

GRADUATE SEMINAR IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY POETRY

(This syllabus is online at: www.sjsu.edu/english/ENGLgreensheets/2016ENGLfall/index.html)

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English 211-1, W 4:00-6:45 p.m., Faculty Office Building (FOB) 104

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Hours: M 9:20–10:20 a.m.; W 2:50–3:50 p.m.; and Wednesday By Appointment

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Texts: *The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry*, 3rd ed., I
Hemingway, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories* (Scribner)
Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying* (Vintage)

Grading: There are two (2) graded assignments, as follows:

- One (1) short paper, 4-6 pages, explicating a poem listed on the Course Schedule (next page), ***excluding*** the following poems, which I will cover in class: Hardy, “Hap,” “The Convergence of the Twain,” and “The Oxen”; Yeats, “Leda and the Swan,” and “The Second Coming”; Frost, “After Apple-Picking,” “Birches,” and “Design”; Pound, “The River-Merchant’s Wife: A Letter,” and “In a Station of the Metro”; Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” and “The Fire Sermon” section of *The Waste Land*; Auden, “Who’s Who,” and “*Musée des Beaux Arts*”. The poem you choose to explicate must be by a poet ***not*** treated in your longer project. You will present your explication to the seminar (about 10-15 minutes). Please note: *present*, not *read*. I will provide you with example explication papers.

- One (1) longer paper, 13-15 pages, on: a) any poet on the syllabus, excluding the poet whose poem you explicated for the above assignment; b) any two poets from the syllabus (again, excluding the one treated in your explication); c) any two poets, one from the syllabus (excepting the one explicated) and one from *The Norton Anthology* that is appropriate to a comparative study; d) one of the poets not explicated and one of the prose fiction writers. Your paper may focus on any topic - chosen in consultation with me - and typically will treat 6 to 8 carefully selected poems that are representative of each poet under discussion. You certainly may discuss poems not listed on the syllabus or not included in the anthology. You may incorporate appropriate secondary sources, but only to augment - not supplant - your own analysis. Given the literary period covered in the seminar, strive to emphasize aesthetics in your discussion. Simply defined, “aesthetics” - as we will use the term in relation to poetry - relates to the craft or technique(s) of poetic composition, which does not preclude discussion of themes, a study of aesthetics being the focus of the *art* of the genre, its creative sources, its forms, and its *effects*. In lieu of a paper, you may write a selection of poems

- accompanied by an aesthetic statement - modeled on one of the six poets on the syllabus, except the one on which you wrote your explication.

The explication paper and presentation comprise 25% of your course grade; the longer project comprises the remaining 75%. The explication paper and your presentation of it are due the class meeting that the poem on which you write is scheduled for discussion. The longer project is due on or before our last class session, **December 7th**. These dates are absolute; please respect them. **Only hard copies of your assignments are acceptable; email attachments are not acceptable.** Please do not ask for special treatment of any kind. Especially do not ask to write on a poet other than as prescribed in the above paragraph. I have selected carefully the poets and poems listed on the schedule for their historic, aesthetic, and thematic significance. As is true of all academic endeavors of value, this course does not allow your choosing the means by which you are evaluated.

211-1 FALL 2016 COURSE SCHEDULE

Please read the biographical headnote and **all** of the selections contained in *The Norton Anthology* for Hardy, Yeats, Frost, Pound, Eliot, and Auden. In our seminar discussions, we will focus on the following poems:

Aug 24 Introduction to Modern Poetry

Aug 31/Sept 7 **Hardy**: “Hap,” “The Subalterns,” “The Darkling Thrush,” “The Respectable Burgher,” “The Ruined Maid,” “Channel Firing,” “The Convergence of the Twain”
Sept 7: “A Poet,” “The Oxen,” “For Life I Had Never Cared Greatly,” “Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave?,” “In Time of ‘The Breaking of Nations’,” and “I Looked Up from My Writing”

Sept 14, 21 **Yeats**: “The Lake Isle of Innisfree,” “The Sorrow of Love,” “When You Are Old,” “Adam’s Curse,” “The Magi,” “The Wild Swans at Coole,” “The Second Coming”
Sept 21: “Leda and the Swan,” “Sailing to Byzantium,” “Among School Children,” “Byzantium,” “The Circus Animals’ Desertion,” and “Under Ben Bulbin”

Sept 28/Oct 5 **Frost**: “Mending Wall,” “After Apple-Picking,” “The Wood-Pile,” “The Road Not Taken,” “Birches,” “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”
Oct 5: “Acquainted With the Night,” “Out, Out - ” “Two Tramps in Mud Time,” “Desert Places,” “Design,” and “Provide, Provide”

Oct 12 Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*

- Oct 19 Pound: “Poetics” (*Norton*): “Blast” section, pp. 895-920; “A Retrospect,” pp. 929-938. Pound’s Poems: “Portrait d’une Femme” “The River-Merchant’s Wife: A Letter,” “In a Station of the Metro,” and “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley: Life and Contacts”
- Oct 26/Nov 2 Eliot: “Poetics” (*Norton*): “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” pp.941-947. Eliot’s Poems: “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” “Sweeney Among the Nightingales” “Gerontion”
Nov 2: “Journey of the Magi,” and *The Waste Land*
- Nov 9, 16 The Hemingway Code (handout); “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”
Nov 16: “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber”
- Nov 23 Non-Instructional Day (Thanksgiving Holiday)
- Nov 30/Dec 7 Auden: “Who’s Who,” “As I Walked Out One Evening,” “Lullaby,” “*Musée des Beaux Arts*,” “In Memory of W. B. Yeats”
Dec 7: “The Unknown Citizen,” “In Praise of Limestone,” and “The Shield of Achilles”
- Final Paper Due on or Before December 7th.**
- Dec 14 Final Examination (Meeting), Wednesday, Dec. 14th 5:15–7:30 p.m.