

Carleton University\*  
Fall 2016  
Department of English

**ENGL 3601: Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Poetry**

*Prerequisite(s): 1.0 credit in ENGL at the 1000 level and third-year standing or permission of the department*

**Day and Time: M, W: 4:00-5:30**

**Location: 415 SA**

**Instructor: Prof. Brenda Vellino**

**Email: Brenda.vellino@carleton.ca**

**Office: 1815 Dunton Tower**

**Phone: x2321**

**Office Hours: Tues: 3-5, by appointment**

**\*on unceded Algonquin territory**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

For the poetry lover, the poetry shy, and the poetry hater. This course takes on W.H. Auden's famously misunderstood pronouncement that "poetry makes nothing happen." Poets of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have been on the front lines of literary and social revolution and renovation. These include the British WW I trench poets who challenged "the old lie" of patriotic military nationalism; the London, Paris and American "free versifiers" who did away with the "tic toc" of metered poetry; "New Women" gender and sexuality reformers; race equality advocates of the Harlem Renaissance; Beat Bohemians and nonconformist Confessionals of the 50s and 60s; Postcolonial and Indigenous dissenters from the Caribbean, Ireland, and Canada; Migrant and Refugee Poets; Eco-Poets and Climate Change Poets; and finally contemporary artists who take their words to the stage and streets via hiphop, spoken word, and slam poetry. Come participate in the debates about whether poetry indeed makes something happen.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

- Course Participation: 10%
- Poetry Worksheet: **Due Sept. 14** 10%
- Four Reading Responses: (5 marks each) 20%
- Two Working Group Assignments:(15 marks each; **Due Sept. 28, Nov. 2**) 30%
- Alternative Final Exam: Summative Course Reflection Narrative: 30%

**Course Text: Purchase this used at Haven Books or online (Abebooks.ca) or at Chapters/Indigo for best prices.**

Geddes, Gary, ed. *Twentieth-Century Poetry and Poetics*. 5th ed. Toronto: Oxford, 2006.\*

\*If you buy this second-hand, **you must get the 5<sup>th</sup> edition, published in 2006**. Earlier editions will be missing some of the poems we will study.

**\*\*You must have a print copy of the text in class for participation marks**

## COURSE READING SCHEDULE

**Wed. Sept. 7:** Introduction: How Do We Know a Poem When We See One?

### MODERNISMS

**Mon. Sept. 12: World War One Poets:** Wilfred Owen: “Anthem for Doomed Youth” pp. 106-110; ee. cummings: “my sweet old etcetera,” “i sing of olaf,” p. 128, 132, 133; Poetics: cummings, “Three Statements,” p. 966.

**Wed. Sept. 14: POETRY WORKSHEET DUE IN CLASS:** Wilfred Owen: “Dulce et Decorum Est” – p. 110

**Mon. Sept. 19: Imagism, Gender, and Modernism I:** Ezra Pound: “Portrait D’une Femme,” “The Garden,” “Commission” “In the Station of the Metro,” “Alba,” “L’Art 1910” pp. 20-26; William Carlos Williams: 34-44; Poetics: Pound “A Retrospect (p. 881); Williams, “A New Measure” (p. 925).

**Wed. Sept. 21:** T.S. Eliot: “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” 90-95; Poetics: Tradition and the Individual Talent, “From Hamlet and his Problems” (p. 809, p. 981)  
**Group A: Reading Response 1 Due**

**Mon. Sept. 26: Gender & Modernism II:** H.D., “Sea Rose,” “Garden,” “Helen,” “Fragment 113” pp. 76-81; Gertrude Stein, “I love my love with a v” (Cu-learn); Stein Bio: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/gertrude-stein>  
**Group B: Reading Response 1 Due**

**Wed. Sept. 28: Working Group Assignment 1: Group 1:** Yeats, “Leda and the Swan”; **Group 2:** H.D., “Tribute to the Angels”(p. 87); **Group 3:** Amy Lowell, “The Weathercock Points South ((Cu-learn); **Group 4:** Edna St. Vincent Millay: “Oh, oh, you will be sorry for that word!” (Cu-learn); Millay biography: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/edna-st-vincent-millay>

