Objectives and Procedures

Course Purpose.
The purpose of English 318R is to explore our imaginative and interesting insights and to shape these into poems/poetry. Necessarily we will also study many contemporary poets to understand how they see the world and to compare their insights with our own. Why? Because what we see in our relatively short lifetimes is extremely limited; if we mesh our experiences with other viewpoints and opinions, we will probably grow in some measure. At the least we will have broadened our perspective about the world we live in.

Course Objectives:
1. to become acquainted with contemporary poetry
2. to learn and use the terminology associated with poetry—both in language and writing
3. to write and rewrite personal poetry in a writing community
4. to become excited about new ideas and insights discussed in a reading community
5. to explore our feelings, ideas, and insights through writing—responding to others’ poetry and our own.

Student Responsibilities:
0. You are responsible for all poetic terminology in our texts and discussions.
   1. You are responsible for reading, studying, and annotating all assigned readings prior to coming to class.
   2. You must carefully consider the writing assignments and their instructions as outlined in class.
   3. You are required to participate in regular in-class workshops and discussion groups.
   4. Although it is a courtesy to contact me by telephone or email if you’re going to miss class, I do not repeat missed class discussions. You must contact a classmate if you miss class to receive class notes or instructions.
   5. You are responsible to turn in materials on time. I do not accept late work. (Emergencies will be carefully scrutinized; however, farewells, weddins, home-comings, family engagements, roommate wars, etc., etc., are not emergencies). I do accept e-mailed assignments if they reach me before class begins—use these sparingly.
   6. You are required to spend 2 hours studying outside of class for every hour spent in the classroom. This is minimal.
   7. Perhaps the most relevant responsibility is the responsibility you have for your own education [as in this is your education]. Please learn to take responsibility for your weaknesses, your procrastination, your work or lack of work, your absences, your studies, and your health. Late nights and early mornings make poor bedfellows and great enemies.
   8. You must keep a poetry journal wherein you will document your study of our course work.

Grades:
Participation/workshops—daily.
Reading Quizzes—often (no makeups)
Oral Report
Journal Sections:
   1. Responses—to assigned poets/poems
   2. Papers (2)
   3. Word play/insight entries
   4. A poem/class meeting
   5. Four finished/revised poems

Journal:
You will be required to keep and regularly update a journal. You should bring this to class each time we meet. It will hold your responses, papers, journal entries, rough drafts, and polished gems. Although I will assign journal entries regularly, I will collect journals irregularly. Entries will consist of assigned and unassigned topics, insights you gain from studying assigned readings, your initial drafts, and revised poems.

Responses: due on the specific poet’s day. Example: Don Justice response is due January 16.

Caveat
I reserve the right to change the calendar or any part of the syllabus without notice (although I’ll rarely do this).

Each semester during our class someone becomes offended by something they’ve found in a poetry textbook. Although I try hard to steer clear of offensive items, it’s nearly impossible to choose a poetry text from available book lists that won’t have words or images that offend. Please forgive me if we discuss or read something that offends your sensibilities. If you take offense, and you’re too nervous to talk about that offense in class, please come see me or mail me and we’ll substitute other poems for offensive ones.

Calendar

Calendar Notes: We cannot possibly (nor would we want to) cover all the poetry. We’ll hit the important stuff. Occasionally I’ll provide outside material in handout form. These you should collect in section 4 of your journal.

Please note writing assignments at bottom of schedule.

January
7 W Roll call and introduction to course; texts; papers; responses; journals; questions. The study of poetry: reading, annotating, writing. Writing exercises.
9 F Writing ideas.
14 W Workshop poems. Style.
April
2  F  John Berryman. Workshop.
5  M  Stream Poem.
7  W  Li-Young Lee. Workshop.
9  F  Workshop.
12  M  Workshop.
14  W  Bill Knott. Workshop.

19  M  Portfolio swap and hand-in.

Writing Requirements:
Responses: One poem response required for each author.
Papers: 2 two-three page papers: one on your author’s poetry (not a biography), and one on any other author.

Poem-a-Day. This is a misnomer, but I like how it sounds. It’s really a poem each time we meet for class. You should be writing everyday, but the minimal requirement is a poem per class meeting.

Poetry journal. This is where you do your rough drafting, revising, thinking. I may never collect these, but I’ll see them as we workshop in class.

Poem Project. This one is a revision assignment. You will revise one of your poems (one of your four portfolio poems) from first draft to final, documenting with notes and drafts (numerous drafts) the changes you have made from inception to completion. Each change, no matter how insignificant, will be shown. Drafts should be numbered chronologically, logically.

Faculty Poetry Reading. You’ll be required to attend the spring faculty reading (or to view the tape after it’s finished).

318R Student Reading. This is just an idea, but we could put together a night or two or six during the semester, either here on campus or some place in town where you would showcase your writing. This is a good experience, but we wouldn’t require it for a grade?