

ENGLISH 469: Modern and Contemporary American Poetry Evans 260 4:30-5:50 MW 3 Credit Hours
Dr. Melissa Morphew Spring 2008
Office 116 Evans 294-1944 eng_smm@shsu.edu
Office Hours 3:00-5:00 TTH 2:00-3:00 MW Others by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Readings in major writers, themes, and/or historical movements within a selected genre in American literature. The approach may vary from semester to semester, and will include such subjects as modern poetry, the short story, the Naturalists, folklore, regional literature, nonfiction prose, or others. Prerequisite: 15 hours of English.

In this class we will read poetry and essays by and about the major American poets of the 20th-century, such as Frost, Pound, Eliot, Stein, Williams, H.D., Hughes, Stevens, Bishop, Lowell, Plath, etc. We will identify major movements and figures in modern and contemporary poetry and the historical circumstances in which these movements arose. We will examine through class discussion and lecture what the texts have to add to our knowledge of the universal human experience and the struggle of daily life in both extraordinary and ordinary circumstances, aiding in our exploration of the concerns, hopes, and fears of human existence. We will examine the characteristics of modern and contemporary poetries, creating a definition that encompasses several critical and philosophical viewpoints addressed in the study of poetics and prosody. We will also complete study guides, take essay exams, and write essays in order to explore these texts and to deepen our understanding of them through explication, analysis, and synthesis.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Students will contrast the poetics of the 20th-century to the poetics of the 19th-century, in order to realize the monumental shift in technique and theme which occurred at the turn of the 20th-century in American poetry and to understand why that shift occurred.

Students will gain a working knowledge of modern American poetics and poetic theories.

Students will learn the dominant themes associated with the major works of major American poets of the 20th-century, concentrating on how those themes were influenced by the historical moment and preceding poetic movements.

Students will learn the specialized terminology of poetics and prosody.

Students will learn how to distinguish poems from prose.

Students will gain a deeper understanding of what makes poems important not only to individuals but to our culture.

COURSE POLICIES:

Since your assignments and projects will be based upon, not only the assigned texts, but also class discussion, attendance is extremely important. You are allowed 3 absences without penalty. After the 3rd absence, your final grade will be reduced by one letter grade. After the 6th absence, your final grade will be reduced by two letter grades. If you are absent more than 10 class periods you will automatically receive a failing grade. It is your responsibility to inform me of your presence at the end of the class period should you come in late.

I expect you to come prepared to discuss the selections and present your work.

Your grade will be based on various (3-4) study guides, (2-3) short essays, pop quizzes, a mid-term exam, a final exam, and a final research project.

The poems and other reading assignments will be posted on Blackboard, so it is important if you are absent to make sure you check Blackboard for the latest assignments.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry [BOX SET] (Paperback)

by Richard Ellmann (Editor), Robert O'Clair (Editor), Jahan Ramazani (Editor), Richard Ellman (Author)

YOUR GRADE WILL BE WEIGHTED AS FOLLOWS:

Study Guides are worth 10% each.

Short Essays are worth 10% each.

Mid-Term 10%.

Final 10%

Pop Quiz grades will be averaged (I will drop the 3 lowest pop quiz grades) and that grade will be equivalent to one essay grade worth 10%.

Final Research Project worth 30%

*****!!**If you are absent it is your duty to find out what you missed and what you need to make up, either by checking Blackboard or from me or from one of your classmates. ***!!****

This schedule is meant as a general guide and **adjustments may be necessary** during the semester.

Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism or academic dishonesty at the least you will receive a failing grade on the compromised paper or test, at the most you might end up failing the course, depending upon the severity of the infraction.

Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be

kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

Religious Holidays

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

Visitors in the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

Instructor Evaluations

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

Classroom Rules of Conduct

The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is found at the following link:
<https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>.

Please turn off all cellphones prior to entering class. It is a tremendous distraction to have cellphones going off in the middle of discussions and lectures. And no texting.

Also, do not, do not read newspapers or textbooks from other courses during class—if you do, I may ask you to leave until you are ready to concentrate on the class at hand.

The key word is R-E-S-P-E-C-T as Aretha so eloquently puts it. 😊