

ENGLISH 205: WRITING ABOUT POETRY

Dr. Christine Loflin

Office: Language Arts 106B

Phone: 4-4682

Learnlink e-mail: Christine Loflin

Office Hours: MW 9:30-10:30 TTh 11:30-12 and by appointment

Course objectives: What is poetry? What is good poetry? How has poetry in English been transformed over time? In this class, we will be studying these and other questions, and I will be encouraging you to come up with your own answers, in response to the works that we read and to the arguments of literary scholars that we will study. We will begin with Beowulf, the first epic in English, reading the whole poem carefully and also exploring the range of literary approaches to the poem. Then, working roughly chronologically, we will study the basic elements of poetic interpretation: diction, structure, form, meter, and poetic techniques and traditions. By the end of this course, you should be able to read a wide range of poets and literary scholars, create and support an original, intelligent interpretation of a poem, and identify and discuss the variety of literary techniques used in English poetry.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Write four essays.
 - 2) Write a formal research paper.
 - 3) Prepare two oral presentations, one group and one individual.
 - 4) Attend a poetry reading and write a response
 - 5) Participate fully in all classroom work, including written exercises and quizzes.
- There will be no makeups for missed classes.
- 6) Complete the midterm and the final examination.

Required:

The Norton Anthology of Poetry

Beowulf tr. by Seamus Heaney

Policies:

Attendance: You should be present for every class and prepared to participate. If you are absent, you are responsible for informing yourself about any missed assignments or announcements, and for material covered during that class. All absences should be for good reason; however, you may miss two classes without explanation. I will lower your grade for every unexcused absence after these two. Excessive absences (more than five) may be cause for dropping you from the class.

Class Participation: This will count for 10% of your grade. For full credit, you will need to attend every class ready to participate. This means not just responding when called on, but coming to class with questions from the reading and topics for discussion, responding

to other students' comments on the text, and taking active responsibility for the liveliness and pertinence of discussion.

Plagiarism: In this course, as in all other courses, you are bound by the Honor Code. Therefore, the work you submit for this class must be your own. If you use any outside sources in your writing for this course, you must acknowledge them by using the MLA system of documentation. **All Websites or other Internet sources must be acknowledged and documented.** If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code as it applies to this course, please consult me or pages 99-101 of the Oxford College catalog.

Grade breakdown:

Essays	40%
Oral presentations	10%
Research Paper	15%
Class Participation	10%
Poetry reading response	2%
Midterm	8 %
Final Exam	15%

All grades for this course will be recorded using the plus/minus scale described on page 34 of the Oxford College catalog.

Weekly Outline of Topics to be covered:

Wed Jan 14 Introduction and Objectives

Jan 21 *Beowulf* 1-189 and Wordsworth Sonnets "It is a Beauteous Evening,"
"London 1802," "Composed Upon Westminster Bridge" (Norton 416-17)

Thursday Jan 22nd 8PM "Sonnets and Sonatas" Carlos Museum. Free. Optional.

Jan 26 lines 190-490; "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics"
Jan 28 lines 491-885

Feb 2 lines 886-1157 Beowulf and Myth
Feb 4 lines 1158-1441 Christian and Pagan Elements

Feb 9 lines 1442-1931 Beowulf and the Anglo-Saxon World
Feb 11 lines 1932-2199 Beowulf as Hero

Feb 16 lines 2200-end of poem (3182). Beowulf: Structure and Unity of the Poem
Feb 18 Chaucer

Feb 23 Shakespeare--Beowulf paper due.

Tuesday, Feb 24th 4:30PM Poetry at Tech, The Clary Theatre. 3 Contemporary poets.
Free. Optional.

Feb 25 Donne, Marvell, Mary Wroth

Mar 1 Midterm

Mar 3 Romantics

March 8-12 Spring Break

Mar 15 Romantics Essay #2 due

Mar 17 Romantics

Mar 22 Modernists

Mar 24 Modernists

Mar 29 Modernists Essay #3 due

Monday, Mar 29th 7 PM Desmond Egan, Irish poet, Oxford Chapel.

Mar 31 Southern Poetry

Apr 5 Southern Poetry

Apr 7 Research paper due/Southern Poetry

Apr 12 Contemporary Poets

Apr 14 Contemporary Poets

Apr 19 Heaney

Apr 21 Contemporary Poets
Essay #4 due

Apr 26 Review

Exam: Tuesday, April 4 at 2PM.