

COURSE CODE: ENGI20
COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF POETRY
SPRING SEMESTER 2018/2019
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS

COURSE LECTURER: DR EVY VARSAMOPOULOU
CLASS TIMES: 12:00-13:15 (XOD02, Room II6)
OFFICE HOURS: MONDAYS & THURSDAYS: 10:00-11:30 & 14:00-14:30 or at other
times & days by appointment
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Course Description

This course introduces students to the academic study of poetry in the English language. Students will be taught to use correct critical terms and apply key analytical tools and skills (including scansion) to a selection of different historical genres of poetry. There will be emphasis on how to identify figures of speech and acquire sensitivity to the particularities of language usage in poetry, as well as a focus on developing one's own reading of poems. Finally, certain critical theoretical approaches will be introduced, and there will be an opportunity to hear recordings of some famous poems.

Primary Texts

Varsamopoulou, Evy, ed, *Introduction to Poetry Course Reader* 2018(at local bookshop)
(Ferguson, M., M.J. Salter & J. Stallworthy, eds, *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. Fourth Edition. New York & London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996. *Optional*)

Learning Aims

1. Appreciate the varied history of poetry in the English but also other literary traditions.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of different forms of verse and their history.
3. Demonstrate ability to use technical terms in the analysis of poems.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of figures of speech.
5. Demonstrate competence in close linguistic analysis of poems.
6. Demonstrate competence in producing 'readings' of poems, both orally and in writing.

Course Themes

- Meter
- Poetic forms
- Poetic language
- Figures of Speech
- Paraphrase
- Reading poetry
- Critical approaches to poetry
- Writing about poetry

Programme of Sessions

Week One

Monday 03/09/18: *Introduction to the Course; Explanation of the Course Guide*

Thursday 06/09/18: *What is Poetry?*

Week Two

Monday 10/09/18: *Listening to the Poem* (Tone, Person, Irony). Theodore Roethke, 'My Papa's Waltz'

Thursday 13/09/18: *Listening to the Poem* (Sound Effects: Rhythm, Alliteration & Assonance) William Shakespeare, 'Full fathom five thy father lies'; Gwendolyn Brooks, 'We Real Cool'.

Week Three

Monday 17/09/18: : *Classical Genre Divisions*: (Lyrical, Narrative/Epic, Dramatic) & Scansion: A.E. Houseman, 'When I Was One and Twenty'

Thursday 20/09/18: *Traditional Verse Form*: Michael Drayton, 'Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part'.

Week Four

Monday 24/09/18: *Traditional Verse Form*: Dylan Thomas, 'Do not go gentle into that good night'.

Thursday 27/09/18: *Imagery*: Elizabeth Bishop, 'The Fish'.

Week Five

Monday 01/10/18: No Class (Public Holiday)

Thursday 04/10/18: *Simile and Metaphor* Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 'The Eagle'; Robert Burns, 'Oh, my love is like a red, red rose';

Week Six

Monday 08/10/18: *Symbol, Myth and Metaphor*: Robert Frost, 'Fire and Ice';

Thursday 11/10/18: Percy Bysshe Shelley, 'Ozymandias'.

Week Seven

Monday 15/10/18: *Myth*: John Keats, 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci'

Thursday 18/10/18: *Poetry and Identity*: Reading: Adrienne Rich, 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers'

Week Eight

Monday 22/10/18: Langston Hughes, 'The Negro Speaks of Rivers'

Thursday 25/10/18: *Developing a Reading*: Walt Whitman, 'O Captain! My Captain!'

Week Nine

Monday 29/10/18: Craig Raine, 'A Martian sends a postcard home'.

Thursday 01/11/18: No Class

Week Ten

Monday 05/11/18: W.B. Yeats, 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'.

Thursday 08/11/18: W.B. Yeats, 'Sailing to Byzantium'.

Week Eleven

Monday 12/11/18: W.B. Yeats, 'Sailing to Byzantium'.

Thursday 15/11/18: Langston Hughes, 'Harlem [Dream Deferred]'.

