

# Introduction to Poetry

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English 200, Section 001  
Spring Semester 2011

Office: Simpkins 115  
Hours: M, 4:00-5:00; T, 4:00-5:00; W, 3:00-5:00

TTh, 2:00-3:15 p.m.  
Simpkins 20

*No prerequisites.*

## 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.

Poetry to print on my website.

## 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 refer to <<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.

## 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. Please see WIU's Policy on Academic Integrity at <<http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>>. Missing classes, or arriving late, will affect the participation grade. Do not expect an "A" if you don't talk regularly in class.

## 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.*

## 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.

## 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 18 & 20  
Consult *Online Assignments* page.  
ITP, "Reading a Poem."

Week 2: January 25 & 27  
Consult *Online Assignments* page.  
Tone & Irony.  
ITP, "Listening to a Voice."

Week 3: February 1 & 3  
Consult *Online Assignments* page.  
Diction, Denotation, & Connotation.  
ITP, "Words" & "Saying and Suggesting."  
*I return to the classroom on February 3.*

Week 4: February 8 & 10  
Imagery & Haiku.  
ITP, "Imagery."

Week 5: February 15 & 17  
Metaphor & Figurative Language.  
ITP, "Figures of Speech."

Week 6: February 22 & 24

Stanza &amp; Ballad.

RR, 1-26. ITP, "Song."

*First Essay Due in Class on Tuesday, February 22.*Week 7: March 1 & 3

Alliteration, Assonance, &amp; Rime.

RR, 26-54. ITP, "Sound."

Week 8: March 8 & 10

Meter.

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

**Spring Break**Week 9: March 22 & 24

Closed and Open Forms.

ITP, "Closed Form" &amp; "Open Form."

Week 10: March 29 & 31

Symbol, Allegory, Parable, &amp; Archetype.

ITP, "Symbol" &amp; "Myth and Narrative."

Week 11: April 5 & 7

Identity.

ITP, "Poetry and Personal Identity."

*Second Essay Due in Class on Tuesday, April 5.*Week 12: April 12 & 14

Translation &amp; Parody.

ITP, "Translation."

Week 13: April 19 & 21

Encountering Other Poetries.

ITP, "Poetry in Spanish."

Week 14: April 26 & 28

Introduction to Literary Criticism.

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

Week 15: May 3 & 5

Virtuoso Readings. Conclusion.

*Third Essay due in class on Thursday, May 5.*Final Exam Week

Event: to be arranged.