

University of South Florida Humanities Institute Faculty Fellowship Program

2023 - 2024 Cohort

Research Theme: Global Irish Studies at USF

This year the Humanities Institute welcomes its third cohort of Faculty Fellows for a year-long collaborative research experience. Jennifer Knight, Matthew Knight, and Elizabeth Ricketts-Jones will spend the year developing their research in “Global Irish Studies.” The group approaches Ireland and the Irish diaspora from a comparative standpoint, exploring what these past lessons can teach us about current global migration experiences as well as how they overlap or differ from other diasporas.

This work builds on existing research and the cohort plans to work with the “Irish Culture and Language Club Student Organization,” develop an interdisciplinary course on the Celtic Revival, and host the 2023 American Conference for Irish Studies Southern Regional Meeting. Drawing attention to USF’s significant holdings in Irish Studies, in particular the Dion Boucicault Theatre Collection, is a goal of the cohort, as is integrating these collections into to the curriculum.



Jennifer Knight | Associate Professor of Instruction | History

Jennifer Knight is an Associate Professor of Instruction in the History Department at the University of South Florida in Tampa, FL, where she teaches in the fields of Irish Studies, Medieval Studies, and Public History. She regularly offers courses on early medieval Irish, Welsh, and Scandinavian history and literature, as well as directing the department’s Internship Program.

She holds a PhD in Celtic Languages and Literatures and Medieval Studies from Harvard University. Dr. Knight’s current book project, forthcoming from Routledge, is *Twenty-Five Women Who Shaped the Celtic World*.

- *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* I have worked at USF for 15 years, and been a faculty member for 10.
- *Book recommendation?* Right now I am reading *Sacred Sisters: Gender, Sanctity, and Power in Medieval Ireland* by Maeve Callan and loving it!
- *What is one interesting fact about you?* I am a wannabe farmer: I have 13 pets (some of them livestock), and am a member of [Abby's Organic Community Farm](#).



Matthew Knight | Associate Librarian | USF Libraries

Dr. Matthew Knight is an Associate Librarian at the Tampa campus library and is also Affiliate Faculty in the Department of History where he teaches the 'Irish in America,' 'Irish Rebels,' 'Ireland at War,' and 'Curating Digital History.'

His book, *Dion Boucicault: The Vampire and The Phantom* is set for a Fall 2023 release from the University of Wales Press, and he is completing his monograph *Éire Mhór: The Irish Language in the American Popular Press*, which will be the first book-length study of the Irish language in America, revealing the tremendous influence that American newspapers and social organizations had on shaping both Irish-American identity and the language revival movement in Ireland.

- *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* I've been a faculty member at USF since August 2013
- *Book recommendation?* I really enjoyed Patrick O'Mahoney's *Recovering an Irish Voice from the American Frontier: The Prose Writings of Eoin Ua Cathail*, which shows that many Irish immigrants to the US preferred to write in their native Irish language.
- *What is one interesting fact about you?* Interesting fact? Hmmm. I am a dedicated student of the Irish language and enjoy translating Irish poetry found in 19th-century US newspapers into English.



Elizabeth Ricketts-Jones | Assistant Professor of Instruction | English

- *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* I've been a faculty member for two years at USF. I also got my PhD from USF in 2021.
- *Book recommendation?* My book recommendation is *Commencement* by J. Courtney Sullivan.
- *What is one interesting fact about you?* An interesting fact about me is that during my PhD studies I got to spend two months in Galway and Dublin, Ireland doing archival research on 20th century Irish theater.

Jerry Rumph, Jr. | Graduate Intern for Irish Studies Fellowship | English Literature PhD Student

2023 American Conference for Irish Studies: Southern Regional Conference

"Inclusivity in Irish Studies: A Community For All"

<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/conferences/acis/>

October 26-28, 2023 | USF St. Petersburg campus

Public Lecture Event: Dr. Christine Kinealy

Thursday, October 26, 2023 | Reception 1:00pm and Lecture 2:00pm

"This year's Faculty Fellowship Program is honored to welcome Dr. Christine Kinealy of Quinnipiac University to deliver a public lecture on Thursday, Oct. 26th as part of this year's Southern Regional American Conference for Irish Studies. Her talk is titled "'Mislike me not for my complexion': Three Black Artists in Ireland, 1829 to 1860" and will feature her most recent research on the work of Black abolitionists and artists in Ireland. She will draw on her research of the Irish Abolition movement including her 2018 publication *Frederick Douglass and Ireland: In His Own Words*, and *Black Abolitionists in Ireland*, published in 2020.

Dr. Kinealy is the founding Director of Ireland's Great Hunger Institute and a preeminent scholar of the Great Famine in Ireland. She has published extensively on the topic and has been involved in numerous public outreach efforts including presenting on the Famine before the British Houses of Parliament and in the U.S. Congress. She has also participated in the 100-mile walk from Roscommon to Dublin, following in the footsteps of tenants forced to sail to Canada in 1847 that now forms The National Famine Way. She has been named one of the top educators in Irish America and was inducted into the Irish America Hall of Fame in 2014. Her 2017 documentary, *The Great Hunger and the Irish Diaspora* received an Emmy award.

This lecture is free and open to the public. For questions or more information, the Fellows can be contacted at IrishStudies@usf.edu."

USF Irish Studies Meeting

March 6, 2024 | CPR 478 Humanities Institute

Course development in-progress: Gaelic Revival co-taught course and USF in Ireland Study Abroad Program; Report on Gael Scoil observation trip by Dr. Elizabeth Ricketts-Jones; Development of Irish Studies seminars for Florida K-12

Social Studies teachers; Humanities Institute Irish Studies Initiative; Future course offerings: Gaelic Revival and USF in Ireland Study Abroad Program; Developing a Gael Scoil program at USF in tandem with USF Youth Experiences office; Volunteering/presenting at LAOH/AOH national convention in August 2024; Discussion with LAOH/AOH attendees: What does LAOH/AOH want to see out of USF Irish Studies in the future?