



SCOTLAND ABROAD: MYTH, HISTORY & CULTURE

May 21 – June 8, 2024

**Offered through the Honors Program & the Center for Learning & Innovation
HNRS 397, 4 credits**

Faculty:

- Professor Molly Murfee (Clark Family School of Environment & Sustainability / Nature Writing & Environmental Literature). <https://western.edu/people/molly-murfee/>

Scotland is a country with a history as dramatic as its landscape. From soaring sea cliffs teeming with puffins, to the wild mountainous Highlands, the land gives rise to stories.

Seek these place-based stories living in the peaks and lochs. Learn of ancient mythologies embedded in the land at archaeological sites 5,000 years old. How does the land itself give rise to these tales, and how does this collaborative phenomenon then create the culture? What impact does this relationship have on the way Scots approach their environment?

Unearth the histories launching thousands of Scottish immigrants to North America, thereby creating the stories of colonization in the U.S. and Canada. Uncover the cycles of oppression exuded by the Roman Empire over the pre-Christian matrifocal people and their traditions, with subsequent waves of British and Viking invasions continuously washing over the sovereign-desiring Scots. Where do these influences extend into the United States? How are they still apparent in modern Scotland?

To discover this information, visit iconic places such as Edinburgh and Inverness, wander through looming castles and standing stones, ride trains through the mysterious countryside, and ferries to archipelagos of islands with white-sand beaches. Course content may include such experiential learning activities as: sampling the local cuisine; seeking conversations with native Scots; diving deep into museums and historic sites; and searching for mythological, historic and cultural clues in sea shanties and folklore.

Before embarking, sprinkled throughout the spring 2024 semester, are group meetings to: make personal connections; delve into Scotland-specific cross-cultural education; complete pre-course readings to optimally prepare for the experience; and organize logistics.

Students receive four academic credits of HNRS 397 for the experience. Students have the opportunity to direct a personal focus through targeted cultural immersions, selected readings, learning community discussion shares, and self-designed projects. Students not enrolled in the Honors Program may attend Scotland Abroad with faculty permission.

Questions? Contact the faculty!

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