EN 204: Introduction to Poetry

Mr. John Ranahan

Course Syllabus, Spring Semester, 2012

[johnr@comfsm.fm](mailto:johnr@comfsm.fm)

Office Hours: MWF, 08:00-08:45; 10:00-10:45; 13:00-13:45

New Faculty Building, Office 3, Lang/Lit; Ext. 213

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course presents three major areas of inquiry. First, there is a selected analysis and review of English poetry from Chaucer to the present. Second, there is a practical study of how poetry uses the sounds of language to convey meaning. Finally, the course includes both oral and written workshops that allow the students to experiment with various poetic forms and concepts in their own reading and writing.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The course will introduce students to the literary genre of poetry. Students will become familiar with the characteristic features of the narrative and lyric forms. They will learn to read short poems with understanding and increased-sensitivity:

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: the student will be able to

1. identify and analyze poetic forms;
2. determine literal and figurative meanings in poetry;
3. discuss themes, literary devices, style, and historical influences in poetry;
4. write a poem in a given form;
5. identify and analyze prosody and apply it in writing;
6. respond reflectively in writing, with a minimum of grammatical error, to poems;
7. make informed language choices in English

COURSE CONTENT

During weeks 1-12, the class will have an oral workshop each Wednesday. The workshop will examine an unseen poem. During weeks 12-16, the class will function as a poetry writing workshop during class sessions, though reading and writing assignments will continue at this time.

January 9-13: Read in *The Seagull Reader - Poem, Second Edition,* Introduction, pp. xxiii-xxxvii, “To Rosemounde,” 62; “Lak of Stedfastnesse,” 64; “There is a garden in her face,” (58); “Sonnet 18,” 275; “Sonnet 29,” 276; “Sonnet 55,” 276; “Sonnet 73,” 277; “Sonnet 130” 278. Workshop poem 1.

January 16-20: Read in *The Seagull Reader - Poem, Second Edition,* Introduction, pp. xxxvii-li, “To My Dear and Loving Husband,” 41; “The Flea,” 97; “Death, be not proud,” 100. Workshop poem 2.

January 23-27: Read in *The Seagull Reader - Poem, Second Edition,* “To Autumn,” 35; “The Lamb,” 36; “The Chimney Sleeper,” 37; “The Tyger,” 38; “Sonnet 32,” 47; “Sonnet 43,” 47; “My Last Duchess,” 48; “She Walks in Beauty” 56. Workshop poem 3

January 30-February 3: Introduction, xlii-xlvi; Milton, Blake, oral workshop poem 4

February 6-10: Introduction, xlvi-li; Shelley, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, oral workshop poem 4

February 13-17: John Keats, oral workshop poem 5

February 20-24: Emily Dickinson, oral workshop poem 6

February 27-March 2: Arnold, oral workshop poem 7

March 5-9: Robert Frost, oral workshop poem 8

March 12-16: McKay, Millay, Yeats (“Leda and the Swan”), oral workshop poem 9

Mach 19-23: Bishop (for the forms), Plath, Piercy, oral workshop poem 10

March 26-30: Dylan Thomas (villanelle), Wilfred Owen, oral workshop poem 11

April 9-13: Writing workshop oral reading in class (Seamus Heaney/others, according to instructor), oral workshop poem 12.

April 16-20: Writing workshop; oral reading in class (T.S. Eliot/others, according to instructor)

April 23-27: Writing workshop; oral reading in class (E.E. Cummings/others, according to

instructor)

Week 16: Writing workshop; oral reading in class as the Final Exam

By the end of the semester you should be able to:

-point out those features of a given poem which are most characteristic of the genre.

-identify folk ballads, literary ballads, sonnets, andlyrics.

-demonstrate a knowledge of numerous literary terms such as: image, symbol, simile, metaphor, rhyme, stanza; couplet, refrain, persona, paradox.

-demonstrate a knowledge of biographical information of poets read in the course.

-demonstrate a familiarity with a method of approaching and understanding a poem on the first reading.

-discuss (in writing and orally) selected poems in such a way as to indicate to the instructor an understanding of the content and a recognition of the form.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Lecture and in-class explications

Small group discussions

Poetry workshop (oral)

Poetry workshop (written)

Written assignments

EVALUATION:

The A,B,C,D,F grading system as defined by the CCM grading policy will be used. Final grades will be based

Homework & written assignments (35%)

Quizzes & exams (15%)

Poetry Workshops (50%)

TEXT:

*The Seagull Reader, Poems,* 2nd Edition, Editor, Kelly, Joseph. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2008. New York.

CLASS RULES:

1. Complete the assigned homework on time, and turn it in at the beginning of class on the day it is due. Late homework is unacceptable.
2. I will follow the COM-FSM Lang/Lit Department policy on attendance: after four (4) absences, you will receive an F, and have you drop from the class.
3. If you are more than fifteen (15) minutes late, I will count you absent for the class. Three late appearances of more than ten (10) minutes will count as one (1) absence.
4. I will follow the COM-FSM policy on academic honesty: if you plagiarize or copy, you will receive a zero (0) on the assignment, and I will bring the act to the attention of the appropriate administrator.
5. Do not bring any food, drink, beetle-nut, candy, or gum into the class.
6. Turn off cell phones or other electronic equipment before you come into class.
7. If you come to class without the appropriate textbook, I will count you as more than ten (10) minutes late.
8. On a positive, more friendly note: come to class ready to enjoy poetry.