**Mon. Oct. 3: The Harlem Renaissance:** Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Claude McKay (Cu-Learn)

**Group A: Reading Response 2 Due**

Wed. Oct. 5: **The Harlem Renaissance:** Georgia Douglas Johnson, Helene Johnson, Gwendolyn Brooks (Cu-Learn)

**Group B: Reading Response 2 Due**

**Mon. Oct. 10: Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Wed. Oct. 12: Class cancelled for Yom Kippur observance.**

### POSTMODERNISM

**Mon. Oct. 17: Beat Poets:** Allen Ginsberg: 375-387; **Poetics:** Ginsberg, p. 986; Lawrence Ferlinghetti: "In Goya's Greatest Scenes," "Constantly Risking Absurdity," "Junkman's Obligato," "Modern Poetry is Prose" pp. 363-373; Leonard Cohen, "You Have the Lovers," "The Genius," "Style" "Disguises," "How to Speak Poetry" pp. 456-468. Also see "Suzanne Takes You Down": <http://hellopoetry.com/leonard-cohen/>

**Group A: Reading Response 3 Due**

**Wed. Oct. 19: Meet at Carl. University Art Gallery,** lower level St. Patrick's Building; "We Are Continuously Exposed to the Flashbulb of Death: The Photos of Allen Ginsberg": Exhibit @ Carleton University Art Gallery: optional 2+ points extra credit written response assignment (300- 500 words)

**Oct. 20-25: Attend an Ottawa Writer's Fest event and write a response paper (300-500 words): +2 pts. extra credit.**

**Fall Break Week: Oct. 24- 28**

**Mon. Oct. 31: The Confessionals & Post-Confessionals:** Robert Lowell, "Skunk Hour," p. 226-227, 236; Sylvia Plath: "Daddy," "The Colossus," "The Disquieting Muses," "Ariel" 440-455; **Poetics:** Plath Interview: p. 1036-1038.

**Group B: Reading Response 3 Due**

**Wed. Nov. 2: Working Group Assignment 2: Group 1:** Plath, "Lady Lazarus," p. 446-449 **Group 2:** Adrienne Rich, "Frame" pp. 331-333, 345-346; **Group 3:** Hass: "A Story About the Body" p. 683, 686; **Group 4:** Bronwen Wallace, "Thinking With the Heart" (p. 840); **Poetics:** Adrienne Rich: 1058-1061.

**Mon. Nov. 7: "Open Field Composition & " L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Poetry:** bp nichol: p. 609-618; **Poetics:** Olson p. 1027; Marlatt: p. 1019-1022

**Wed. Nov. 9: bp Nichol: The Canadian Long Poem: "Continental Trance":** p. 619-634; **Poetics:** 1022-1026; **Group A: Reading Response 4 Due**

**Mon. Nov. 14: Afro-Caribbean Postcolonial Poetry: Derek Walcott**, p. 506-524;  
**Dionne Brand**, from Inventory: <https://canpoetry.library.utoronto.ca/brand/poem2.htm>  
**Group B: Reading Response 4 Due**

**Wed. Nov. 16: Irish Postcolonial Poetry: Seamus Heaney**: “Digging,” “Requiem for the Croppies,” “Bogland,” “Bog Queen” and “From the Frontier of Writing” 580-591; **Poetics**: p. 988.

**Mon. Nov. 21: Migrant, Refugee, Diaspora, Exile Poetry:**

<http://www.warscapes.com/poetry/refugees-some-poems>

Mahmoud Darwish (Palestinian); Warsan Shire (Somali):

<http://www.warscapes.com/poetry/refugees-some-poems>

\*Naomi Shihab Nye (Palestinian): “Gate A-4”:

<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/gate-4>

\*Tenzin Tsundue (Tibetan): “Refugee,” “Exile House,” “Tibetan in Mumbai”:

<https://www.tenzintsundue.com/poems>

**Wed. Nov. 23: Indigenous Poetry**

\***Rita Joe**, (Mi’kmaq) “Your Buildings”:

<https://womenmakingwaves.wordpress.com/2009/06/22/national-aboriginal-day-june-21-2009/>

\***Rebecca Thomas** (Mi’Kmaq), “Living Treaties”:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/rebecca-thomas-poet/living-treaties/1037794079646886>

\***Lee Maracle** (Sto:Lo First Nation, Coast Salish Territory): “Blind Justice”:

