 10-12 (other translations available in other books on reserve); the poems "J.S.:", "Wales 1937" and "the Poet's Propaganda" by R. Williams Parry in [Twentieth-Century Welsh Poems](#), 54-55.

Thursday, February 15: Pain, Monotony, and Incredible Creativity.

Reading: the short stories "The Letter", "Provoking", "The Widow", "The Ruts of Life" and "The Quilt" by Kate Roberts in [The World of Kate Roberts: Selected Stories](#)

Optional extra reading: Chapter 7, "The Post-War Mood", in K. O. Morgan, [Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980](#); the other stories in the 1925-1937 section in [The World of Kate Roberts: Feet in Chains](#)

Week 5

Tuesday, February 20: Lighting a Fire: Protest and Nationalism in the 1930s.

Reading and listening:

(1) John Davies, [A History of Wales](#), pp. 575-6 (about Penyberth and 'the bombing school campaign') and Gwyn A. Williams, [When Was Wales?](#), pp. 279-84.

(2) D. J. Williams, "Saunders Lewis – Man of Destiny" and Saunders Lewis, "The Caernarfon Court Speech" (1936) in [Presenting Saunders Lewis](#), pp. 3-5 and 115-26

(3) The songs "Tŷn yn Llŷn" by Plethyn and "Dros Gymru'n Gwlad" by Cŵr Penyberth on the playlist.

Thursday, February 22: A Small Nation and the Second Great War:

Reading: (1) Introduction and Chapter 1 (â€˜The Waging of War.â€™ 1939-45) in Martin Johnes, [Wales since 1939](#);

(2) The poems â€˜The Counter-Attackâ€™, â€˜On a Visitâ€™, â€˜In Berlin â€˜ August 1945â€™ and â€˜The Poet of the World As It Isâ€™ by Alun Llywelyn-Williams in [Twentieth-Century Welsh Poems](#), pp. 167-72.

(3) Kate Roberts, 'The Resurrection' (in week 5 folder)

Week 6

Tuesday, February 27: Considering Wales at mid-century.

Reading: (1) Chapter 3 (â€˜The Hard Times are Finished.â€™ The Coming of Affluence, 1951-64) and the first few pages (the ones covering the 1950s) in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 in Martin Johnes, [Wales since 1939](#)

(2) The poems â€˜The Carcassâ€™ and â€˜Elegy for Sir John Edward Lloydâ€™ by Saunders Lewis in [Selected Poems: Saunders Lewis](#), pp. 13 and 31-33, and â€˜Welsh Land, Welsh Languageâ€™, â€˜In Two Fieldsâ€™ and â€˜The Momentâ€™ by Waldo Williams in [Twentieth-Century Welsh Poems](#), pp. 130 and 135-6.

Optional Extra Reading: the poem â€˜The Sound of the Wind that is Blowingâ€™ (extracts) by J. Kitchener Davies in [The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English](#), pp. 207-13.

Thursday, February 29: *Under Milk Wood* â€˜ a necessary cliché?

Viewing for Thursday: the film [Under Milk Wood / Dan y Wenallt](#) (and if you have time, take a look at the book: Dylan Thomas, *Under Milk Wood*).

Optional extra reading: Dylan Thomas, [Under Milk Wood](#)

Mid-term Assignment due by 5.00 (17.00) on Friday, February 29th.

Week 7

Tuesday, March 5: Can we talk about â€˜Postcolonial Walesâ€™?

(no reading: discussion of views put forward in the mid-term assignment)

Thursday, March 7: A backward look at the end of the 1950s?

Reading: Kate Roberts, *Tea in the Heather* pp.169-226 in [The World of Kate Roberts](#).

Optional extra reading:

*** Spring Recess: Saturday, March 9 - Sunday, March 17 ***

Week 8

Tuesday, March 19: Unease at the Start of the 1960s.

Reading and viewing: (1) Kate Roberts, *Dark Tonight*, pp.227-84 in [The World of Kate Roberts](#); (2) the film [Un Nos Ola Leuad](#) (â€˜One Moonlit Nightâ€™). (3) Kate Roberts, 'The Resurrection' (if we didn't have time to discuss it during Week 5)

Thursday, March 21: Various Aspects of the 1960s

Reading and listening: (1) in Martin Johnes, [Wales since 1939](#), the sections in chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 dealing with the 1960s.

(2) Saunders Lewis, the â€˜The Fate of the Languageâ€™ (1962) in [Presenting Saunders Lewis](#), pp. 127-41

(3) the songs by Tony ac Aloma, Huw Jones and Meic Stevens from the playlist.

