

SPRING 24
ENGL 1005 READING POETRY
English Department
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
3 credits

Course Meeting Dates and Location

TTH 9:45-11:00

Classroom tbd

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: W 3:00 pm – 5:00

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Catalog Description

Poems say interesting things in small spaces. How do they do it? The famous American poet Emily Dickinson wrote, “If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry.” While Dickinson isn’t describing poems that literally saw through her skull, she is describing the odd and wondrous ways in which poems affect us. While poems are literary texts, they are musical, visual and, most often, short. White, brown and black folks from all walks of life read and write them. Expect to read poems from a variety of perspectives and time periods that all say interesting things in their own, individual ways.

COURSE OVERVIEW

ENGL 1005 Reading Poetry is an introduction to the reading and critical examination of poetry. The goal is to prepare you to become thoughtful, life-long readers of poetry. Instead of being popular songs or best-selling novels or memoirs, poems don’t come to us except in courses such as ENGL 1005. In Reading Poetry, you will encounter poetry in a way that you likely never have until now. This course will teach you how to interpret poems in a way that is sensitive to nuance, implication and possibility. Most often, the best poems do not reveal themselves in their entirety even after close, informed analysis. Lifelong poetry readers will tell you that their readings of poems change over time.

However, this course will teach you to do the analysis necessary for those initial close readings and to watch and wait to learn more from your initial discoveries. In ENGL 1005 you will explore poetic language, forms and techniques, particularly how poets use sounds, forms, and white space to create poetic meanings, especially those that take off the tops of our heads.

Course Objectives

Through the examination of poetic language, forms and techniques, ENGL 1005 will help you learn and develop:

1. Explication: the ability to read a poem as a literary text, make sense of it, and explain your understanding of the text to others
2. Close reading: the ability to apply knowledge of a poem's characteristics (sounds, forms and white space)
3. Appreciation: the ability to explain a poem's significance and value, which requires Explication and Close Reading.

Literature Core objectives and criteria

Courses that meet the Literature Core requirement will introduce students to the challenges and joys of the close study of literature. Literature uses language in creative and powerful ways to entertain and engage, instruct and inspire, and shock or sadden us. In so doing it enlarges our understanding of the human experience, transforms our thinking and our lives, and helps us to imagine new possibilities for our society and the world. Penetrating analysis of literature teaches the power of literature to express the breadth and complexity of human lives past and present, near and far. Careful study of literature can enrich students' individual and professional lives and make them more understanding and reflective members of their multiple communities.

Courses that meet the Literature Core requirement focus on the ways in which the written word articulates and explores human experience. Courses that meet this requirement may be offered in any world language that has a strong body of written literature. Like other courses in the arts and humanities, literature classes analyze creative works, but their special emphasis is on the relationship between language and meaning in literary texts: we may find more complex meanings when we examine the author, the readers, the social or historical context, as well as the written text itself. Because informed readers of literature appreciate the aesthetic qualities of good writing, courses about literature teach students to work with language as both a vehicle through which ideas and images are expressed and as the material from which aesthetic works are composed. A poem is, for example, a text that communicates ideas as well as an aesthetic object that is composed of words (just as a painting conveys ideas and emotions but is made up of paint and brush strokes).

In ENGL 1005 **Students analyze written works of literature (poems)**. Students will learn to notice how the author is using language to poetic effect, how the author's identity interrelates with the speakers and personas they choose, and which literary theories and movements particular poems belong to. The framework of the course will guide students to consider how an author's choice of poetic devices affects how readers experience the poem.

In ENGL 1005 **Students study the formal dimensions of literature**. In the short and long papers students analyze the components of literature including elements such as persona, alliteration, metaphor and simile that authors explore and deploy in poetry more than in narrative. in ENGL

1005 students will study each word in each line of poetry—an overall training in close reading that poetry is uniquely suited to teach to all students.

In ENGL 1005 **Students examine the social and historical contexts of the literary works as well as their content.** Within technical literary frameworks such as Persona and Free Verse as well as conceptual literary frameworks such as Eco-poetics and Love Poems, students will learn about the social and historical contexts of poetry that precedes our moment and connect poems of the past, such as poems of war, to poems that explore contemporary war, for example.

Student Learning Outcomes

Throughout the semester students will learn how to Communicate Effectively about poetry. Students will practice how to write about poetry in an initial paper on Personas and continue to improve upon their ability to Communicate Effectively about poetry in a longer poem due at the end of the semester. The instructor will assess student's ability to Communicate Effectively about poetry according to the depth, extent and nuance of Poetic Terminology each student deploys in these papers.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Online Resources

The poems you will read in this class are all found online.