Week Twelve

Monday 19/11/18: Emily Dickinson, 'The Soul Selects Her Own Society';

Thursday 22/11/18: Emily Dickinson, 'Tell all the Truth but tell it Slant'.

Week Thirteen

Monday 26/11/18: Emily Dickinson, 'Because I could not stop for death'.

Thursday 29/11/18: Revision discussion and Exam advice

Important notice

UCY regulations stipulate that class attendance is compulsory. When there are serious reasons that prevent attendance (for instance, illness or bereavement), you must notify the instructor via e-mail and produce documentation, if relevant, justifying the cause of absence (eg. Doctor's note).

Course Assessment

There will be three assessments, each weighted at 30%. Class participation, which may include brief (3-minute) individual presentations, will account for a further 10% of the final mark. Assessment instructions follow.

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

1. In-class test. Weighting: 20%. **Week SEVEN Thursday.** This will be an analysis of a poem. The poem will be selected from one of those already studied in class. The test will last the entire session. The analysis is to be approximately 200-300 words in length.

Students must be on time so as to receive instructions and not cause disturbance by late entry.

2. Essay. Weighting: 30%. This will be a comparative analysis of two poems. The essay should be approximately 500-600 words in length.

Deadline: *Week Eleven, Monday*

3. Final Exam. 40% The date will be announced online later in the semester.

Instructions

Choose ONE of the following questions, and write a critical essay. Your essay should include both analytical and critical commentary on the poems, develop your own argument in response to the question and include reference to at least two critical sources.

I. *What is the relation of poetry to music? Your discussion of this question should refer to two poems studied on the course.*

II. *What is the power of poetry? Discuss with reference to any two poems studied.*

III. *How and why does poetry make use of myth? Discuss with reference to two poems studied on the course.*

IV. *What is the particularity of the relation between poetry and the self, or self-identity, in modernity as exemplified by two poems studied on the course?*

3. Final Exam. Weighting: 30%. Exam advice and revision will be offered in Week Thirteen.

***Note on Extension Requests**

You must notify your lecturer in advance **in writing** if you need to request an extension on the essay deadline or have reasons which prevent you from attending on the day of the test or the final exam. Please use the contact information given in this guide.

Recommended Bibliography

- Arp, Thomas R., & Greg Johnson, *Perrine's Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry* (Boston, Mass.: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2005)
- Boland, Eavan and Mark Strand, *The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms* (W. W. Norton & Co, 2001)
- Carper, Thomas and Derek Attridge, *Meter and Meaning: An Introduction to Rhythm in Poetry* (New York & London: Routledge, 2003)
- Cook, Judy, *Introduction to Poetry: Forms and Elements Study Guide* (New York: Progeny Press, 2003)
- Eagleton, Terry, *How to Read a Poem* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006)
- Fenton, James, *An Introduction to English Poetry* (London: Viking, 2003)
- Furniss, Tom and Michael Bath, *Reading Poetry: An Introduction* (Longman, 1996)
- Hart, Josephine *Catching Life by the Throat* (Time Warner Audiobooks, 2006)
- Herbert, W.N. and Matthew Hollis, eds, *Strong Words: Modern Poets on Modern Poetry* (Bloodaxe Books, 2000)
- Hobsbaum, Philip, *Metre, Rhythm and Verse Form* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006)
- Kennedy, X.J. and Gioia, Dana, *An Introduction to Poetry* (N.York: Longman, 1998)
- Lennard, John, *The Poetry Handbook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)
- Matterson, Steven & Darren Jones, *Studying Poetry* (Hodder Arnold, 2000)
- Roberts, Philip Davies, *How Poetry Works* (London: Penguin, 2000)
- Wainwright, Jeffrey, *Poetry: The Basics* (London: Routledge, 2004)

Recommended Internet Sites

- <http://www.poets.org>
- <http://www.textetc.com/theory.html>
- <http://www.poetrymagazines.org.uk>
- <http://www.poetrymagazine.org>