

**Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Razi University**

**Introduction to English Poetry: a Course Syllabus**

**Fall Semester, September 2018-Janary 2019.**

**Class Time: Sundays, 15:30-17:00.**

**Instructor:** Ghaderi, A.

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**Part 1: Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to provide you a rudimentary yet comprehensive body of knowledge that will help you in reading, understanding, interpreting and recognizing components of English poetry. We will be learning about the aesthetics and history of English poetry as well. During the course, selected poems from different poetic traditions will be read and analyzed, moreover, structural elements of poetry will be introduced and discussed so as to enable us comprehend both content and structure of the poems. We will use the historical backgrounds of the works to boost our understanding of the works and their hidden and less explicit meanings. In this regard, poets’ choices behind poetic allusions, language, genre, diction, rhythm, and use of figurative language will be brought into attention and scrutiny. The poems selected belong to different authors, and literary periods, ranging from Shakespeare to Seamus Heaney, and the Renaissance to the present. Thus, this course will shed light upon techniques and genres employed by the poets to compose verses that call to us and make us think. The importance and vehemence of applying close reading to the poems and reading assignments for each session cannot be overstated.

**Part 2: Course Objectives/Outcomes**

* Students will briefly go through the history of emergence and development of English poetry.
* Students will observe and apprehend poems from different periods and by various poets reflect aesthetic trends and historical contexts.
* Applications of close-reading to the given materials.
* Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the reading assignments designated for each session.
* Students will be able to interpret and analyze verses and basic elements of poetry through applying close reading and different points of views developed under a few introductory paradigms.

**Part 3: Required Texts**

Abrams, Meyer H., and Geoffrey Galt. Harpham. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Thomson Wadsworth, 2012.

Perrine, Laurence. *Poetry: The Elements of Poetry*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974.

**Part 4: Students’ Responsibilities**

* **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to have completed the reading assignments before attending the class. Two absences will be permitted. Each additional absence will result in a reduction of the final course grade. **And remember, take notes during the sessions.**
* **Participation:** Students are expected to take part in class discussions and raise questions, if they have any, regarding the subject matter and content of each session. Moreover, they will be asked to give their opinion on certain matters during the class time.

**Part 5: Classroom Rules**

* All electronic gadgets must be off or set to silent mode. If you use them for reading PDFs and other class related files, make sure they will not distract you or others so as to prevent the class from digressions.
* Punctuality is a non-negotiable must.
* 3 sessions of absence mean reducing your chance of passing the course greatly not to mention increasing the possibility of being dropped out of the course. **Don’t try it, ever!**
* Class activities are expected of the students.
* Last but not least, respect the class. Do not leave the class in groups during the breaks. You absolutely must not extend breaks’ duration on your own authority. For each session, a 10 minute break is already scheduled.
* Should the students have any questions, concerns, or requests for meeting and materials, they will contact me **only and solely** via **my email address**. Other forms of communications are absolutely not recommended.

You all have my thanks and appreciation since you have always observed these rules and regulations. Bringing them here again is only a matter of formality and academic regulations.

**Part 6: Grading Policy and Final Exam Structure**

| **Points**  | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| 20 + 10 | Class participation + attendance |
| 70 | Final exam⃰.  |
| 100 | Total points |

**⃰** the final exam will be an essay exam. On your exam, you will answer essay questions that are structured around the issues discussed in the class. You must respond to them properly and to the point in a reasonable length with maximum awareness of the texts themselves and critical subject matters that have been presented in the class. It goes needless to say that those who show genuine analytical insights in their answers will receive extra points. And there will be at least one bonus question on your exam which is much more difficult than the regular questions and needs a great deal of critical insight and mastery over the sources. Don’t forget: **everything I say will be on the exam!**

**Part 7: Schedule**

**Week 1:**

* What is poetry?
* Alfred, Lord Tennyson ‘The Eagle’.

**Week 2:**

* Denotation and Connotation.
* Emily Dickenson ‘There is no frigate like a book’
* William Shakespeare ‘Winter’

**Week 3:**

* Figurative Language I: Metaphor, Personification, Metonymy
* The Guitarist Tunes Up ‘Cornford’
* Bereft ‘Robert Frost’
* Song of Powers ‘Mason’

**Week 4:**

* Figurative Language II: Symbol, Allegory
* Robert Frost ‘The Road Not Taken’
* Metaphors ‘Sylvia Plath’

**Week 5:**

* Figurative Language III: Paradox, Overstatement, Understatement, Irony
* Much Madness is Divinest Sense ‘Dickinson’
* Percy Bysshe Shelley ‘Ozymandias’

**Week 6:**

* Allusion
* Meaning and Idea
* Out, Out ‘Frost’
* W. H. Auden ‘The Shield of Achilles’

**Week 7:**

* Tone and Musical Devices
* R. P. Lister ‘Target’
* Keith Douglas ‘John Anderson’

**Week 8:**

* Musical Devices
* Swinburne ‘sweet mother’
* Gerard Manley Hopkins ‘God’s Grandeur’
* English poetry during the Neoclassical period

**Week 9:**

* Rhythm and Meter
* George Herbert ‘Virtue’
* John Donne ‘The Good-Morrow’

**Week 10:**

* Sound and Meaning
* Alexander Pope ‘Sound and Sense’
* Wilfred Owen ‘Anthem for Doomed Youth’

**Week 11:**

* Pattern
* John Keats ‘On First Looking into

 Chapman’s Homer’

* Dylan Thomas ‘Poem in October

**Week 12:**

* Bad Poetry and Good
* William Blake ‘Tiger’
* Kingsley Amis ‘A Bookshop Idyll’
* Thomas Hardy ‘The Darkling Thrush’

**Week 13:**

* Ezra Pound ‘’Portrait d’une Femme’
* William Wordsworth ‘Strange fits of Passion’

**Week 14:** review

**Week 15:** review