

# Introduction to Poetry

LIT 120, Section 02  
Fall, 2016

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## Description

An introduction to reading and writing about poems, with emphasis on the lyric and other shorter forms. Goals: (1) enhanced appreciation of poetry and of creative language, (2) knowledge of different forms and genres of poetry, (3) understanding types of poetic language and its ways of conveying meaning, (4) knowledge of terms and concepts important for understanding and discussing poems, (5) ability to identify themes, tactics, and meanings in poems, (6) ability to interpret poems coherently, (7) proficiency in writing clear and cogent critical essays, (8) insight into several cultural areas often explored in poetry, (9) knowledge of the work of several important poets.

## Text

Meyer, *Poetry: An Introduction*, Seventh Edition (Bedford/St. Martin's)

## Exams

There will be a midterm and a final that will cover primarily the second half of the course. There will also be occasional pop quizzes over readings.

## Writing

Four essays will be assigned, three of which will be formal critical essays. Near the end of the semester you will revise one of the earlier essays for a new grade. You will also write five informal response papers. See Writing Outcomes below. Plagiarized papers will fail and their authors dismissed from the course. (See policy statements on page 3.)

## Attendance

After four unexcused absences your grade will decline. A note from a doctor or some other relevant professional is needed for an absence to be excused. The midterm and final exams must be taken as scheduled.

## Discussion

It is important to join in discussions occasionally, if only to ask questions.

## Grading

Writing—50%, Tests—40%, quizzes—10%; semester grades are likely to be enhanced for students who consistently contribute to class discussions.

## Writing Outcomes

1. Student writing will show understanding of the major characteristics of the dominant genres (poetry, fiction, and drama), utilizing those characteristics to analyze individual examples.
2. Students will state clearly the central themes, concepts, and ideas governing a work of literature and then, as a separate but related act, to evaluate their literary importance and/or cultural significance.
3. Students will engage thoughtfully with a range of perspectives on controversial issues, including an ability to state clearly the assumptions and premises of their own position.
4. Students will be able to perform a literary close reading, demonstrating an ability to insightfully interpret literary texts by thoughtfully integrating quoted passages into the larger argumentative claims of an essay.
5. Students will be able to write clear, grammatically consistent, and rhetorically effective papers, driven by a thesis and sustained by an ordered, coherent argument or sequence of ideas.
6. Students will support their literary research with access to academic information resources provided by the library and will include both in-text citations and a bibliography of sources that adheres to the MLA style of documentation.

## Policy Statements

Add-Drop Deadlines and Incompletes: For details of important dates and deadlines, please see: [http://www.umt.edu/registrar/documents/\\_notes/Important%20Dates%20201130.pdf](http://www.umt.edu/registrar/documents/_notes/Important%20Dates%20201130.pdf)

Disability Accommodation: Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodations for coursework. To request accommodation, please contact me as soon as possible in the semester. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at <http://www.umt.edu/dss/> or call 406.243.2243 (Voice/Text).

Plagiarism: From the UM catalog: "Plagiarism is the representing of another's work as one's own. It is a particularly intolerable offense in the academic community and is strictly forbidden. Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion." Plagiarism means using someone else's ideas, organization, and/or wordings as one's own.

