



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
20th English Language Poetry: Figures, Movements, Modes	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Coordinator: Dr. Rimas Užgiris	Department of English Philology Faculty of Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
Semester 2 (Year 1)	Optional

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Lectures and interactive seminars	Spring Semester	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: Language of instruction is English	Additional requirements (if any): None

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	150	32	118

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed

In this MA seminar, we will track the course of English language poetry through the 20th c. This is easier said than done, as such a project should include the literary traditions of Great Britain, Ireland, the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, not to forget the former colonies either in which English is one of the official languages, and this would include various islands of the West Indies, India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya. Poets from all of these diverse places are united by their use of English and its poetic traditions rooted on an island in the North Atlantic, but they are also differentiated by their different colonial experience and the particular cultures that existed and developed in those places. English literature is thus very much a world literature. The question, then, is how to proceed with its study. Schools and movements of poetry are derivative constructs. What is primary is the poem and the body of work produced by the poet. Due to the aesthetic quality and influence of certain poems, certain poets can be thought of as “canonical”: they are poets whose work one should not fail to know in trying to comprehend 20th c. English language poetry. I will thereby proceed by means of canonical authors (as they appear at the moment), in rough chronological order. In the process of looking at their work, we will discuss movements, schools, trends, continuities and disruptions, formal innovations and continuities, as well as nationality, colonialism, and post-colonial culture.

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will develop critical and comparative skills, making connections across authors and singling out differences; this transferable skill will also help them handle the complexity of the outside world.	Interactive seminars. Before each seminar students will read the poetic texts and the secondary literature from the Primary (Compulsory) list; before each seminar, the students will hand in a brief essay discussing a poem from the weekly reading.	Weekly analysis of a poem Academic paper
Students will learn how to analyse and critically read poetic texts	Tutorials/interactive seminars weekly analysis of a poem	Weekly analysis of a poem Academic paper
Students will learn practical research skills: to search for secondary sources, to compile a bibliography framed around a research question, to confidently assess the views of literary critics, and to plan and write an academic essay.	Tutorials/self-study. Students will develop a research question for their final essay, and show the teacher their bibliography and essay plan.	Weekly analysis of a poem Academic paper

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours						Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship / work	Contact hours	Self-study hours
								Assignments

					r k	r k p l a c e m e n t		r s	
1. Introduction to the course. Precursors to Modernism: Whitman, Dickinson, Hopkins, Hardy and Victorian poetry in general			2				2	2	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
2. The first round of modernism, the leaders: T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
3. The first round of modernism, imagism: William Carlos Williams and HD			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
4. The first round of modernism: Wallace Stevens and Marianne Moore			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
5. The first round of modernism, regionalism and formalism: William Butler Yeats, Robert Frost			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
6. The first round of modernism, the city and alternate identities: Hart Crane and Langston Hughes			2				2	8	Reading the poems and contributing to the discussion

7. Modernism and the retrenchment of poetic form: W.H. Auden and Dylan Thomas			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
8. Modernism extended, surrealism and confessionalism: Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Lowell			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
9. Modernism extended, confessionalism and a return to nature: Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
10. Modernism extended, the bitter, troubled persona at the heart of the poem: John Berryman, Phillip Larkin			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
11. Post-modern beginnings, the New York School: John Ashbery, Frank O'Hara			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
12. Post-modern nature poetry and post-modern formalism: A.R. Ammons and James Merrill			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
13. Post-colonialism: Derek Walcott, Juan Felipe Herrera			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion

14. Post-colonialism and feminism: Seamus Heaney and Adrienne Rich			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
15. The contemporary free-verse poem: Louise Glück and W.S. Merwin			2				2	8	Reading the poems, critical material, and contributing to the discussion
16. Writing an academic paper on poetry			2				2	4	Writing an outline for the final academic paper
Total	150		32				32	118	

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Weekly Close Readings	30%	Weekly	A short write up of one poem or a section of a longer poem involving some close reading, aesthetic appreciation and contextualizations. 200-300 words. The goal is for each student to find something in the weekly readings to look at closely and discuss. I will only count the top 10 grades of a student's weekly write-ups, meaning some can be missed. I also offer the possibility of a 10 minute oral presentation of a poem in lieu of 2 weekly write-ups, for this is an important skill as well.
Academic Paper	70%	June	An 8-12 page academic paper on one or more of the poets we have studied in class, involving close reading of poems, use of scholarly secondary sources, and some contextualization or comparison with other poets.

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house
Compulsory reading: primary texts (selected poems from each collection)				

Students will receive internet links, or electronic documents with poems from each of the authors listed above. There will be 30-40 pp. of Word doc. reading each week. Students will also receive electronic selections of books or articles that discuss the poets we are reading for that week, or essays by those poets themselves.				Poetry Foundation.org Poets.org Poetry Archive.org
Compulsory reading: secondary sources (selected chapters/sections)				
Jennifer Ashton (Ed.)	2013	<i>The Cambridge Companion to American Poetry Since 1945</i>		CUP
Vernon Shetley	1993	<i>After the Death of Poetry</i>		Duke University Press
David Lehman	1999	<i>The Last Avant-Garde</i>		Anchor Books
Dennis O’Driscoll	2008	<i>Stepping Stones: Interviews with Seamus Heaney</i>		FSG
Gioia, Mason, Schoerke (Eds.)	2004	<i>Twentieth Century American Poetics</i>		McGraw-Hill
A. David Moody (ED.)	1994	<i>The Cambridge Companion to T.S. Eliot</i>		CUP
Stephen Burt	2016	<i>the poem is you: 60 Contemporary American Poems and How to Read Them</i>		Harvard University Press
William Meredith	1991	<i>Poems Are Hard to Read</i>		University of Michigan Press
Neil Corcoran (Ed.)	2008	<i>Cambridge Companion to Twentieth Century English Poetry</i>		CUP
Louise Glück	1994	<i>Proofs & Theories: Essays on Poetry</i>		Ecco Press
Optional reading: secondary sources (selected chapters/sections)				
John Carey	2020	<i>A Little History of Poetry</i>		Yale University Press
Harold Bloom	2004	<i>The Art of Reading Poetry</i>		Harper Collins
Daniel Tobin	1999	<i>Passage to the Center: Imagination and the Sacred in the Poetry of Seamus Heaney</i>		University Press of Kentucky

This course unit description was revised and updated on February 1, 2021.

Dalyko aprašas atnaujintas 2021-02-01.