Iceland is uniquely poised in the North Atlantic between America and Europe. The energy and creativity of its 330,000 inhabitants are famous, as are Iceland’s renewable geothermal and hydro-electrical resources, fabulous birdlife and centuries-old maritime culture, and location straddling the Mid-Atlantic ridge where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates are dividing, making it a geological wonderland of volcanoes, glaciers, geysers, and waterfalls.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT
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Heroes of Fire and Ice:
A Three-Week Study Abroad to Iceland
(6 credit hours)
May 28-June 16, 2017
Dr. Anne Cotterill
Dr. Eric Bryan
This study abroad experience offers students the opportunity to visit one of the most unique places on earth. It also earns students six hours of upper level humanities credit, as well as their experiential learning requirement.

IN REYKJAVÍK
The first two weeks will be spent in Reykjavík, Iceland’s capital city, where students will enjoy a mixture of modern and medieval Iceland, visiting the National Museum of Iceland, the Reykjavik Maritime Museum, the archaeological Settlement Exhibition, Viðey (a spectacular nature preserve), and go whale-watching and horseback riding.

DAY TRIPS FROM REYKJAVÍK
Students will take day trips to Pingvellir National Park, site of the world’s first “parliament” in Iceland’s early days as a republic; the state-of-the-art Geothermal Energy Exhibition at the Hellisheiði Power Plant; Iceland’s greatest waterfall and the geyser named Great Geysir; the relaxing Blue Lagoon geothermal spa; and the famous volcano Hekla, once thought to be an entrance to Hell.

JOURNEY INTO THE WILDERNESS
For the third week we will tour the dramatic Icelandic countryside important in sagas and folklore, including Snæfellsnes Glacier; the farmstead of Erik the Red; Akureyri, Iceland’s second city in the north; thermal heated natural baths; a boat tour of the glacier lagoon at the edge of Europe’s largest ice cap; and the Westman Islands, home to millions of puffins.

The Icelandic landscape is home to some of the most breathtaking natural sites in the world.

Dr. Bryan’s course, “Extreme Nature and the Supernatural in Iceland” will explore how Iceland’s stark landscape influenced the country’s myth and folklore. Old Norse mythology will be read alongside Icelandic folklore that reflects ongoing tensions between pagan and Christian belief systems in a land where dramatic nature makes the supernatural natural.

Dr. Cotterill’s “The Icelandic Hero and Outlaw” will give students a taste of Icelandic literature, past and present, beginning with a sample of great medieval sagas based on the lives of Viking settlers. The sagas’ heroic men and women equally wielded sword and verse, and the outlaw was a recurring figure. Iceland’s meditation on lawlessness reappears in its acclaimed modern crime fiction, which we’ll explore, along with the work of one or two additional novelists interested in the relationship between the laws of human and natural worlds.