ENG-302 Syllabus

Poetry and Poetics

Fall Quarter 2013
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Professor Katharine Whitcomb
ONLINE

Required Texts:
Poems, Poets, Poetry by Helen Vendler, 3rd Edition

Requirements and grading:

1. Paper #1 on individual poem (3-5 pages) 10%
2. Paper #2 on group of poems by the same poet (5-7 pages) 15%
3. Midterm Exam 10%
4. Discussion Board Presentation—Poem Analysis w/ checklist 10%
5. 3 reading quizzes 15%
6. Homework Assignments (6 exercises, 2 thesis paragraphs & form poem) 15%
7. Discussion Board Posts (5 short assignments & peer comments) 15%
8. Final Exam 10%

Hello. Welcome to English 302.

Course Description and Goals: Why should you take Poetry and Poetics? *Demystification.* Poetry is notoriously *hard* hard to read, hard to understand, hard to talk about, hard to write about, hard to write. This being said, you are here in this class to learn how approach a poem with the tools and knowledge that allow you the full enjoyment of experiencing this art form. The point of the study of any art is to be able to see what to appreciate. Poetry draws you in with its display of human emotional response and this response consequently gives you a lens on human life!

A poem is a carefully constructed house that you can enter again and again. Each time you walk through that house’s rooms you make an emotional and intellectual journey. Sometimes, the door stays shut the first time you knock, but by the end of this class you will see how the door can open marvelously at the second knock.

Goals: You should leave this class knowing something of the range, depth, and precision of poetry over several historical periods, and you should be able to talk about poetry with some ease. You will be reading chapters coordinated with building your comprehension skill acquisition, responding to the reading assignments with weekly exercises, working on a presentation to demonstrate your analytical skills with poems, and writing two papers. This background will serve you well in literature and writing courses you will take during the rest of your education, and will help open up an important part of literary culture for you.

We will be reading extensively from Helen Vendler's *Poems, Poets, Poetry.* You are expected to have this book when the course begins on 9/25/13. It is extremely important that you keep up with the reading so that you can contribute to your Discussion Board posts effectively, complete your homework exercises thoughtfully, and follow the guidelines for your papers.
You will be posting a Discussion Board presentation that will be responded to by the class during the last week of the quarter. These presentations will be an analysis of a poem of your choice from the anthology in the back part of the Vendler book. Guidelines for the projects will be posted shortly after midterm.

NOTE: You should plan on sending me weekly updates on how the class is going for you in the Journals feature of Blackboard. This is confidential communication between the two of us. If you have questions about the class, want to ask about a grade or an assignment, or send me a message, just write a note in Journals. I check this daily and will get right back to you.

In English 302, you will have opportunities to:

1. Identify and apply analytic strategies and concepts (Quizzes #1-#3, Midterm Exam and Final Exam).
2. Write effective analytic and comparative essays (Papers #1 and #2).
3. Complete exercises designed for you to practice and build upon analytic skills introduced in each assigned chapter in the Vendler text. (Homework Exercises).
4. Prepare short analytical exercises and respond to the work of other students, in order to begin formulating a critical aesthetic stance. (Short Assignments w/ Peer Review on Discussion Board)
5. Follow analytical protocol and correctly identify poetic elements. (Poem Presentation)

Grades:

I will not be assigning letter grades to any of the homework exercises but I will be giving credit for work turned in, and writing comments to you when appropriate. All homework and other material you turn in for this class must be submitted as a Word file, double-spaced, turned in by the due date and time in Blackboard Assignments.

Please note that your Gradebook assignment grades are percentages and not points. The assignments are weighted by percentage. An assignment might have grading scale of 10, but it might be worth 30% of your grade. The assignment percentages are listed on the previous page.

Paper grades:

A-The essay is not only well organized, but written in a sophisticated, highly readable style. The writer knows clearly what he or she wants to say, and the writing convinces the reader that a complex subject has been attempted and approached with interest, care and maturity. It has almost no errors in spelling or grammar.

B-This is an above-average paper. It is well written, well organized, and thorough, but perhaps lacks a high degree of sophistication in style, or the subject is less ambitious than in an “A” paper.

C-Average. The essay has all the basic components of a competent essay: thesis, paragraph development, concrete illustration, etc. The thesis may be a bit broad or narrow and the writing somewhat uninspired. There may be a few too many errors, including
misspelled words, grammar mistakes, sentence faults, and misused punctuation.

D-Below average. This essay probably has one or more serious structural flaws, such as a missing or poorly articulated thesis, irrelevant passages, and faulty paragraph structure. It probably also contains a large number of serious errors.

I’ll be posting announcements on this Blackboard site; please make sure to log in daily to make sure you are up to date.

I do not accept late homework, exercises, responses or assignments. Unless you have contacted me before the due date about a special circumstance, late assignments will count as missed and will receive no points.

**Course Resources:**

**Blackboard**
Blackboard is a Learning Management System which we will use for our course. You can login to Blackboard at [http://courses.cwu.edu](http://courses.cwu.edu) Your username and your password are the same one you use for Novell/Safari.
The “Blackboard Help and Support” section of the Online Learning web site at, [http://www.cwu.edu/~avpugrad/OnlineLearning/support.html](http://www.cwu.edu/~avpugrad/OnlineLearning/support.html), is provided to give you and your students vital information on teaching and learning online with Blackboard. You are required to read the information provided in both the “Getting Started” page and the “Blackboard Support” page.

**Software and Hardware**
The “Technical Requirements” page provides information on the software and hardware you need for Blackboard. Please be sure to use the correct browser specified for your operating system and computer. Also run the browser check to be sure that you have the necessary browser settings. A plug-in check is available to be sure you have multimedia support for audio and video in your web browser.