Book: For your second paper requirement, you will check out from the library or purchase one book of poetry: a single collection, not a selected or collected edition. Alternately, you may choose one book included within a collected edition. I recommend that the book you select be that of a poet you discovered in the readings for this class.

Basic Resources

Glossary of Poetic Terms

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms>

How to Read a Poem Out Loud

<https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/poetry-180/how-to-read-a-poem-out-loud/>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. First you will write one short paper (2-3 pages): a close analysis of a persona poem. Who is speaking? What literary devices (alliteration, assonance, consonance) are they using? What is the social or historical context for the poem? The Poetry Foundation has a

resource that allows you to filter poems by types, such as Persona. Select one poem from that list as the focus of your paper.

2. There will be a one-hour midterm on Poetic Terms.
3. You will write a longer paper (6-8 pages) at the end of the semester. For the second paper, I will ask you to explore the books of one poet whose work you enjoyed, select one single volume of poetry, and write a short paper about two or three poems that you find in that single volume of poetry. The paper must apply the Poetic Terms on which you were tested during the midterm. Any literary and theoretical approaches are welcome.
4. You will also contribute a weekly discussion post on Canvas about the relevant class material.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Canvas responses	10%
Short paper	20%
Midterm Exam	40%
Long Paper	30%

Grades will be based on the fulfillment of course requirements according to University standards as described in the College of Liberal Arts Handbook (a more detailed breakdown is included below).

- A *Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.*
- B *Achievement significantly above the level required to meet course requirements.*
- C *Achievement meets the base course requirements in every aspect.*
- D *Achievement worthy of credit despite failing to meet fully the course requirements.*
- F *Performance fails to meet the basic course requirements.*

Class meetings	Weekly Objectives	Readings	Assignments
Week 1: 1/16	How do Poems Mean?	Emily Dickinson, "Tell all the truth, but tell it slant"	

Week 1: 1/18	Do poems always mean something?	Lewis Carroll, "Jabberwocky"	-
Week 2: 1/23	Personas and Speakers	Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess" Sylvia Plath, "Lady Lazarus"	-
Week 2: 1/25	Personas and Speakers	Margaret Atwood, "Pig Song" James Tate, "The Motorcyclists"	Persona poem selections due for discussion in small peer group
Week 3: 1/30	Narrative Poetry	Louise Erdrich, "Indian Boarding School: The Runaways" Claude McKay, "If We Must Die"	-
Week 3: 2/1	Narrative Poetry	Edgar Allen Poe, "The Raven" Russel Edson, "The Difficulty with a Tree"	-
Week 4: 2/6	Lyric Poetry	Dylan Thomas, "Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night" Lucille Clifton, "wishes for sons" John Clare, "I Hid My Love"	First paper due
Week 4: 2/8	Lyric Poetry	W.S. Merwin, "For the Anniversary of My Death" Louise Gluck, "Vita Nova"	-
Week 5: 2/13	Formal verse	Raych Jackson "sestina for a black girl who doesn't know how to braid hair" Shakespeare, "Sonnet 65" Elizabeth Bishop, "One Art" [villanelle]	-
Week 5: 2/15	Free verse	Walt Whitman, "I Sing the Body Electric"	-
Week 6: 2/20	Sound and Sense	E.E. Cummings, "[All in green went my love riding/]" Gwendolyn Brooks "We Real Cool"	-
Week 6: 2/22	Sound and Sense	Audre Lorde, "Coal" Phillip Levine, "They Feed They Lion" Simon Ortiz, "Storming toward a Precipice"	-
Week 7: 2/27	Sound and Sense	Louise Gluck, "All Hallows" Gerard Manley Hopkins "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves"	-

