

LMC 3520–Contemporary Scottish Lit

Creative Nonfiction, Travel, & Memoir

Semester: Summer 2026
Credit Hours: 3
Prerequisites: ENGL 1102

When and where does the class meet?

Days/Time: MTWR 8:30
Building/Room: Lister Learning Center Rm
TBD

How can you contact me?

Name: JC Reilly
Email: jc.reilly@lmc.gatech.edu

How can you meet with me?

Office Hours: By appointment—I'm happy to work around your schedule.



Where do I find course materials and texts?

Course Texts:

- Bunting, Madeleine: *Love of Country*
- Kay, Jackie: *Red Dust Road*
- Ochyra, Helen: *Scotland Beyond the Bagpipes*
- Orr, Deborah: *Motherwell*

Other resources, as needed, will be available on Canvas.

How will this course be delivered?

This course meets in person.

What digital technology tools and equipment will you need for this course?

The only technology you need is your computer/ iPad/ or paper notebook & pen (how old school!).

What is this course about?

I am excited for you to join me and your fellow students on this journey of learning together as we delve into the topic of Scottish literature. So, what is the contemporary literary landscape of Scotland? What do Scottish writers working today write about? Is it the high moors and gray days? Is it the natural world? Is it the past? Is it myth and seascapes? Let's find out! This course is designed with our study abroad program in mind: by immersing you in the literary and cultural artifacts of Scotland, we will be able to cultivate an understanding about the Scottish people. We will learn to appreciate recent works both to appreciate the unique flavor of Scottish writing and to see how identity is (re)produced through the Scottish culture, language, and literature. The course will focus on creative nonfiction, memoir, and travel lit, allowing you to explore and analyze the life experiences of Scottish writers; engage in robust discussions; generate rhetorical texts about what we read; create our own personal travel memoir, and experience cultural events (lectures, poetry readings, plays, ghost tours, Highland tours, pub crawls, etc.). We will be busy, but we will learn a lot. And hopefully we'll have some fun in the process.

How does this class benefit you?

You might wonder how a course like this can benefit you. For one thing, it allows you to the time to engage with contemporary Scottish writing, something you probably have never had the chance to read before (and it's certainly not something we teach on the Atlanta campus). Another benefit of this class is that it gives you the opportunity to reflect and focus on your own travel story—What are you learning? What are you excited about being stationed in Edinburgh? How is your world view being changed by your time abroad? Finally, the class will help you to develop a deeper appreciation for the cultural differences—and similarities—that you discover, and give you the space to “figure it all out.”

Because this is a humanities course, we will be focusing on engaging with work that tells human stories, that deals with folks who are complex, who have needs, and who may be different from ourselves. We get to explore how what is humane influences the art that has been produced. The small size of the class allows for more individualized support, the opportunity to build deeper connections, and engaged, active learning.

What are my hopes and vision for the course?

I believe in a community of care, compassion, connection, and active engagement. This means that I envision this course as a supportive and inclusive learning community where we can share experiences, engage critically with relevant texts, discuss our thoughts and ideas, and celebrate creativity. This means that the success of this class and your own and your peers' learning relies on your thoughtful contributions.



I also hope that you will actively engage with me and with each other. I invite your feedback on the course content, the clarity or any confusion about the structure of the course and/or the assignments, and my facilitation of the course. Your feedback is invaluable to me as I care deeply about making your learning in this course a good experience for you.

Please know that I will always be here to help you. Email me to schedule a meeting or personal video chat with me.

Names & Pronouns: Our commitment to use a person's chosen name & pronouns

Everyone has the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns that they use for themselves. I am committed to ensuring that I address you with your chosen name and pronouns, and expect everyone else to do so too. A student's chosen name and pronouns are to be respected at all times in our classroom. Please let me know what name and pronouns we should use for you.

Let me introduce myself to you

I have been teaching a LONG TIME; contemporary Scottish literature is a current passion of mine, with the exception of Scottish fiction which I find needlessly complicated and often very boring. (Yes, I said the quiet part out loud.) My other areas of research focus mainly on spiritual memoir and women's writing, especially poetry. But I love memoirs of all kinds because getting to know a person's life with all their challenges, successes, and weirdnesses excites me. I hope you will come to feel the same way about the books we read in here.

Additionally, I am a creative writer. I have been writing since I was young, and have been fortunate to make it part of my career. I have four poetry books (traditionally published), a romance novel on WattPad, a YA novel in search of a publisher, short stories and creative nonfiction in many different literary journals, as well as plays and screenplays.