Optional Extra Reading: Caradog Prichard, [One Moonlit Night](#)

the nature of your final project must be agreed upon by the end of this week

Week 9:

Tuesday, March 26: Protest, Song and Poetry: The 1969 Investiture

Reading and Listening: (1) Chapter 8 in Martin Johnes, [Wales since 1939](#). (If you'd like, you can also watch an episode of the Netflix series, *The Crown* – season 3, episode 6: *~Tywysog Cymru~*.)

(2) The poem *~Caernarfon, 2 July 1969~* by T. Glynne Davies in [The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse Welsh in English](#), pp. 277-8; Selections from *The Poems of the Shame* by Gerallt Lloyd Owen (on pdf in folder).

(3) songs by Dafydd Iwan and the song *~Colli Iaith~* by Heather Jones on playlist.

Thursday, March 28: 1979 – the death of a dream and rebirth in reaction.

Reading: (1) Chapter 10 (*~Under an Acid Rain.~* Debating the Nations, 1970-85) in Martin Johnes, [Wales since 1939](#)

(2) 'Poems on Devolution' (pdf in week 9 folder)

(3) songs by Y Tebot Piws, Edward H. Dafis and Tecwyn Ifan from the playlist. (And songs by Dafydd Iwan and Heather Jones, if we didn't get a chance to discuss them on Tuesday).

Week 10:

Tuesday, April 2: Protesting for Welsh-language Television.

Viewing: (1) the film [Y Sŵn](#) (*~The Noise~*).

Reading: (2) poems about Gwynfor Evans (pdf in week 10 folder).

Thursday, April 4: Media Culture and Counterculture – various views of the 1980s

Reading and listening: (1) the sections in chapters 10-13 in Martin Johnes, [Wales since 1939](#), dealing with the 1980s.

(2) select poems from the 1980s (pdf in folder)

(3) songs by Geraint Jarman, Anhrefn, Y Cyrff, Steve Eaves, Datblygu, Llwybr Llaethog, Bob Delyn a'r Ebillion, Traddodiad Ofnus and Ffa Coffi Pawb on playlist.

Week 11:

Tuesday, April 9: Cool Cymru and the Coming of Devolution – the 1990s and early 2000s.

Readings and listening for Tuesday: (1) Chapter 14 (*~A Nation Once Again.~* 1997-2009) in Martin Johnes, [Wales since 1939](#);

(2) Dai Griffiths and Sarah Hill, *~Postcolonial Music in Contemporary Wales: Hybrids and Weird Geographies~*, in [Postcolonial Wales](#)

(3) a few poems from the 1990s (pdf in folder)

(4) the songs by Gorky's Zygotic Myncci, Catatonia and Super Furry Animals on the playlist.

Thursday, April 11: the meaning of a past life for a new century

Reading: Angharad Price, *The Life of Rebecca Jones*.

Week 12:

Tuesday, April 16: Yes Cymru â€” the rising 21st century.

Thursday, April 18: Getting Contemporary.

Note: there will be a short 'lecture' with PowerPoint slides at the start of each of these two classes, presenting recent and contemporary issues and cultural developments. Discussion will be around these presentations as well as the material noted below.

Reading and listening for week 12: (1) Chapter 14 (â€”A Nation Once Again.â€” 1997-2009) and â€”Conclusionâ€” in Martin Johnes, [*Wales since 1939*](#).

(2) songs by Mim Twm Llai, Gwyneth Glyn, Georgia Ruth, Cowbois Rhos Botwnnog, Gwenan Gibbard and Meinir Gwilym, Sen Segur, Omaloma, Serol Serol, Yr Angen, Sŷnami, Candelas, Adwaith, Angel Hotel, Y Cledrau, Gwilym Bowen Rhys, Kizzy Crawford, Alaw, Burum, Eŷdyth, Gwenno, Bwncath, Joy Formidable, Lily Beau a Cerys Hafana on the playlist. *There is a larger selection of songs for this week; all of the lyrics won't be translated ahead of time - please listen and let me know what songs/bands you're most interested in.*

(3) The song 'Kŷn' by Calan (see pdf in week 12 folder; please watch the Youtube video and read the lyrics as well - all on the pdf).

Week 13:

Tuesday, April 23: Unfinished Business â€” final class.

**Last Day of Spring Classes: Wednesday, April 24 **

No reeding for the final week.

Reading period ends: Thursday, 1 May

**** final project due 11.59 (23.59) on Wednesday, May 8th ****

Spring Term Final Examinations End: Saturday, May 11