

Bergen Community College

Division of English
Department of Composition and Literature

Course Syllabus

LIT 227– Introduction to Poetry

Instructor:
Office
Phone:
E-mail:
Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

Introduction to Poetry is a representative study of poetic forms and poetry from around the world. Through a close examination of the poetry, we will explore the evolution of poetic form, literary movements and the wide range of themes addressed through poetry. As we examine each work, we will be discussing their historical, cultural, and social influences.

3 Lecture Hours, 3 Credits

Prerequisite: WRT 101

Introduction to Poetry fulfills the Humanities General Education Requirement.

Student Learning Objectives

As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, students will be able to:

1. Read a wide range of poetry from various times and regions around the world.
2. Identify and discuss a variety of styles and conventional themes that characterize poetic works from various time periods and cultures.
3. Recognize a variety of traditional poetic forms from diverse cultures and backgrounds.
4. Recognize multiple structural elements used in poetry, and demonstrate understanding of the relationship between form and meaning.
5. Respond to works of poetry through writing, demonstrating learning of concepts and approaches to poetry appreciation covered in the course.
6. Use MLA style documentation in writing assignments.

Course Requirements:

You will be required to do the following:

1. Write at least three in-class essays.

- (Meets student learning objectives 1-7)
2. Complete other writing exercises such as journals and reading responses.
(Meets student learning objectives 1-6)
 3. Read, interpret, and analyze various forms of poetic works.
(Meets student learning objectives 1, 5-6)
 4. Comprehend and apply various literary terms to texts assigned by your instructor.
(Meets student learning objectives 1,4,6)
 5. Conduct independent research and write a 7-10 page research paper using MLA style.
(Meets student learning objectives 1-7)
 6. Submit papers that adhere to MLA manuscript requirements and demonstrate effective proofreading and editing.
(Meets student learning objectives 1-7)
 7. Participate in class discussions and other in-class (individual or group) activities.
(Meets student learning objectives 1-5)

Course Content

This course is an exploration of poetic forms and traditions from various cultures. The course will begin by building a strong foundation in the understanding of the relationship of poetic form to meaning by exploring the structural elements of poetry, such as rhythm, meter, metaphor, rhyme and repetition, and will then move into an overview of traditional verse forms, such as the sonnet, villanelle, sestina, ghazal and haiku. The rest of the semester will be devoted to the reading and discussion of poems from various time periods and cultures around the world, with consideration given to literary traditions and movements.

Recommended Texts

Washburn, Katharine, John S. Major and Clifton Fadiman, eds. *World Poetry: An Anthology of Verse from Antiquity to Our Time*. New York: Norton, 2000.
ISBN: 978-0679741152

Course Requirements

Participation

The primary focus of this course is the close examination of the literature that has been assigned. In order to gain the greatest understanding of the assigned readings, it is important that students come to class prepared and ready to discuss the material. This means making sure students have completed the assigned readings for each day before they arrive for class. **This is primarily a discussion class.** By talking about the literature, students are able to gain a deeper understanding of each work by finding out how each member of the class views and interprets it. Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in the discussion and other activities.

Written Work

There will be three essay exams in this course, including the final exam. In addition to the exams, students will be required to write a 7-10 page research paper. Students will also keep a reading journal in which responses to the works read each day will be written.

Evaluation of student performance in WRT-207 is based on the Student Learning Objectives. Students will show their achievement of these objectives through the following:

| Assignment Type | Recommended Percentage |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Exam 1 | 15% |
| Exam 2 | 15% |
| Final Exam | 20% |
| Research Paper | 25% |
| Journals | 10% |
| Participation | 15% |

| Recommended Grading Scale | |
|---------------------------|----|
| 100-90 | A |
| 89-85 | B+ |
| 84-80 | B |
| 79-75 | C+ |
| 74-70 | C |
| 69-60 | D |
| 59 and below | F |

Attendance Policy

BCC Attendance Policy: “All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.”

Recommended Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction: What is a Poem?

Structural Aspects of Poetry: Image and Metaphor / Meter and Rhyme

Week 2 Structural Aspects of Poetry Continued:

Patterns of Word, Phrase and Sound Repetition: Anaphora, Anadiplosis, Zeugma, Epanalepsis, Parallelism, Alliteration, Consonance, Assonance

Week 3 Traditional Poetic Forms –

The Sonnet: Shakespeare, Keats, Millay, Alarcon, Santayana
The Villanelle: Bishop, Roethke
The Sestina: Pound, Hecht

Week 4 Traditional Poetic Forms Continued

The Ghazal: Ghalib, Agha Shahid Ali
Haiku: Issa, Basho

Translation and Variation

Basho, Pessoa

Week 5

Poetry of Love:

Troubadour Lyric:

Jaufre Rudel, Arnaut Daniel, Guillelma de Rosers,
Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, Comtessa de Dia,

Songs of the Korean Kisaeng:

Hwang Jini, Im Je, Hongjang, Myongok, Kang Gangwol

Week 6

Poetry of Contemplation: Odes

“The Bamboos Grow Well Under Good Rule,”

“Shu is Away,” Lao-Tzu,

Horace

Contemplation and/or Sorrow: Elegies and Elegiac Modes

Hikmet, Ch’u Tz’u, Holderin

Week 7

Poetry of Adventure:

Lai from Marie de France

Ballad: Robert Service

Saga, from Egil’s Saga

Week 8

The Poetry of War and the Epic

from *The Iliad* of Homer

from *The Mahabharata*

Week 9

Poetry of Religious Devotion:

Psalms, Native American Songs and Prayers,

from Mayan: *Popol Vuh*

Philosophical Allegory & Doctrinal Allusions

from Attar, *Conference of the Birds*

Week 10

Modern Movements in the History of Poetry:

Dada, Surrealism, Modernism

Week 11

20th and 21st Century Works: The Poet and Social Conscience

Celan, Bei Dao, Pablo Neruda

Wisława Szymborska, Anna Akhmatova
Gwendolyn Brooks

Week 12 The Poet and Social Conscience Continued
Kommunyakka, Czesław Miłosz, René Depestre

Week 13 Hip-Hop, Rap and Slam
Public Enemy, Nas, Abd Al Malik, Def Jam Poets

Week 14 The Changing Poetic Landscape & Closing Thoughts