I believe that we all have the ability to understand compelling stories and to exhibit empathy, excitement, and creativity when we read and analyze these works. Your ideas are significant and important to me, and I hope that sharing our views on our texts and experiences will be meaningful, interesting, and mind-expanding. I also know that you are taking other classes this summer and you probably will be going to other countries on the weekend. Which is to say, maybe reading 50 pages a night will seem like a lot, but they aren't *hard* books to read, and if you can't read everything, at least skim pretty well. For two free points, email me the title of your favorite book by 8:30 a.m. on the second day of class.



What will you learn in this course? What are the learning outcomes?

Course readings, lectures, discussions, in-class activities and assignments are designed to facilitate the following **learning outcomes**. You will be able to:

- Advance your understanding of what constitutes readable, interesting, and dynamic literature of Scotland;
- Read, analyze, and communicate more contextually and skillfully;
- Engage in critical discussion and analysis of creative works;
- Co-create knowledge in a collaborative learning environment.

Additionally, per LMC and the Board of Regents, you will be able to:

- Cultivate awareness of the traditions and conventions of literature, film, and other forms of narrative art, analyze those traditions and conventions in specific cultural contexts; and
- Describe relationships among languages, philosophies, cultures, literature, ethics, or the arts.

What Core IMPACTS Information do I need to know?

LMC 3520 is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:
How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence

How will I assess your learning?

You will have a variety of ways to demonstrate your learning. This includes how and what you contribute to class discussions, how you engage with course concepts, and how you complete written assignments both in and out of class.

When are assignments due, and what happens if I miss a deadline?

The following table lists all the assignments, grade weights, and due dates for the work we will do in class. Specific guidelines for these assignments can be found in Canvas under the “Assignments” tab. An overview of assignments appears in the following section.

Project	Point Value	%age	Due
Attendance and active, engaged participation in all discussions and activities.	30 pts.	10%	Daily
Travel Memoir	90 pts.	30%	Wed. 7/22
Class discussion leadership + handout	60 pts.	20%	On your chosen day
Response papers to 2 course texts of your choice	2 @ 30 pts. each	20%	Due the last day we discuss the book
Attendance at two Scottish cultural events of some sort + response papers	2 @ 30 pts. each	20%	Due the class after you attend

There are 300 points available for you to earn in this class.

A=300 to 270 B=269.999 to 240 C=239.999 to 210 D=209.999 to 180 F= <179.999

Assignments should be submitted to Canvas by the due dates posted on the syllabus. Most assignments will be due at 8:30 a.m. on the day of class to align with course content and in-class activities.

If you need more time to complete an assignment, flexible deadlines are available. Completed assignments will be accepted for full credit until 8:30 a.m. the day **after** the due-date, after which a 40% partial credit based *on the earned grade* will be awarded until the last day of classes. Assignments not turned in at all will receive a 0.

If you anticipate missing class for more than one week due to illness or other reasons, please contact me to make alternative arrangements for completing assignments.

Remember, deadlines work both ways, and I promise to provide timely feedback on your assignments to ensure you stay on track with the course.

Overview of course assignments

All work should be typed in 12 pt. font and double-spaced (this means skip every other line, not put a line between single-spaced paragraphs). Full details for each assignment can be found in Canvas.

1. **Response Papers to two course books of your choice:** A book response is both a critique about a work, and also a reflection on your feelings about it. You can think about this assignment as a kind of book review, which means you can examine individual sections with some depth, but you should also speak to the book as a whole. Does it hold up? How does it fit together? What themes, ideas, and topics does the author return to again and again, if anything? What is the internal logic of the book? What is the subject matter, and how does the author explore their subject? What is their approach to the work? Write 2-3 pages double-spaced about each book of your choice, due the last class period in which we are discussing the book.
2. **Class discussion leadership + “key takeaways” handout:** On your assigned day you will be responsible for leading class. Think about what stands out to you in the reading for that day. What’s interesting to you? What’s perplexing? What do you think is important enough that you want the class to remember about that reading? This is your chance to guide the discussion and help the class make connections with the material. Look for themes and cultural touchpoints that you notice and share those. Maybe give us some background about the author or subject matter or historical events if they’re mentioned in the texts. Then write up a page of “key takeaways” for the reading you did, and post that in the discussion board.
3. **Cultural Events Attendance + Responses:** Another way to learn about, appreciate, and understand Scotland, besides reading its literature, is by enjoying any of its cultural offerings. There are so many (some are even free)! Ghost tours, museums, pub crawls, botanical gardens, poetry readings, Highland tours, etc. all offer insights into Scotland and its people. It's your job to make some discoveries, and write 2 pages double-spaced response about your experience.

