

English 205
Fall 2009
MW 2:30-3:45

Dr. Adriane Ivey
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Required Texts: *Immortal Poems of the English Language*; *101 Great American Poems*; Poetry on Blackboard; undecided poetry texts

Suggested Texts: *A Handbook to Literature* (Holman and Harmon)
The MLA Handbook

Objectives: There are two very specific aims for this course: to teach you how to read and understand the central ideas in poems and to give you practice writing clear and organized essays about poetry. You will be expected to read a lot of poems and to read each one multiple times. Class discussion will focus on clear understanding of the poetry. You will be asked to write many short papers to give you practice narrowing your topics and writing clear and fully developed arguments.

You will be introduced to new ways of reading and writing about literature and learn to understand poetry in the context of literary concepts, movements, and periods. Your writing will discuss the ways poets use sound, symbolism, and figurative language to convey meaning. We will discuss how all poetry is a response to its particular historical context, and how all great poetry also transcends that context.

Attendance: Because understanding the poetry we read is reliant upon participation in active discussions, attendance is an important aspect of this class. **Therefore you will be allowed a maximum of three absences.** Your final grade will drop three points for each absence after the third. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.

Deadlines for Assignments: Assignments are due in class on the date specified on the itinerary. Late papers will drop five points for every day they are late. Late RAs will drop 2 points for every day they are late.

Plagiarism: All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented using MLA format. Remember that you are to adhere to the Oxford College Honor Code and that your name on any assignment submitted in this class indicates that you have neither given nor received unauthorized information on the work. Remember that it is your responsibility to understand the Code and what constitutes plagiarism.

Requirements and Grading: All work will be graded and every assignment will count towards the final grade. I grade on a plus/minus scale. Your final grade for this course will be figured as follows:

20%	8 1-2-page papers on poetry	20%	Midterm Exam
40%	2 4-5 page papers on poetry	20%	Final Exam

Short Papers: These are 1-2 page analyses of a single poem. You must stay within the page limit and USE NO OTHER SOURCES. This means you should not quote another source or even consult any sources to understand the poem. This also means you are not allowed to look the poems up on the internet; doing so will constitute plagiarism. These papers are to give you practice analyzing the poems ON YOUR OWN. Because these are very short papers, you will need to narrow your focus to ONE aspect of ONE poem. Your thesis should deal with how the aspect you've chosen helps to express the poem's central idea. Note that these are not **explication** papers: you shouldn't go line by line telling what the poem is saying. These are **analysis** papers: you must have a thesis that makes some argument about the poem.

Long Papers: These are 4-5 page papers on the poetry. You will answer a specific question about one or two poems. For these papers, you may consult reliable academic sources and cite them in your writing. You will get the assignments for these papers well in advance of the due date, and you will go through at least two drafts of them.

Midterm and Final Exams: These exams will be essay exams testing two abilities. Some of the questions will ask you to remember what you've learned about particular poems we've discussed in class and to write about them using specific literary terms. One question will ask you to read and write about a poem we've never discussed to test your ability to interpret and argue about poetry on your own. For each of these exams, you will write 4-5 pages of handwritten text.

Other Things to Know:

Be courteous of me and of your classmates; turn cell phones off or silence them at the beginning of class.

Throw nothing away.

If I am late and there is no notice at the door, you should wait fifteen minutes before leaving. Prepare the next day's assignments for the next meeting.

Please read the instructions carefully for all assignments and class policies. I expect you to know anything that is written down.

If you happen to miss class, you are responsible for getting any information that you missed. I will not regive a lecture. Get notes from classmates you trust and find out if any deadlines have been changed or assignments explained.

I reserve the right to amend or modify anything on this statement by means of future hand-outs.