

## English 205: Poetry

Fall 2010  
Oxford College

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### Objectives

- Through the experience of studying poetry, to improve the ability to analyze and appreciate an important art form
- Through the act of writing about poetry, to understand more fully the strengths and weaknesses of your own writing and to come to greater understanding of poetry
- Through conversation about poems, to improve the verbal art of communicating ideas with the end of greater learning from others, from your instructor, and from yourself
- Through study of texts on your own and in class, through writing and through conversation, to learn the major poetic techniques, something about major poets, and the types and styles of poetry written in the English language

### Guidelines for the Class

1. Each absence, after the first 2, results in 1 point off your final average. You do not need permission to take the first 2 absences; use them for illness or whatever you believe important. If you are absent/late, you miss important class work that can't be made up. Attendance is expected at every class. Lateness is not only rude but means you may miss important information, assignments, or quizzes.

2. The final exam will be an in-class essay on a poem we have not studied. It will measure what you've learned about poetry and writing about poetry. The entire semester prepares you for the final exam. (Wednesday, December 15, 9-12 pm)

3. The five or six formal papers should be 800 words in length, or 3 pages. Workshop Days will precede the due date for most papers. These are days we will work together on papers. Complete rough drafts are due on each Workshop Day. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per 24 hours, beginning at the start of class on the due date. All papers must be hard copy. After the first paper is returned, make an appointment for an individual conference; thereafter conferences are optional.

4. Unannounced quizzes will occasionally begin the class. They will not be difficult and will relate to the work of that day; they cannot be taken late or made up.

5. Participation means you must be willing to speak in class every day. Class time is mostly discussion. In the second half of the semester you must prepare and present a poem, leading part of the class for that day.

6. The best time to see me is after 2 pm Mon-Fri. If you wish to see me about your work, I encourage you to make an appointment with me through email.

7. Refer to these guidelines throughout the semester. If there are changes (normally there are since each class progresses at its own pace), they will be announced in class and on Learnlink. The syllabus will be posted on the conference.

### **Information about the Class**

**Grading Policy:** Final 20%, Papers 60%, Participation & Quizzes 20%

Keep track of your own grades, please. I do not average grades until after the final exam. I will drop the lowest one or two quiz grades. If you are not doing adequate work in the class I will let you know.

**Text:** Western Wind, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Mason and Nims. You MUST have your own book and bring it to class everyday. The edition must be the 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

**Papers:** Due approximately every other week. You may meet with me before a paper is due or after it has been returned. Papers are formal and thesis-centered; they are thoughtful and supported with evidence. An English handbook (with grammar rules) will help you do a good job; if you don't have one, get one or access to one. If you need help, ask. That's what I'm here for. Email me a question, set up an appointment, or talk to me after class.

**Learnlink Conference** "Lemons 205": I will use this conference to contact you if there are changes in assignments, to remind you of what is going on, to give you suggestions having to do with the course, to ask questions about poetry. You can use it to respond to any of my announcements, to raise questions about assignments, to share your ideas about poetry or the class. I will place this conference on your desktop.

### **Important Dates, Schedule of Assignments:**

Papers due. 9/10; 9/24; 10/15; 11/5; 11/22; 12/8 (this last one is Reading Day. The paper may be turned at my office by 3:00 pm that day.) Last day of this class is Monday Dec 6.

**Reading Assignments:** We will do one or two chapters of Western Wind per week; specific daily assignments will be announced in class and on our Learnlink Conference. The class will go at its own best pace; there is no penalty for reading ahead!