

**ENGLISH 286  
POETRY**

**BULLETIN INFORMATION**

ENGL 286 – Poetry (3 credit hours)

**Course Description:**

Poetry from several countries and historical periods, illustrating the nature of the genre.

Prerequisites: ENGL 101 and 102 or equivalent

**SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW**

An introduction to poetry, this course will emphasize the reading, understanding, and analysis of English-language poetry. Students will learn to discern how poets use form, sound and rhythm, and figurative language to communicate their meanings, and to advance their skills in interpreting this highly-compressed form of communication.

**ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Upon successful completion of English 286, students will be able to:**

1. Describe the fundamental elements of poems as an artistic and literary form
2. Apply concepts and techniques for analyzing poetry in terms of style, period, and composition
3. Discuss specific genres of poetry from major practitioners and various historical periods
4. Interpret and appreciate the meanings of poems through close reading
5. Write effective analytical essays interpreting literary texts.

**SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS**

1. *Poetry: A Pocket Anthology*, 6th edition (only!), edited by R.S. Gwynn.
  - a. Students must bring this textbook to every class meeting. The assignments below simply list the beginning page numbers for the section to be read; unless otherwise indicated, students should read all selections in the given section or by the given author.

**SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAM**

1. **Examinations:** The midterm and final examinations will feature a combination of short-answer questions concerning both the elements of poetry (“technique”) and the specific poems introduced and discussed in class, and a short poem for instant analysis (i.e., several short-answer questions).
2. **Quizzes and Exercises:** There will be four brief reading-knowledge quizzes in the first half of the term, covering the most important elements of poetry presented in R.S. Gwynn’s “Introduction.” There will be four home-work “exercises” distributed and

completed in the second half of the term; the purpose of these exercises is to reinforce the students' understanding of central poetic techniques as they complete their course papers and prepare for the final examination.

- 3. Paper:** Each student will submit a brief paper (c. 4pp, 1000 words): an explication of an assigned poem. Outside research (print or on-line) will not be necessary for this paper; in fact, it will inevitably detract from your grade

### **SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS**

- Week 1:** (Introductory)  
Anonymous ballads (59) and Wyatt (62); also read "Introduction" (1-18) and, q quickly, the rest of the "Introduction" (18-44)
- Week 2:** Spenser (63), Sidney (64), Southwell (65), and Drayton (66); Quiz #1 on "Introduction" (1-18)  
Shakespeare (67): Sonnets 18, 20, 29, 73, and 116; also reread "Introduction" (18-26)
- Week 3:** Shakespeare (69): Sonnets 129 and 130, and "When Daisies Pied"; and Campion (72); Quiz #2 on "Introduction" (18-26)  
Donne (73): "The Flea," "Holy" Sonnets 10 and 14; also reread "Introduction" (27-34)
- Week 4:** Donne (74): "The Sun Rising" and "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning"; Herbert (80): "Easter Wings"; Quiz #3 on "Introduction" (27-34)  
Herrick (79), Waller (83), Milton (83), Bradstreet (85), Lovelace (86), and Marvell (87); also reread "Introduction" (35-44)
- Week 5:** Dryden (89), Taylor (90), Swift (91), and Pope (93); Quiz #4 on "Introduction" (35-44)  
Gray (96), Blake (100), and Burns (103)
- Week 6:** Wordsworth (108): "Ode (Intimations of Immortality . . .)"
- Week 7:** Shelley (121)—especially "Ozymandias"; Keats (125)—especially "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer"  
Midterm Examination
- Week 8:** Poe (135) and Tennyson (141): "The Eagle" and "The Lady of Shalott"—Paper Guidelines Distrib.  
Tennyson (146): "Tears, Idle Tears" and "Ulysses"; Browning (151): "Porphyria's Lover"

- Week 9:** Browning (149): “My Last Duchess”  
Finish Browning—Exercise 1 due (Denotation-Connotation)
- Week 10:** Hardy (173)—also discuss Exercise 1  
Housman (180)—Exercise 2 due (Figurative Language I)
- Week 11:** Yeats (184): “Leda and the Swan” and “The Second Coming”— also discuss  
Exercise 2  
Frost (193) “After Apple-Picking” and “Design” —Exercise 3 due (Figurative  
Language II)
- Week 12:** Frost (196): “Home Burial” through “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”—  
also discuss Exercise 3  
Stevens (202): “Anecdote of the Jar” —Exercise 4 due (Sound)
- Week 13:** Williams (209), Pound (212), Wylie (214), and H.D. (215)—also discuss Exercise 4  
T.S. Eliot (222): “Journey of the Magi” and “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”
- Week 14:** T.S. Eliot (228): “Preludes”  
Cummings (234); Course Paper due

**Final Examination according to University Final Exam Schedule**