

Eng. 302.01
L&L 307
4:00-5:40 T&R

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Texts: *Norton Introduction to Poetry*, Gioia & Kennedy
Accent On Meter, Powell & Halperin
Delights & Shadows, Ted Kooser

Course Description:

When we planned this course, we recognized that English majors have the most difficulty with poetry, and we needed to try to allow you access to this genre so that you wouldn't miss out on "the best words used in the best order" (Coleridge). We were also concerned about your success in other courses that made assumptions about both your knowledge of and facility with poetry. Reading poetry is often difficult, but the best poetry amply rewards the energy you put into it.

The "Poetry" part of the title refers to the skill of reading poetry as well as some sense of the history of poetry--where it has been, how it has changed, where it seems to be going. The skill of reading poetry is best worked on by learning some "tools" for interpretation (vocabulary, reading strategies, the power and limits of ambiguity, etc.) and applying those tools to some poems. A brief study of the history of poetry will help clarify expectations and assumptions poets make about their poems and their readers.

The "Poetics" part of the title refers to the elements of poetry, the behind-the-scenes tactics used by the poets to create meaning and patterns of sound. This will include a study of meter and form. By "meter" we mean the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a poem. By "form" we mean types of poems (sonnets, sestinas, villanelles, epics, ghazals, haiku, etc.), tone, and the "shape" of the poem. We will look at the ways form and meter affect how we read poems. "Poetics" also refers to more theoretical issues not only about meter but aesthetic issues of quality, organizational strategies, and form, but because this is an introductory course we will not venture far into this territory.

Course Objectives:

*To learn how to read poems with confidence and facility--to undermine all the clichés we tend to have about reading poetry (we will consider those clichés during the first week of class).

*To understand the different strategies poems can take: metrical poetry, lyrical meditations, narrative, intense personal and confessional poetry, surreal clusters of images, social criticism, creating mythopoetic dream worlds, etc. But if we approach poetry with an open mind, patience, and a critical intelligence, we should be able to read all kinds and get something out of it.

*To learn how to scan poems and not feel intimidated by formal poetic concerns; we will learn the metrical feet used in English meters and strategies for scanning metrical poetry.

*To introduce you to how poetry has evolved over time--how the concerns (both

intellectual and formal) have shifted. We will look at the aesthetic concerns involved with certain “isms”: Romanticism, Realism, Symbolism, Surrealism, Imagism, The Beats, Confessionalism, and New Formalism.

*To learn to write about poems and their formal properties with confidence, sophistication, and accuracy.

Course Requirements & Outcomes:

The above objectives will be measured by quizzes, a midterm and final, two formal essays, and group presentations. The group presentation is an “Ism” report. There is one sonnet to write to help with learning meter and forms, and twelve lines to memorize. You must do all the assigned reading and participate in class discussions. It is vitally important that you keep up with the reading, ask questions, and get involved. If you see this as just another onerous requirement to get off your backs, not only will you be missing some of the best reading available, but you are also jeopardizing future success in other classes, not to mention the grade in this one.

Policies:

Attendance is extremely important. Any more than three **absences** will compromise your grade; four absences and your grade is reduced by half a grade; six and it is reduced by 10%, etc. People who miss classes waste other people’s time by causing us to backtrack and clarify what was already covered.

Plagiarism is the willful use of someone else’s work and presenting it as your own; if you are caught plagiarizing, not only will you get an “E” out of the class, but it will be reported. If you need extra time for papers, let me know well *before* the paper is due; otherwise, late papers are penalized 10% per class meeting after the due date. You are responsible for any changes on the syllabus--if you miss class call someone to see if there were any changes.

Grading: All points given in this course will count toward the final grade. I merely add up all the points and divide by the number possible to arrive at your percentage. (93-100=A; 90-92=A-; 87-89=B+; 83-86=B; 80-82=B-; etc.) Please be aware that one missed score affects your grade profoundly. For example, let’s say that you got a 93 on a paper and then missed two 10 point quizzes. Your percentage just fell to 77, or from an A to a C+. I have found that students are occasionally astonished by their final grades, so please compute carefully.

E-mailed papers: I **do not** accept emailed papers for a number of reasons: I typically read papers away from the computer desk, and I don’t have a laptop; I prefer marking them with a pencil to draw arrows and circles to illustrate agreement problems or how ideas conflict; print cartridges are expensive. Occasionally, emergencies will arise when emailing is the best solution, but unless we have discussed the issue, please don’t email your papers to me.

Late Papers: If you need to extend the deadline for personal reasons, talk to me before the paper is due and we can work out an arrangement. If we have not worked out this arrangement, late papers will be lowered 10% for every class day that they are late. Papers turned in after I've handed back everyone else's will not be accepted, and you will receive a zero for that grade.

ADA Statement: If you need disability-related educational accommodations, please let me know or contact Robert Campbell, ADA Compliance Officer, at 963-2171.

Syllabus: Eng. 302.001 (Spring, 2006)

Note: All reading must be done for the date that it appears on the syllabus; also, we will read from *An Introduction to Poetry (IP)*, the *Accent On Meter (AOM)*, and Ted Kooser's *Delights & Shadows (DS)*.

March 28: General Introduction

30: IP 5-28

4: IP 37-68; poetry report assignment

6: IP 69-79; 102-109

11: IP 80-101

13: IP 118-140

18: AOM 1-14; 96-109

20: AOM 15-35; sonnet assigned

25: AOM: 36-80; 110-119; paper #1 assigned

27: AOM: 145-156; midterm review

May: 2: **Midterm**

4: Peer Evaluation; Poetry Reports

9: Poetry Reports; **paper #1 due**

11: Poetry Reports

16: *Delights & Shadows*: 5-24; **sonnets due**

18: *Delights & Shadows*: 25-50

23: *Delights & Shadows*: 51-84; Paper #2 assigned

25 IP: 259-227; **Recite 12 lines of poetry**

30: IP: 278-294; 311-324

June 1: Peer evaluation; class evaluation; final review; **paper #2 due**

Final: