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CRWR 211.01: Intro to Poetry Workshop

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Introduction to Creative Writing: Poetry | CRWR 211.01

Spring 2019, T/Th 12:30-1:50 LA 105

Instructor: Riley Woods

Email: riley.woods@umontana.edu

Office: LA 230

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 11 to 12:30

Required Texts:

- Silent Anatomies by Monica Ong
- miscellaneous PDFs assigned and posted on Moodle

Course Description:

This class will be devoted to the study and writing of poems. We will learn to creatively and critically engage poems written by established poets, your peers, and yourself. The goal of this class is to discover how we digest the content of our lives, our thinking, our feeling, and our reading into a poem, as well as challenge preconceived notions of what poetry is and can be.

Learning Outcomes:

- Acquire foundational skills in reading, discussing, and writing poetry.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the terminology and concepts that apply to poetry.
- Practice the art of writing and revising poetry.
- Learn to critique the quality of one's own work and that of peers.

Attendance Policy:

Each student has three free absences (i.e. you don't have to email me, they will not affect your grade, and you should save them for illnesses or emergencies which will happen during the semester). The fourth and fifth absences will drop your final grade by ten percent (10%) each, thus twenty percent (20%) total. Your sixth absence will result in an F in the class.

If you miss the first two classes, you will need to drop the course on CyberBear and enroll in another semester. This is university policy and the reasoning behind it is that important groundwork for the semester is put in place in the first few class meetings.

Grading Breakdown:

—30% Participation (attendance, preparedness, verbal and written feedback on peers' work)

—20% Midterm Portfolio (6 poems and a written reflection)

—20% Final Portfolio (10 poems and a written reflection)

—15% Collection Report (one in-depth examination of a poetic work of your choice)

—15% Annotations (informal responses to the reading assignments)

PARTICIPATION:

Attendance is a necessity for this class. Attendance is not simply being present; attendance means showing up to class prepared, having read the readings and completed any and all writing assignments, and then thoughtfully contributing to the discussion and giving considerate, constructive criticism and/or praise to your peers' work during workshop. Lastly, we will meet twice for individual conferences. Missing your conference will count as an unexcused absence.

PORTFOLIOS:

Workshop poems (please include workshop drafts as well as newest drafts, and at least two of these poems should've undergone significant revision) and a reflective letter in which you discuss your poetic theories (I'll provide more details later in the semester).

COLLECTION REPORT:

The best way to study poetry is by reading poetry—and a lot of it. Early in the semester, I will provide a “suggested reading” list. Please select a collection of poems from this list (consider choosing a poet you haven't read before), read it independently, and complete a 3- page written reflection on it. I will hand out a more detailed assignment sheet. If you would like more detailed reading suggestions or if you would like to write about a collection not on this list, please see me in my office hours. (The Mansfield Library has a significant poetry section.)

ANNOTATIONS:

These are 300-500-word responses to a poem, series of poems, or poetics from the assigned reading for that day. You are to engage with the readings informally, approaching them as a poet or curious reader rather than a critic. You may choose to talk about the themes of the poem or its various meanings (what the poem is about), but more of your focus should be given to what craft elements draw your attention (think key terms), and why and how. Then you should talk about how you could use (imitate or steal) these moves you're observing for your own poetry. In short, talk about what you found interesting in the poem: an image, a metaphor, an idea, a comma or lack thereof, a line break, anything. I leave this open-ended because I want you to find your own way into and out of these poems.

Grading Policy:

Students enrolled in CRWR 211 are graded by the traditional letter grade A, B, C, D, F or are given NC for no credit. The NC grade does not affect grade point average. It is reserved for students who have worked unusually hard, attended class regularly and completed all assignments but whose skills are not at a passing level at the end of the semester.

Late Work:

Late work is not accepted and will not be graded. This class cannot operate if you turn in your work late; your peers need enough time to read and think about your work before workshop periods, and there is not enough time in the semester to guarantee flexibility in the schedule. If you know you are going to be absent, it is your responsibility to contact me to discuss your options. All work must be typed and printed to be considered on time.

Plagiarism Policy:

Plagiarism is defined in the UM Student Conduct Code as representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own. Consequences include failing an assignment, failing a course, or even expulsion.

Technology Policy:

Participation is a significant portion of your final grade, and participation requires active listening and engagement while you're in the classroom. Cell phone use will not be allowed during class. Occasionally, you may be allowed to use a laptop/tablet in class to look up a poem or other information online. At all other times, consider laptops/tablets to fall under the same policy as cell phones. If you have an extenuating circumstance that requires you to have your cell phone (or laptop/tablet) on or in use, I ask you to notify me before class.

Students with Disabilities:

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator.

Note:

This syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester. I will notify you verbally and in writing (via email or otherwise) if any changes to the syllabus occur.