

Introduction to Poetry

Professor Merrill Cole
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Peer Mentor: Lisa English

English 200Y, Section 001
Spring Semester 2010

Office: Simpkins 115
Hours: TTh, 1:00-2:00; W, 3:00-5:00

TTh, 2:00-3:15 p.m.
Simpkins 27

Texts

Hollander, John. *Rhyme's Reason: A Guide to English Verse. Third Edition.*
New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2000.

Kennedy, X. J. and Dana Gioia. *An Introduction to Poetry. Thirteenth Edition.*
New York: Longman, 2010.

Course packet (order online, \$8.57 at <www.universityreaders.com>).

Course Objectives

What does poetry do? What experiences might it offer? What makes poetry different than other forms of writing? What do we need to know, in order to understand and appreciate it? What purpose might it serve in today's world? These are some of the questions this course will address, as we read, analyze, discuss, and write about a wide variety of poems.

This is not a survey of all poetry written in English, across the long history of the language. Rather, this course focuses primarily, but not exclusively, on more recent productions, from the late-Nineteenth Century to today. Our readings are organized around formal topics, such as imagery, irony, and free verse. This course also carefully attends to traditional verse forms, which are not only still in use, but also help us better to understand contemporary poetic innovations.

Introduction to Poetry offers a comprehensive preparation in poetry and poetics, which should ready students for more advanced work in literature, as well as develop close reading, analytical, and compositional skills. The course also aims to expand literary and cultural appreciation.

In addition to writing short essays on poetry, students will have opportunities to experiment with poetry writing.

Requirements

This course involves three five-page assignments. You will receive an assignment sheet for each, and you will have the option of rewriting one of the first two. All writing done outside of class must be typed, paginated, and stapled, with a standard 12-point font. Handwritten homework will receive zero credit. Because I will make local corrections on your work, I need to insist that you double-space *everything*.

Students will be responsible for leading small group discussions on a rotating basis. When it is your turn, you will prepare three typed, double-spaced questions for discussion and turn them in to me at the end of the class. Please do not write out answers to the questions on the page you give to me. Each student will also prepare a five-or-so-minute oral presentation on a particular poet of her or his choice.

Absences will not be taken lightly, only excused with a doctor's note or other suitable documentation. Please see <<http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/>> for student rights and responsibilities.

Everyone *must* actively participate. Lack of participation will damage your grade. This means doing the homework, completing the readings, and joining in class discussion.

You will be required to photocopy your own writing for all of your classmates. Please see <<http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/>> for student rights and responsibilities.

Grading

Participation:	15%
Presentation:	5%
Discussion Questions:	10%
First Essay:	20%
Second Essay:	25%
Third Essay:	25%

Unless excused, late essays receive a one-letter grade reduction. I will grant an extension for almost any reason, if the student contacts me *at least 24 hours in advance*. No extensions on the final essay. Plagiarism will result in an F for the course, and I will report the student for academic discipline. Missing classes, or arriving late, will affect the participation grade. Do not expect an "A" if you don't talk regularly in class.

First-Year Experience

English 200Y is a first-year experience course. As such, all students must attend three co-curricular events that will take place outside of the classroom and class time during the semester. We will decide which events to include as a group. Please inform yourself about upcoming events on campus and in Macomb. Let's make this fun, please!

The Peer Mentor for this course is Lisa English. She can be a resource for you not only in academic matters pertaining to our course, but also in regard to student life on campus.

The Writing Center

The University Writing Center can assist you with general and specific questions on writing assigned in any discipline and at any academic level. The tutor's job is to add another voice in response to your writing. The one-on-one assistance available at the Writing Center can help with generating ideas, suggesting organization, and even working through grammatical issues. The University Writing Center is located in Simpkins Hall 341. Call for an appointment (298-2815) and be sure to bring a copy of your assignment to your session.

Visiting My Office

Please take the opportunity to meet with me during my office hours, or by appointment, to talk about the readings, or your writing. *I very much appreciate any kind of feedback about the course.*

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), I will make academic accommodations for any student who notifies me of the need. For me to provide the proper accommodation(s), you must provide me documentation from Disability Support Services. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to my attention, as I am not legally permitted to ask. Students who require special assistance in emergency evacuations (i.e., fire, tornado, etc.) should tell me the most appropriate procedures to follow. Please contact Disability Support Services at 298-2512.

Schedule

Notes: ITP is *An Introduction to Poetry*; RR is *Rhyme's Reason*.

Week 1: January 19 & 21

Introduction to the course. Handout & discussion. Paraphrase & Summary.
ITP, "Reading a Poem."

Week 2: January 26 & 28

Tone & Irony.
ITP, "Listening to a Voice."

Week 3: February 2 & 4

Diction, Denotation, & Connotation.
ITP, "Words" & "Saying and Suggesting."

Week 4: February 9 & 11

Imagery & Haiku.
ITP, "Imagery."

Week 5: February 16 & 18

Metaphor & Figurative Language.
ITP, "Figures of Speech."

Week 6: February 23 & 25

Stanza & Ballad.
RR, 1-26. ITP, "Song."
First Essay Due in Class on Tuesday, February 23.

Week 7: March 2 & 4

Alliteration, Assonance, & Rime.
RR, 26-54. ITP, "Sound."

Week 8: March 9 & 11

Meter.
RR, 54-70. ITP, "Rhythm."

Spring Break

Week 9: March 23 & 25

Closed and Open Forms.
ITP, "Closed Form" & "Open Form."

Week 10: March 30 (No Class April 1)

Symbol, Allegory, Parable, & Archetype.
ITP, "Symbol" & "Myth and Narrative."

Week 11: April 6 & 8

Identity.

ITP, "Poetry and Personal Identity."

*Second Essay Due in Class on Tuesday, April 6.*Week 12: April 13 & 15

Translation & Parody.

ITP, "Translation."

Week 13: April 20 & 22

Encountering Other Poetries.

ITP, "Poetry in Spanish."

Week 14: April 27 & 29

Introduction to Literary Criticism.

ITP, "Recognizing Excellence" & "What Is Poetry?"

Week 15: May 4 & 6

Virtuoso Readings. Conclusion.

*Third Essay due in class on Thursday, May 6.*Final Exam Week

Event: to be arranged.