Week 7: 2/29	Sound and Sense	Emily Bronte, "Remembrance" Thom Gunn, "Tamer and Hawk"	Midterm (1 hour, in class)
Week 8: Spring Break 3/5 and 3/7			
Week 9: 3/12	Protest Resistance and Empowerment	Adrienne Rich, "What Kinds of Times Are These" William Blake, "London" Patricia Smith, "10-Year-Old Shot Three Times, but She's Fine"	
Week 9: 3/14	Protest Resistance and Empowerment	Gwen Westerman, "Dakota Homecoming" Jill McDonough, "Dear Gaybashers"	
Week 10: 3/19	Ecopoetics	Joy Harjo, "Once the World Was Perfect" W.S. Merwin, "For a Coming Extinction" Carl Dennis, "The Greenhouse Effect"	
Week 10: 3/21	Ecopoetics	Camille Dungy, "The Blue" Robert Frost, "Oven Bird" Stephanie Burt, "Advice from Rock Creek Park"	Selection of poetry volume is due to instructor in class
Week 11: 4/2	War Poetry	Ilya Kaminsky, "We Lived Happily During the War" Wilfred Owen, "Strange Meeting" Wisława Szymborska, "The End and the Beginning"	Poetry volume checked out or purchased
Week 11: 4/4	War Poetry	Claude McKay, "If We Must Die" Amit Madmugar, "Ode to a Drone" Yehuda Amichai, "Wildpeace"	Bring poetry volume to class for brainstorming and discussion in peer group
Week 12: 4/9	Love Poems	Shakespeare, "Sonnet 65" Amber Flora Thomas, "Aubade" Brenda Shaughnessy, "Project for a Fainting"	
Week 12: 4/11	Love Poems	Reginald Shepherd, "You, Therefore" Anna Swir, "I'll Open the Window" Mary Jo Bang, "You Were You Are Elegy"	
Week 13: 4/16	Anti-love Poems	Linda Gregg, "Winter Love"	

		Ross Gay, "Love, I'm Done With You" Kazim Ali, "The Rain"	
Week 13: 4/18	Anti-love Poems	Bill Knott, "The Consolations of Sociobiology" Anne Sexton, "Ballad of the Lonely Masturbator" Louise Gluck, "Anniversary"	
Week 14: 4/23	Closure	Discussions of previous poems	
Week 14: 4/25 [last meeting]	Closure	Discussions of previous poems	Paper 2 due in class
Finals			

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

CLA Classroom Policies: <http://cla.umn.edu/english/undergraduate/advising/classroom-policies>

University Grading Policies

The grading policy in this course conforms to CLA guidelines. Therefore a "C" is equivalent to basic fulfillment of requirements; to achieve a grade higher than a "C" a student must perform beyond the basic requirements. Please keep the following scale and criteria in mind:

- A 4.000 - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- A- 3.667
- B+ 3.333
- B 3.000 - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B- 2.667
- C+ 2.333
- C 2.000 - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
- C- 1.667
- D+ 1.333
- D 1.000 - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
- S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.

For additional information, please refer to:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>.

Incompletes

A grade of incomplete ("I") is given only in a genuine emergency, and generally only for work

which is due during the last two weeks of the course. The student must make arrangements with the instructor for an incomplete before the last day of class.

Make-up Work For Legitimate Absences

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections.

For complete information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html>.

Absence for Religious Observation

The University of Minnesota permits absences from class for participation in religious observances. Students who plan to miss class must inform instructors of anticipated absences at the beginning of the semester; meet with instructors to reschedule any missed labs or examinations; and obtain class notes from other students.

Student Academic Integrity & Scholastic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty: Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Plagiarism can include submitting a paper:

- written by means of inappropriate collaboration;
- written by you for another course, submitted without the permission of both instructors;
- purchased, downloaded, or cut and pasted from the Internet;
- or that fails to properly acknowledge its sources through standard citations.

For resources on how to appropriately use and cite sources, and to avoid plagiarism, see:
<http://writing.umn.edu/sws/quickhelp/sources.html>

Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes & Course Materials:

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes

undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community.

Academic Freedom & Responsibility

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course

as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom.

Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are

free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

Student Writing Support

Students can get one-to-one-consultations on any course paper or writing project at Student Writing Support. Student Writing Support has several campus locations, including the main location in 15 Nicholson Hall.

See <http://writing.umn.edu> for details about locations, appointments, and online consultations.

Disability Accommodations

The University of Minnesota views disability as an important aspect of diversity, and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability

Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities

to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as, mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact the DRC office on your campus (UM Twin Cities - 612.626.1333) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
- Students with short-term disabilities, such as a broken arm, can often work with instructors to minimize classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, students should contact the DRC as noted above.
- If you are registered with the DRC and have a disability accommodation letter dated for this semester or this year, please contact your instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.
- If you are registered with the DRC and have questions or concerns about your accommodations please contact your (access consultant/disability specialist).

Additional information is available on the DRC website: <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/> or email drc@umn.edu.

Mental Health Services

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>

Student Conduct Code

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see:

https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/2020-01/policy_student_conduct_code.pdf

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means “engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.”

Sexual Harassment

“Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting.

For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

<https://policy.umn.edu/hr/sexharassassault>

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities,

without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: <https://eoaa.umn.edu>