ENG 2011G-001: Introduction to poetry

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Course Description
This course examines the development of the poetic form as a genre that seems particularly designed to help us understand ourselves in the world. We will survey the poetic form in order to get a sense of the sheer versatility and experimental nature of poetry over the ages. The most important aim of this course will be to make poetry interesting and readable to the student. Poetry is alive and responsive to what goes on in the world, especially through the lyric voice of the individual. And, as we will see through close attention to poetic form and content, poems respond to tradition with a vengeance and a purpose. While we will begin with a historical survey of the sonnet form, we will spend a good deal of time on Romantic-period poetry. After all, Romanticism is the literary period most closely associated with lyric expression—the story of the individual’s mind, feelings, actions. The story of "I" takes the front seat with more grandeur. Yet the poetry of “High Romanticism”—in all of its sublime seriousness—exists alongside devilish playfulness. Contemporary poets have challenged and re-worked these inherited concerns and approaches. They will give us a picture of the multi-faceted, historical rise of the poem, its reincarnations and admixtures of older forms. During the semester, students will be expected to have at least one conference with me, produce two formal essays and shorter writings showing analytical understanding of works covered in class. A midterm and final will also be assigned, as well as occasional homework assignments and several in-class, unannounced quizzes.

Texts

Purchase immediately: Course Reader, available at Copy-X, located at 219 Lincoln Avenue, 345-6313

Requirements
Exams: a midterm (10%) and a final exam (20%)
Short at-home writing assignments, including one-page analyses of poems (10%)
Participation, in-class writing assignments, quizzes, and class presentation (20%)
Essays: Two 3-4 page essays (20% and 20%)

LATE POLICY: Essays—and all other assignments—are due at the beginning of class.

1) Late essays will be marked a full grade lower for every day late. Essays turned in a week past the deadline will be given a "zero."
2) Short at-home writing assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Late ones will not be accepted.
3) In-class writing assignments and quizzes must be turned in during class, and cannot be “made up” at a later date.

Essay Format: Your paper should be stapled and include page numbers. Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment, if not for the entire course. I will follow the departmental policy on plagiarism:
“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

Submit your papers using correct MLA (Modern Language Association) format. Refer both to the section entitled “MLA Documentation” in your reader and to Andrea Lunsford’s Easy Writer handbook for instructions.
English 2011G-001: Schedule of Classes—subject to revision
You will receive the schedule for the second half of the semester after spring break.

WEEK ONE
Tu 1/8  Introductions; Adrienne Rich, "Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers" (handout)
Th 1/10 Suggestions for Approaching Poetry (P 40-41); DICTION and SYNTAX: Randall Jarrell, “The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner”; e.e. cummings, "she being Brand" (P 68-75)

WEEK TWO
Tu 1/15  “Dover Beach” (P 115); “Dover Bitch” (P 529); SENSORY EXPERIENCE (P 109); William Carlos Williams, “Poem” (P 110); Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est” (P 122); FIGURES OF SPEECH (P 133-43)
Th 1/17  SOUNDS (P 183-96): Gwendolyn Brooks, “We Real Cool” (P 98); William Blake, “London,” “The Clod and the Pebble” (R); John Updike, “Player Piano” (P 185)
F 1/18—DEADLINE TO DROP COURSE WITHOUT A GRADE

WEEK THREE
Tu 1/22  THE SONNET FORM—AN OVERVIEW (P 244): Shakespearean versus Petrarchan sonnets; William Shakespeare, “No longer mourn for me when I am dead” (R)
Th 1/24  William Shakespeare, “Shall I compare thee” and “My mistress’ eyes” (P 243); Christina Rossetti, “In an Artist’s Studio” (R)

WEEK FOUR
Tu 1/29  Robert Frost, “Design” (P 373); William Wordsworth, “The World Is Too Much with Us” (P 242); John Keats, “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” (P 241)
Th 1/31  METER or PATTERNS OF RHYTHM—READ THIS CAREFULLY (P 215-222); Charlotte Smith, selections from Elegiac Sonnets (R)

WEEK FIVE
Tu 2/5  METER continued
Th 2/7  IRONY (P 161); e. e. cummings, “next to of course god america i” (P 163); Henry Reed, “The Naming of Parts” (P 176); William Shakespeare, “Not marble, nor the gilded monuments” (P 491); John Updike, “The Beautiful Bowel Movement” (R)

WEEK SIX
Tu 2/12  William Wordsworth, The Prelude
Th 2/14  The Prelude (cont.)

WEEK SEVEN
Tu 2/19  The Prelude (cont.)
Th 2/21  PAPER ONE DUE

WEEK EIGHT
Tu 2/26  Review for the Mid-Term Exam
Tu 2/28  MID-TERM EXAM

WEEK NINE
Tu 3/4  Individual Conferences with Professor Park in her office, room 3030 in Coleman; be prepared to discuss your plans for the class presentation you will deliver at the end of the semester
Th 3/6  Conferences

WEEK TEN
3/10 - 3/14  SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS
PLAGIARISM (using another writer's written words or ideas without giving properly documented credit) will not be tolerated and will result in a FAILING GRADE on the assignment, and most likely for the course.

CONFERENCES: As I get to know your writing better throughout the semester, I will require that you meet with me on an individual basis. In these conferences, we will discuss where you think your writing and critical skills are improving or need more work.

LATE POLICY: All take-home papers and assignments are due at the beginning of class. You will NOT be able to make up any missed in-class assignments and quizzes. More details:

Late final versions of assignments will be marked a full grade lower for every class day late. Assignments turned in a week past the deadline will be given a “zero.”

In-class writing assignments must be turned in by the end of class, and cannot be made up at a later date.

ABSENCE POLICY: When you are absent—especially when you are frequently absent—two things happen. First, your participation grade drops substantially. Second, you naturally fall behind in understanding course material and neither the class nor the Professor can catch you up on everything missed in a day’s class. YOU need to decide when it is absolutely necessary to miss class. Be wise. It bears repeating: you cannot make up missed work and late assignments will be penalized. Whether these are excused or unexcused absences does not matter for this course. The Professor does not need to have your absences documented or explained.

EMAILING POLICY: I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you call me or stop by my office during office hours (or scheduled times) so that we can talk. DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE. Working groups will be assigned so that you can contact group members for notes and missed work.

ESSAY FORMAT: Your paper should be paper-clipped. It must include page numbers. Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

PARTICIPATION: This means more than simply being present in class. It means being prepared (BRING YOUR TEXTBOOKS AND READER TO CLASS), thoughtful, respectful of others, engaged, and fruitfully open to criticism. PLEASE, while you’re in class, act like it and respect your teacher and fellow students: no cell-phone rings, no text-messaging, no iPods or headphones.

MORE ON GRADES:
For in-class writing assignments, group exercises, grammar exercises, and essay drafts, you will be graded on a scale of \(\sqrt{+}, \sqrt{\mid}, \text{or} \sqrt{-}\). Work that is strongly engaged and on-topic will receive a \(\sqrt{+}\) (equals an A). Satisfactory work that is on-topic will receive a \(\sqrt{\mid}\) (equals a B). Work that shows little engagement or is off-topic will get a \(\sqrt{-}\) (equals a C). Final versions of assignments will receive letter grades. See the GRADING RUBRIC for details of the grading criteria I will use.