<http://decolonization.org/index.php/des/article/view/19622/16245>

\***Marilyn Dumont** (Cree-Metis), “The Land She Came From”:

<http://arcpoetry.ca/2014/04/21/national-poetry-month-marilyn-dumont-the-land-she-came-from/>

\***Rosanna Deerchild** (Cree), “We are Just”: <http://puritan-magazine.com/we-are-just/>

\***Gregory Scofield** (Cree-Metis), “She is Spitting a Mouthful of Stars”:

<https://thewalrus.ca/she-is-spitting-a-mouthful-of-stars-nikwis-song/>

**Mon. Nov. 28: Post-Pastoral Poetry:** Robert Frost: “Birches,” “Stopping by Woods,” “Acquainted with the Night,” “Desert Places,” “Design,” pp. 46-56; **Poetics**: Frost p. 983-985

**Wed. Nov. 30: Contemporary Eco-Poetry**

\*Gary Snyder; "Piute Creek" and "Riprap" pp. 406-410; **Poetics**: Snyder p. 1065

\* **Poetics**: Don McKay, p. 1018 (Geddes)

\***Don Mckay poems: "Astonished," "Petrified": from Strike/Slip, Griffin Poetry**

**Prize: <http://www.griffinpoetryprize.com/see-and-hear-poetry/h-n/don-mckay/>**

\***"Song for the Song of the White-Throated Sparrow":**

**<https://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/QWERTY/Qweb/QWERTY/qspring/don1.htm>**

**\*One page extra credit +2 pts: introduction and nomination of favourite spoken word/hiphop poems due!**

**Mon. Dec. 5: Climate Change Poetry**

**See poems from The Guardian Climate Change Poetry series:**

\*Jackie Kay, "Extinction"

\* Imtiaz Dharker, "X"

\* Carol Ann Duffy, "Keep It in the Ground":

**<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/series/keep-it-in-the-ground-a-poem-a-day>**

\*Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Poem for UN Climate Summit 2014, "Dear Matafele Peinam":

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation\\_id=annotation\\_3776613377&feature=iv&src\\_vid=L4fdxXo4tnY&v=mc\\_IgE7TBSY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_3776613377&feature=iv&src_vid=L4fdxXo4tnY&v=mc_IgE7TBSY)**

\*Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, "Spoken Word Poetry vs. Page Poetry":

**<https://jkijiner.wordpress.com/2014/03/25/spoken-word-poetry-vs-page-poetry/>**

**Wed. Dec. 7: : Spoken Word/Hiphop Poetry: Nominations welcome**

**Fri. Dec. 9: Last Class: Spoken Word/Hiphop Poetry: Nominations Welcome**

**Exam Period: Final Reflection Response for Course: Due at scheduled exam time in exam room: TBA**

**WORKSHEET: How Poems Work**

This assignment is designed to give students a practice workshop on close analysis of poetry and on using some of the relevant terminology from your "literary toolbox." Part of training your eyes and ears to be attentive to how poems work will involve learning how to meaningfully recognize and apply poetry terms. This will be foundational for all other assignments in the course.

See CU-Learn for the Worksheet Template and Guiding Questions.

**Step 1:** Practicing literary annotation or graffiti: Photocopy your poem and read carefully to yourself and out loud with a pencil or highlighter in your hand, underlining or circling key imagery, outstanding diction, key sound patterns. Look up any words or references that are unfamiliar and write down the definition. Write marginal notes on key questions, poetic terms, and themes in the margins. I will provide an example of a poetry annotation.

**Step 2:** Consult the Worksheet Guiding Questions and the Further Resources for prompts on the elements of the poem that create meaning (speaker, tone, stanza divisions, key images, diction, alliteration, assonance, rhyme or other sound patterns, figurative language like personification, metaphor, and simile).

**Step 3:** Type in your insights into the relevant sections in the Poetry Worksheet template.

**Step 4:** Bring both your annotated poem and your typed poetry worksheet to class for submission at the end of class discussion.

**Further Resources: “How to Read a Poem”:** <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/how-read-poem-0>

**\*Glossary of Poetic Terms:**

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/resources/learning/glossary-terms>

**You may also request an extra tutoring session with me for tips on close reading poetry.**

**\*Proper Citation Practices Required!** If you consult any sources, including web sources, you must provide a Works Cited and indicate your sources with parenthetical citation.

