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ENLT 121L.80: Introduction to Poetry - Honors

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*Syllabus ENLT 121, Introduction to Poetry (text: Norton Introduction to Poetry)
Honors Section (Lit 80), Fall 2009*

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Purpose: As an introduction to poetry for undergraduates from across the university this course will seek to give you a lasting appreciation for poetry, and a grounding in the tradition out of which contemporary American poetry has emerged. Through close reading, lecture, and discussion you will be introduced to major elements in our literary tradition. Lecture and discussion will focus on the historical, social, and political contexts of the poets and poems we study, as well as on poetic form and diction. In addition, ENLT 121 places emphasis on aesthetic matters, on the importance of the role that the encounter with beauty plays in enabling humans to claim their social and ontological rights.

August 31st—September 11th--Two Examples of Early Poetry: Poems from the Shijing, and the poetry of Sappho. **Assignments: Explication (formal writing assignment), due: September 14th; Memorization, due: September 11th.**

September 14th—September 18th--The Japanese Haiku Masters Basho and Buson. **Assignment: Poem, due: September 21st:**

September 21st—October 2nd--Three Renaissance Poets: Donne, Shakespeare, and Herrick; **Memorization, due: October 2nd.**

October 5th—October 16th--Three Romantic Poets: Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley. **Writing Assignment: Analysis (formal writing assignment), due: October 19th.**

October 19th—October 23rd--The First of Two Great American Influences (Nineteenth Century): Dickinson; **Memorization, due: October 23rd.**

October 26th—October 30th--The Second of Two Great American Influences (Nineteenth Century): Whitman.

November 2nd—November 13th--From the Victorian into the Modern: Hopkins, Yeats, and Eliot. **Writing Assignment: Poem, due November 16th.**

November 16th—November 23rd--Two Great Modern American Influences: Williams and Stevens. **Writing Assignment: Analysis (formal writing assignment), due: November 30th.**

November 30th—December 11th--The Poetry of Experimentation and Beyond: Ginsberg, Volkman, Collins, and more. **Writing Assignment: Poem, due: December 11th; Memorization, due: December 11th.**

Memorizations: Starting on, Friday, September 11th, we will be doing presentations of memorized poems in class on the Fridays that end some units (four poems for the semester in total). You may choose any four poems from the Norton Introduction; however, one of the poems you choose must be at least fourteen lines long. In addition to presenting your memorization, you must do a brief oral report on the poet whose poem you have memorized. Although your memorizations won't be given letter grades, they will amount to 1/4 of your participation grade.

Computer Literacy Policy: All papers (with the exception of in-class writings) must be written on the computer.

"Smart Responses": From time to time I will assign you brief, informal responses to our readings (some in-class, some for homework); your aim should be to write smart things that will impress me. Although these informal writings won't be given letter grades, they will amount to 1/4 of your participation grade.

Revision Policy: You will be permitted to revise **one** of your three formal papers for a new grade.

Attendance Policy: All absences must be excused through email or phone messages. More than three unexcused absences will drop your grade one letter.

Final Exam: There will be a comprehensive final exam at the end of the semester (**on the last day of class, December 11th**); half of the exam will consist of short answers where you will be asked to match a poet with a specific statement, the other half will be a single essay response.

In-class Verbal Participation: Your response during class discussion will count for 1/4 of your participation grade.

Creative Work: Although the three poems you write for the class won't be given letter grades, they will amount to 1/4 of your participation grade.

Grading Breakdown: Explication: 20%; 1st Analysis: 20%; Second Analysis: 20%; Final Exam: 20%; Participation (memorizations, smart responses, poems, verbal responses): 20%.