Written assignments may be presented as a Microsoft Word document (.doc). If you do not have Microsoft Word installed on your computer, you can use Open Office Writer instead, which you can obtain for free at [http://www.openoffice.org/](http://www.openoffice.org/).

**Course Policies:**

Instructor Feedback/Communication
I will be reading the Discussion Boards and grading your posts. You will receive specific feedback on your Assignments in the form of electronic comments appended to your electronic submission. You should use the Journal to communicate weekly progress and specific questions. I will use the Announcements tool in Blackboard to communicate changes to the course and other course information.
Student Feedback/Communication

I welcome all feedback on the course. My preferred method of communication with individual students is via email or the Journal tool.

If you experience a legitimate emergency (according to my standards) which will prevent you from completing required coursework on time, I expect you to communicate with me at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Please state the nature of the emergency, and when you expect to turn in the coursework.

Late Work

- Late work is not accepted.
- Missed course requirements are entered into grades as “0” points.

The due date and time associated with each quiz, discussion, exam and assignment are stated clearly in Blackboard and on the Course Schedule.

**University Policies:**

**Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is a standard set for this course. Students are expected to complete all of their coursework and assignments using their original words and ideas and will properly cite the words and ideas of others. Students are also expected to be honest in their interactions with the instructor. A student found to have not upheld these expectations is subject to failing this course and shall be subject to disciplinary action or sanction. The University catalog defines the term “academic dishonesty” in all its forms including, but not limited to:

- cheating on tests;
- copying from another student’s test paper;
- using materials during a test not authorized by the person giving the test;
- collaboration with any other person during a test without authority;
- knowingly obtaining, using, buying, selling, transporting, or soliciting in whole or in part the contents of an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test;
- bribing any other person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test; substitution for another student or permitting any other person to substitute for oneself to take a test; plagiarism” which shall mean the appropriation of any other person's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own work offered for credit;
- "collusion" which shall mean the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for credit.
Documented incidences of Academic Dishonesty will be referred to Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs.

**Special Needs**

If you have a disability that may prevent you from meeting course requirements, contact the instructor immediately to file a Student Disability Statement and to develop an Accommodation Plan. Course requirements will not be waived but reasonable accommodations will be developed to help you meet the requirements. You are expected to work with the instructor and the CWU Disability Support Specialist to develop and implement a reasonable Accommodation Plan. For contact information at Center for Disability Services (CDS) please visit [http://www.cwu.edu/~dss/cms/](http://www.cwu.edu/~dss/cms/).

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**English 302 Whitcomb**

**CLASS SCHEDULE:** (this schedule may be updated during the quarter)

**INTRO WEEK**

**W 9/25**
- Introduction to the course.
- Read through Syllabus & Schedule and Course Design.
- Familiarize yourself with the course website.
- Make sure you have your textbook.

**SUN 9/29**
- Organizational patterns in poetry.

  **READ:** Begin Chapters 1 & 2 in Vendler, “The Poem As Life” and “The Poem As Arranged Life.”

  **POST on Discussion Board:** Class Introduction.

**WEEK 1**

**W 10/2**
- **READ:** Chapters 1 & 2 in Vendler, “The Poem As Life” and “The Poem As Arranged Life.”

  How to approach a poem.

  **DUE:** Exercise #1 in Assignments.

**SUN 10/6**
- **POST on Discussion Board:** Poem Analysis.
WEEK 2

W 10/9  READ: Chapter 3 in Vendler, “Poems As Pleasure.”
Poetic Structure & Poetic Argument.
Scansion? You can do it!

DUE: Exercise #2 in Assignments.

SUN 10/13 POST on Discussion Board: Scansion Exercise.

DUE: Quiz #1 in Assignments.

WEEK 3

W 10/16  READ: Chapter 4 in Vendler, “Describing Poems.”
Poetic Kinds and Speech Acts.
Checklist for Exploring Poems.

DUE: Exercise #3 in Assignment.

SUN 10/20 POST on Discussion Board: Structure Exercise.

WEEK 4

W 10/23  READ: Chapter 5 in Vendler, “The Play of Language”
Sound and Music.
The ordering of language.
Sonnets and Form Poems.

DUE: Exercise #4 in Assignment.

SUN 10/27 POST on Discussion Board: Contemporary Poem Analysis.

DUE: Quiz #2 in Assignments.

WEEK 5

Midterm study review.
Writing papers about poetry.

SUN 11/3 POST on Discussion Board: Sonnet Analysis.

WEEK 6
W 11/6  
**DUE:** Midterm Exam in Assignments.

SUN 11/10  
**DUE:** Paper #1 Thesis Paragraph.

WEEK 7

W 11/13  
**READ:** Chapter 6 in Vendler, “Constructing A Self.”
Speaker and Persona.

**DUE:** Exercise #5: Sonnet or Form Poem in Assignments.

SUN 11/17  
**DUE:** Paper #1 in Assignments.

WEEK 8

W 11/20  
Guidelines for Paper #2.
Guidelines for Poem Presentations.

**DUE:** Exercise #6 in Assignments.

SUN 11/24  
Schedule “conference” with Prof. Whitcomb about Paper #2 in Journals.

**DUE:** Paper #2 Thesis Paragraph in Assignments.

WEEK 9

W 11/27  
**DUE:** Quiz #3 in Assignments.

Thanksgiving Break—No Sunday Assignments.

WEEK 10

W 12/4  
**POST:** Poem Presentation and peer comments on Discussion Board.

SUN 12/8  
**DUE:** Paper #2 in Assignments.

EXAM WEEK

W 12/11  
Final Exam due in Assignments.