## **READING RESPONSES**

The goal of this assignment is to provide you with an informal space to respond to the poets of the week. Your responses may engage questions, issues, problems, personal interests in or disagreement with the weekly readings. In other words, speak your mind, give your gut response, but do it thoughtfully. Strong responses will go into depth with specific poems or make comparative connections between poets, poems, and poetics. Engage. React. Challenge. **Creative formats are most welcome.** Please offer your poems, songs, collages, paintings, and other visual responses!

**\*\*You will be divided into an A or B group and will respond in alternating weeks to the weekly readings except on the days when Working Group assignments are due.**

**Format:** Responses should be 500-750 words double-spaced and typed unless they are in creative format. Creative format responses should be accompanied by a two-paragraph explanation of the connection to the weekly readings.

## WORKING GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

This small group work requires some out of class preparation and allows students to develop their close reading and analysis skills while benefiting from the insights of their peers. Early in the term, I will divide students into four working groups. If I assign you to Group 1, you will be working on the “Group 1” assigned poem for each working group week. I will post your working groups on Cu-learn.

**Step 1:** For each of the two working group classes, each group will be assigned a focus poem as indicated in the course calendar. Each student should photocopy and annotate your focus poem as you did for your worksheet.

**Step 2:** Based on annotation notes, each student should prepare two questions that he, she, or they believe are central to understanding the poem’s themes, issues, imagery, diction, or form. Questions could link some aspect of the poet’s social context or poetics with the poem to be discussed. For each of your questions, students will then prepare two - three paragraph answers. These answers will be in short essay form with a topic sentence and detailed discussion of specific lines of the poem (using direct quotation). Again if students consult secondary research, they must use proper documentation with a Works Cited. Research is not required for this assignment, but it is allowed.

**Step 3: Bring your typed questions and responses to class.** You will meet with your working group to discuss your responses. Each member of the group should ask one of his or her questions, getting feedback from the group and taking notes on new ideas from group members. He or she should also share his own answer when everyone has had a turn. When the discussion winds down, move onto the next person and their question. Make sure everyone in the group has a chance to present at least one question. The discussion should be as free and creative as possible, allowing room for tangents and respectful differences of opinion. One person will be a note-taker for the group and be prepared to report your insights to the larger class if time permits.

**Step 4: Please hand in your annotated poems and question-answer papers with your class notes at the end of class.**

**\*The average length of this assignment should be 4 pages (1000 words), double-spaced and typed.**

### **Alternative Final Exam: Summative Course Reflection Narrative & Oral Presentation\***

This exam prioritizes student-centred learning and peer learning. Your summative course reflection narrative is a culminating exercise in which members of the class first prepare an individual exam paper, then come together to offer key insights to each other on what each is taking away from this course in five minute oral presentations based on a prepared exam paper. This exam underscores my pedagogical belief that learning is both an individual and collective endeavour and that the context for your learning in this course is not solely the Prof., but rather the entire community of your classmates.

This assignment invites you to take responsibility for your learning journey in this course. It thus asks you to identify what has been most interesting or meaningful about the modernist and contemporary poets you have encountered and to write a short exam paper based on your own narrative of the course. On one level, you will do a similar kind of **connecting the dots exercise** that you might do by reviewing and **making connections between texts** on the course for a more traditional essay exam question assigned by your Prof. and written in an exam room. However, this is a more student-centred approach in which each student creates a personal learning narrative without the timed writing exam room stress.\*\*

\*Please note that the oral presentation can only improve your grade on the written assignment, not detract from it.

\*Please note that accommodations for the oral presentation component are available for students who experience presentation anxiety on a case-by-case basis. For those students, you will need to let me know prior to the exam, be present in the exam room to listen to your classmates, and present individually to me in my office.

For your exam prep, you will do the following:

- Review the course materials
- Develop **summary notes** on key poets, strategies, and issues that most interested you
- Prepare a **short essay exam paper** (1250 words) that makes connections between one or two important themes from among the poets we read this term.
- Prepare talking points on cue cards or a summary sheet to bring on the exam date (TBA) to share with your classmates in a **five-minute oral presentation**.