4. **Travel Memoir:** This is a creative activity that will allow you to reflect on your time in Scotland and write about your experiences in an extended way. You will have read four pieces of creative nonfiction by the end of the class—so theoretically you will have a good idea about how to explore your own personal Scottish journey. Why did you come on this adventure? What have you seen? What strikes you as remarkable? What challenges have you encountered? What explorations have you made? What have you tried that's new to you? (Haggis, anyone?) You may want to include brief excerpts from your cultural events responses or even some thoughts about the readings as a whole. The point is to craft a 10-12 page double-spaced piece of creative nonfiction/memoir about yourself and really get to the heart of who you've become as a result of the Scottish Summer Program.

What will help you to be successful in this course?

If you want to be successful in this course, your best strategy would be to:

1. Mark time in your calendar for completing course readings and assignments;
2. Review the assignment guidelines and strive to meet the expectations;
3. Submit the assignments by the dates assigned;
4. Participate actively in our class sessions.

What are my expectations about class attendance and active participation?

This is a highly interactive class. In other words, active participation is an expectation and the norm. This doesn't mean that I will grade your participation based solely on how much you speak in class. Your active participation grade will rather reflect a combination of attending class regularly, being prepared to contribute to in-class discussions and activities, completing assignments, and being an active participant in class activities and discussions.



During each class session you will have multiple opportunities to actively participate, including responding to questions or prompts in writing, demonstrating active listening, taking on supportive roles in small group discussions, asking interesting questions, showing curiosity about your own and others' perspectives on an issue, demonstrating respect for others opinions and ideas through acknowledging their view and asking for clarification when you aren't sure.

Attendance and active participation are 10% of your grade. You will receive full credit if you attend every class. Absences due to your own illness, family illness or death, religious observances, or other extenuating circumstances will need documentation. Three absences for any reason are permitted. Every absence over three will impact your grade by -2%. Coming to

class late is distracting for the other students and to the lesson, so please avoid being tardy. Excessive tardiness (more than 15 minutes late) will count as half-an-absence.

Please be sure to sign the attendance apparatus which I will pass around every day. This is how I keep track of who's come to class and who hasn't. If you don't sign, I will assume you did not come to class.

You can read about Georgia Tech's [Student-Faculty Expectations here](#).

Disability Accommodation Statement

GT is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course (such as necessary adjustments in assignments, timelines, or due dates). If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first week of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Students with disabilities should contact Disability Services to discuss reasonable accommodations. [You can apply for services here](#) or visit Suite 221 in the Smithgall Student Services (Flag) Building. For more information, please [visit the Disability Services website](#).

Inclusive Learning Statement

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently and bring different strengths and needs to the class. If there are aspects of the course that prevent you from learning or make you feel excluded, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Our campus has various offices and support programs committed to helping you succeed academically and socially that are open to all students, not just those who are struggling. There is no shame in availing yourself to these resources.

- [CommLab](#): provides help at any point of the writing process
- [Academic Success & Advising](#): provides tutoring and resources for success as well as academic advising services
- [Center for Mental Health Care and Resources](#): offers a community of care to GT students to help cope with stress or anxiety, find strategies to overcome challenges, promote mental wellbeing, and succeed in college life and beyond.
- [STAR Services \(Students' Temporary Assistance & Resources\)](#): provides clothing for job interviews, food between paydays, temporary housing, or interest-free emergency loans.

Meet with me!

Meeting with me is a critical part of your success in this course. Whether you have specific questions, needs, or concerns, or simply want to chat about your progress, I encourage you to schedule at least one meeting with me during the semester. Here are a few options to connect with me:

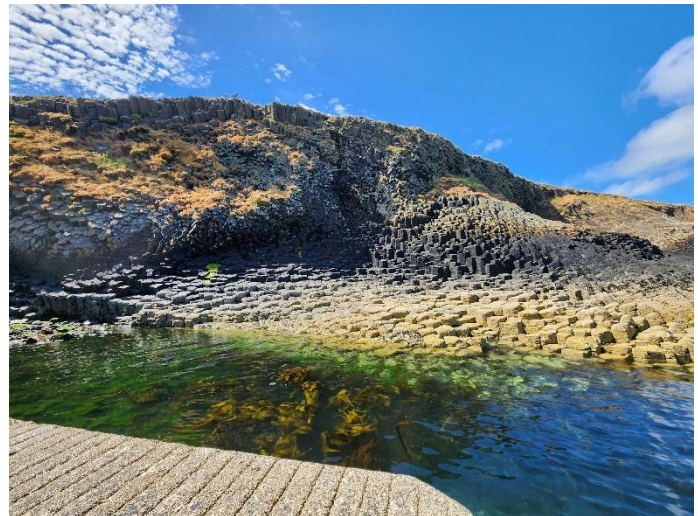
1. Schedule a quick meeting with me by emailing me at jc.reilly@lmc.gatech.edu or set up something in Teams. You can choose to meet in person or virtually.
2. Schedule a longer meeting if you need help with specific course content, coursework, or if you want to discuss other school and life matters, including future plans.
3. Remember, meeting with me is an essential part of your success in this course. Don't hesitate to reach out, as I am here to support you throughout the semester.

