

ENGLISH 156 INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

Instructor: Laurie Abel
Office: Paul Building Rm. 337
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 11:30-12:30
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Texts: Required Texts:
Gary Geddes, ed. 20th Century Poetry & Poetics Fourth Edition
Alberta Turner, To Make a Poem

Recommended
3-ring binder for notes and handouts

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the craft of poetry, consisting of discussion and in-class exercises on such basic elements as concreteness and abstraction, structure, rhythm, sound, meaning, and metaphor. To Make a Poem is a "how to" poetry book that will introduce you to these concepts. A typical class consists of a brief lecture, several poems that illustrate a specific poetic principle, an in-class exercise to try out the principle, and discussion about "what happened." It is expected you will bring To Make a Poem to every class in order to facilitate study.

20th Century Poetry & Poetics is an anthology of poetry and essays by poets that you will need to write your essay. Poems from the above texts, as well as photocopies of poems not in your text, will be studied in depth and discussed from the point of view of a writer rather than as a critic or literary historian. The focus will be on how poems are constructed and how they achieve their effects. Any poem from your texts or handouts discussed in class is eligible for inclusion on your final examination.

You will be required to write ten poems in response to the exercises that we begin in class (value 50%), a mid-term paper (20%) and a final examination (30%). You will be given detailed instructions for each of these components.

Your grade for written work will be based upon how well you have met the specific requirements of the assignment and how well you perform in such areas as imaginative content, the use of figurative language, diction, form, etc. Basic skills ... grammar, spelling and punctuation must be in place.

Some of the classes will be based on a discussion of student poems in order for you to become acquainted with the basics of criticism and the process of revision. Not every student will have his/her poems discussed in class and work that is discussed will remain anonymous. You will also take part in a number of peer critiques and will work with the same group of students throughout the semester.

Everyone learns differently. It is up to you to take an active part in the class and to make sure you are getting the nurturing, encouragement, criticism, evaluation, and information that you need. Class is 2:30 - 4:20. From time to time, I will require the whole group to attend until 4:20 so please do not schedule work or appointments in this time slot. Usually, however, I will dismiss the main group at 3:50, answer questions for 10 minutes, and then see scheduled students (one or two per day) for an individual consultation. All students will have a minimum of one consultation during the term and I will proceed alphabetically through the list. Consultations begin Tues. Jan. 15. Please bring in any work you would like to discuss, and questions that you have about the class or specific assignments.

Assignments and Evaluation

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| Ten assigned poems | 50% |
| Essay (5 pages not including Works Cited) | 20% |
| Exam | 30% |
| | 100 % |

Assignments

- Please keep copies of drafts as well as final poems. Sometimes I ask to see the process of the work, not just the final product.
- You should ALWAYS keep a copy of EVERYTHING you hand in for evaluation. I will not be responsible for work that disappears.
- You must complete all assignments and attend your one-on-one consultation to receive a grade in this course.
- Plagiarism will result in an automatic F grade for the work involved. See Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," in the Camosun College Calendar.

Attendance

Your attendance and participation are required. If you miss too many classes you will be asked to withdraw from the course. Assignments will not be accepted from students who miss more than 25% of classes.

Format Requirements for Assignments

1. All poems must be typed. (From time to time I also collect original hand-written material from in-class exercises.)
2. If a poem is longer than one page, please indicate at the bottom of page one if a stanza break occurs there, i.e. "no stanza break" or "stanza break."

3. In the left-hand corner, please include the number of the poem (Poem #1), your name, my name (Laurie Abel), English 156, and the date. As well, each poem should have a title, no matter how sketchy it is. (No separate title pages, please.)

4. All poems should be written in 12 pt. Font and Times New Roman style. Be sure your printer produces type at least as dark as the type on this page. Please double-space your poetry.