**What to bring to the exam:**

- **Your exam paper to hand in.**
- **Five index cards or one page of selected summary notes/talking points that you would like to share with the class in a five minute oral presentation.**

**Further Instructions:**

- You may wish to identify one or two main patterns, themes, or connections between questions or issues that stand out for you from the course readings, lectures, and discussions. You might also wish to consider themes, issues or questions that the course lectures and discussion did not cover, but that you found to be interesting in several of the poets on the course.
- Please refer to at least **five specific texts** for your **specific examples** representing **five different weeks** of the term to support your points. **The more specific you can be in a concise way, the stronger your paper will be.** You may pursue several different topics or themes using two or three texts for illustration of your points and then turn to a second cluster of texts to illustrate a second topic or theme. Or you may find a theme that connects all five of the texts that you wish to discuss.



- **As always if you consult a secondary source, including lecture notes, you must indicate your sources in both parenthetical citation and works cited.**
- Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, punctuation, missing words, awkward sentences, typos etc.!! Writing and presentation counts.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance and Participation:** Class works when you do. Active participation is essential. I define class participation as both physical and mental presence in class, evidenced by preparedness, engagement, and willingness to take risks. Students are required to **bring the poetry anthology or print out readings posted to cu-learn or on-line and bring to class** so that you come prepared to contribute. **You may have four grace absences for sickness, emergencies or appointments.** Budget them well. Extend me the courtesy of letting me know when you will need to be absent. Life is unpredictable, so if you do have a difficulty of any kind this term, please keep me in the loop and let me know how I may be of help. Students sometimes make the mistake of not talking to Profs when issues come up.

**\*\*Students missing more than 50% of the course will be advised to withdraw from the course or risk failure.**

**Device Free Classroom: No laptops, Cell phones, Tablets, or e-readers:** In this class, we will give ourselves the gift of being distraction free so we can focus on the readings and discussion. I know this will be an adjustment for many of you, but the word on the street tells me that most that most of what goes on on screens in the classroom is not related to coursework (you all know what I'm talking about). This means that all devices will stay in your school bags and off your desktops.

**Exceptions:** The only students allowed to use laptops will be those with special permission from me for note-taking purposes.

**Late Assignment Policy: In order to pass this course, you must complete ALL assignments and hand them in on time.** Extensions must be arranged in person with me (for illness or other difficult circumstances only) in advance of the due date. Assignments handed in late without prior arrangement will be docked two points per day with a weekend counting as one day.

**Plagiarism:** Academic honesty is considered the ground rule of any university course. Plagiarism is defined in the "Academic Regulations of the University: Instructional Offences" section of the *Carleton Undergraduate Calendar* as "using and passing off as one's own ideas the work of someone else without expressly giving credit to another." If you find yourself tempted to use someone else's work because of stress, illness, anxiety about your own ability, personal crisis, time crisis, or any other issues, I urge you to let me know about these circumstances, so that we can work together to create the space and means for you to do work of the highest integrity.

**Please ensure that all sources (including biographical and internet) used in reading responses and working group assignments are properly credited.** Grey areas of plagiarism sometimes arise from confusion about what counts as putting things in your own words or paraphrase. If you change a word or two in a critic's sentence, this is *not* paraphrase. Put altered words in brackets and put the whole sentence in quotes. If I suspect that any portion of your writing has been plagiarized, I am required to submit the writing to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. The penalties for plagiarism are very severe, ranging from failure in the course to expulsion from the university. See **“How Not to Plagiarize:** [www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html](http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html)

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

**For Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities, including mental health disabilities, requiring academic accommodations must contact a co-ordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary *Letters of Accommodation*. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible. [www.carleton.ca/pmc](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc)

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should contact their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, but no later than two weeks before a due date. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

## STUDENT SERVICES

**Writing Services:** If you know your writing needs improvement, do consider free tutoring with this service. <https://carleton.ca/csas/writingservices/>

**Carleton Health and Counselling Services** offers confidential consultations with medical doctors, lab testing, and emotional support for difficult times from Monday to Friday, 8:30-4:30. They are located in the Carleton Technology Building on the east side of campus. Check out their website at <https://carleton.ca/health/contact/>

\*Also check out the Student Alliance for Mental Health: <http://www.samhcarleton.com/>