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CRWR 211A.02: Introduction to Poetry Workshop

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CRWR 211A.02 | INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING: POETRY
SPRING 2018, MWF 10:00-10:50AM, LA 249

INSTRUCTOR: Anna Zumbahlen
EMAIL: anna.zumbahlen@umontana.edu

OFFICE: COR 254
OFFICE HOURS: Monday 11-2 or by appt.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

250 Poems: A Portable Anthology by Peter Schakel, Jack Ridl (ISBN: 1457636921)
—other PDFs (poem packets, essays, excerpts) 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.

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 constructively critique 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 couple class meetings.

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

- 35% Portfolio (all drafts and revisions of the poems written for class)
- 30% Participation (attendance, preparedness, verbal and written feedback on peers' work)
- 15% Collection Report (one in-depth examination of a poetic work of your choice)
- 15% Annotations (informal responses to the reading assignments)
- 5% Poem Memorization & Recitation (just one!)

PORTFOLIO: Workshop poems (please include workshop drafts as well as newest drafts, and at least two of these poems should've undergone significant revision); all prompt-poems from class; and a reflective letter in which you discuss your poetic theories, curiosities, and processes. In April, I'll provide more details.

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. (An introvert option is available; if you feel this applies to you, please see me for details.) Lastly, we will meet twice for individual conferences. Missing your conference will count as an unexcused absence.

COLLECTION REPORT: The best way to study poetry is by reading poetry—and a lot of it. During the first week of class, 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 500-700-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.

POEM MEMORIZATION: Memorize a poem from the anthology (at least fourteen lines) and recite it in class. I’ll hand out a more detailed assignment description.

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: You will not be prepared for discussion or you will not give your peers enough time to read and think about your poem. If you know you are going to be absent, it is your responsibility to contact me to see what you will be missing and what will be due when. **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.

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.

This syllabus is subject to change.