Your wellness matters

As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating, and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may diminish your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. GT services are available, and treatment does work. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on campus, including counseling, at [Center for Mental Health Care & Resources](#) or you can call them at 404-894-2000.

Information about Course Structure and Technology Use

Our Canvas site is the central hub for this course. On Canvas, you will find items such as the syllabus, announcements, course materials, assignments, grades, and other relevant course information. There is also an announcement function which I will use to send updates and reminders during the semester. Please make sure to check Canvas on a regular basis.



Academic Honesty Statement

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at GT which means academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible.

All work you turn in for this class must be your own work, completed for this class in this semester (i.e., not work you did or are doing in another class) with all outside reference sources properly cited and acknowledged, if necessary. Please refer to the [Academic Honor Code](#), which outlines what is considered ethical behavior and academic honesty.

What you need to know about Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

What is plagiarism? It is any attempt to take credit for work done by another person or entity. Yet, all scholars rely on the work of others to shape their own knowledge and interpretations.

This means: In your writing and other work, you must acknowledge the importance of other works through footnotes and/or direct textual references to influential books, articles, media texts (yes, including Internet resources!), and ideas. When you use other people's sentences, words, or concepts; or summarize or paraphrase ideas or opinions; you need to use quotation marks and/or cite your source. Using someone else's words and ideas without attribution or misappropriating them in some way is stealing.

If you do use outside sources for your work for any reason (such as quoting from a memoir), please use that intellectual property responsibly.

If you'd like more information about plagiarism, the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) provides a [comprehensive Plagiarism Overview](#).

My policy on ChatGPT and other generative AI

This course is meant in part to improve and evaluate your writing and thinking abilities and assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually (or possibly in small groups). For this reason, for the purposes of this class, any student found to have used AI technologies or programs (e.g. Chat GPT, Bing Chat, Gemini etc.) to compose part or all of any submitted work will face the same penalties as a student who submits plagiarized work (i.e. a failing grade in the course). Please don't use AI—it's not nearly as smart as you are.

Use of Electronic Devices in Class

While using computers and other electronic devices in class opens new learning possibilities for students, it can also be distracting. Please use your electronic devices only for class related purposes.

Please set your phone on silent (not on vibrate) in class. If there are significant circumstances, such as a family emergency for which you may need to answer a phone call, please let me know before the start of class and put your phone on vibrate so you can quietly exit class and answer the call.

In addition, no portion of the class can be audio or video recorded without my and your fellow students' consent. Doing so violates other students' privacy and could inhibit other students' participation and interfere with their learning. These expectations will help you maintain focus in class as well as allow privacy in the space for open dialogue.

Last But Not Least

Thank you for reading this far. If you would like another two free bonus points, send me an email that tells me what you're most looking forward about your trip to Scotland, before 8:30

a.m. the day the second class meets. By remaining in this class, you agree to take responsibility for your own learning. Should you have any questions, or if you are unclear on any aspect of the syllabus, assignments, the class itself, or any information discussed in the class, it is your responsibility to get answers by raising the issue in a timely manner during class, during office hours, or via email. And, by “timely,” I mean as soon as possible. If something is going on that I’m unaware of, something that affects your performance and success in class (either class related, or some kind of catastrophic disruption in your life), I need to know sooner rather than later. Let me help you if you need help.

If you miss class, be sure that you find out what you’ve missed from another student first (before contacting me). I won’t hound you about turning in work that you’re missing. You’ll know what is due, and when it’s due, and it’s your job to make sure you turn your work in on time.

Further, remaining in the class means you agree to abide by all of the policies/ procedures laid out in this syllabus. If there are any problems that arise regarding class policies or governance, I will refer you to this syllabus. Finally, I will not discuss grades via email. If you are concerned about your performance, please make an appointment during my office hours. I am happy to discuss this with you.

Now, let’s have a great summer!

