



**College of the Holy Cross
Holy Cross Online Learning**

**Course Syllabus:
*The Irish American Experience***

Professor: Dr. Edward T. O'Donnell '86

**Course & technical questions:
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Course Description:

This course will examine the historical experience of the Irish, one of the largest ethnic groups in America. The Irish in America have left an indelible mark on the nation's economy, politics and culture, while at the same time they have been shaped by their adoptive country. Among the topics addressed: colonial era immigration, the Famine, changes in ethnic identity, class conflict and the labor movement, the Catholic Church, machine politics and political affiliations, culture and the arts, nationalism and the fight for Irish freedom, upward mobility and the quest for respectability, and relations with other ethnic and racial groups.

Course Materials:

All course materials are provided at no cost within the online course platform. Suggested supplemental resources are offered each week for those desiring to learn more about that week's topic.

Course Activities:

Each week includes a content lecture video (approximately 30 minutes), and an opportunity to respond to reflection questions via an interactive class discussion board. Discussion board cohorts are capped at a number designed to allow in-depth and meaningful engagement with fellow classmates. Professor O'Donnell will be active in the weekly discussion boards.

In Weeks 1, 2, 4 and 5, there is a short supplemental video series called "Ed Extra," in which Professor O'Donnell highlights some of his personal connections to the course content.

In both Weeks 3 and 6, there are one-hour live sessions with Professor O'Donnell. These will take place via a video conference platform called Zoom (more information to be distributed prior to the sessions) and will feature a moderated online discussion. Students should bring questions, as they will be able to submit them via a class chat window.

- Week 3 mid-course live session: Wednesday, November 1 at 6 p.m. EST
- Week 6 wrap-up live session: Wednesday, November 29 at 6 p.m. EST

We anticipate students spending no more than one to two hours per week on course activities.

Course Mastery:

There are no graded activities in this course. To get the most out of the course, full participation in all activities is recommended.

Course Outline:

Week (Dates)	Topic
1 (October 16 - 22)	Introduction to the course The Irish in America before 1820
2 (October 23 - 29)	The Great Migration to America, 1820 - 1900
3 (October 30 - November 5)	The Struggle to Make It in America (Mid-course live session - Nov. 1)
4 (November 6 - 12)	The Catholic Church
5 (November 13 - 19)	Power and Patronage: The Political Machine
6 (November 20 - 29)	On the Rise: Work, Mobility, and Respectability (Wrap-up live session - Nov. 29)