COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- During your four weeks in Ireland, you will be required to write three essays, typed and double-spaced, and to have those works discussed by the rest of the workshop. The workshop schedule will be determined on the first day of class.

- The compression of the summer term demands that we meet 16 times over a month-long period. The experience in Cork requires attendance at readings during the evening and offers the opportunity for field trips on days that we do not have class. Thus, our best strategy is to arrive in Ireland with as much of our first-pass creative work done as possible. To that end, we will require that you complete and distribute to us and your classmates via email your first two essays by FRIDAY JUNE 1 (earlier than that when and if possible). Before arriving in Cork, you should already be thinking about the third essay, too. Class members will be responsible for printing and bringing with them their classmates first two pieces. Essay authors will be responsible for printing and distributing their third essays while in Ireland.

  Two of the three essays should be 8-15 pages in length—with an absolute limit of 20 pages. One of the three essays should be 20-25 pages in length.

- Chapters of book-length projects are discouraged, since workshop members will find them difficult to critique without an understanding of the larger work. Nonetheless, chapters of longer works might be accepted under the following circumstances:
  
  o you receive prior permission of Professors Harvey and Blackwood; and
  
  o you include a synopsis of what's come earlier in the book and what will follow. (For the opening chapters of longer works, synopses are unnecessary.)

- You will be required to give both written and verbal evaluations of work submitted by your classmates. Written evaluations must be at least two pages, double-spaced, and must be completed before class.

- You will be expected to thoroughly mark manuscripts, line-by-line—making notes in the margins, suggesting diction/editing changes, proofing, cutting, etc.

- You may also be asked to read and discuss works by professional writers. These short works will be distributed in Ireland.

EVALUATION METHOD:

- Attendance and in-class participation: 20 percent
- Written evaluations of other's work: 20 percent
- Essay submissions: 60 percent (20 percent per submission)
SUGGESTIONS FOR RESPONDING TO CLASSMATES’ WORK:

- We will always start workshop discussions by describing a work. One of the most important things you can do for a fellow writer is to note simply what you see in an essay, no matter how obvious such an inventory might seem.

- Address what works in an essay and specifically why it works, as well as what might work better and how.

- Think about the themes of the essay—those that the writer intended, as well as interesting thematic directions that might the author might explore further.

- Think about moments, images, turns of phrase, etc., that lingered with you after you put the piece down.

- Think about how the form/style/structure is related to theme, and whether there might be ways of enhancing this relation.

- Read the piece a second and third time, paying close attention to individual sentences. Is the writer’s use of diction, syntax, pacing, etc., effective and efficient? Do the writer’s line-by-line decisions complement his/her overall intentions for the essay? Could the piece be tightened? Can you suggest specific places to cut?

- Treat other writers with respect. Practice civility and humility. Appreciate risks.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1) Students will learn how effectively to analyze the elements of writing nonfiction and will exhibit their analytic skills in the writing of the required critiques, the annotation of their peers’ manuscripts and their oral comments during workshop.

2) Students will learn to apply the fruits of their analytical skills to the drafting, revising and completion of their own essays.

3) Students will learn to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses as a nonfiction writer and thus will learn to utilize their strengths, diminish their weaknesses and grow as a practitioner of creative nonfiction.