English 3150
Intermediate Poetry Workshop
T 6:30-9:20, Spring 2011

Professor: Corey Marks
Office: Auditorium Bldg. 214
Office Hours: Tuesday 5:00-6:30
& by appointment

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Course Description

While inspiration serves a primary role in writing poetry, poets can’t succeed without technique. This class will consider how poems are made rather than simply received, and how the process of making poems must be learned through practicing the methods honed by accomplished poets of the past and present. To this end, we’ll study poetry as readers and as writers. Reading provides essential instruction for writers; without reading, you cannot develop as a poet. Of course, you also need to write your own poems, and so I’ll give you assignments that focus on critical aspects of poetic craft. These two approaches will feed each other; your analytical abilities will benefit from insights gleaned during the act of writing, while your facility with craft and your sense of poetic possibilities will grow through encountering work written by strong and mature poets. Finally, as a member of a workshop you will be expected to participate actively in our discussions.

Electronic Group

You MUST join our class’ Yahoo group. We will use this group to share poems and communicate outside of class. Before our next class, send an email to ENGL3150-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Follow the directions link to create a yahoo account and join our class’ group.

Required Texts

*How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry*, Edward Hirsch

*The Sounds of Poetry*, Robert Pinsky

*Remnants of Another Age*, Nikola Madzirov

Attendance

Because of the discussion-centered nature of this class, regular attendance is important. Absences will harm your grade and after three missed sessions (for ANY reason), you can receive a failing grade for the semester. Please notify me (by phone or email) prior to
missing a class. You are responsible for materials handed out or assignments made during your absence.

If you find you cannot comply with this policy I am willing to drop you from the course at any point prior to the semester's final drop date (March 30). It's your responsibility to request the drop and to process the paperwork.

Visiting Writers

This semester, you must attend the reading by poet Nikola Madzirov on April 12. If you don't attend, you will be required to write a 3-5-page response to the poet's work due the class period immediately following the reading. I also strongly encourage you to attend other readings this semester—I will announce opportunities to you as class continues.

Workshop Procedures

You will be expected to participate in workshop by putting your own work forward for discussion and by commenting on your peers' poems. Because of the number of students enrolled, the class will be divided into two groups that will have due dates and discussion periods on alternating dates. You will be expected to read, discuss and write comments on the poems from both groups. We still will not have time to accommodate all the pieces handed in each week, and while we'll make an effort to workshop a majority of the poems you write over the semester, we won't be able to discuss all of them. Nonetheless, each poem you hand in on time will receive written comments from your peers as well as from me.

Evaluation:

Your grade will be based on:

1. Creative work (50%):
   - Six original poems;
   - A final portfolio, including at least 3 substantial revisions
2. Participation and attendance (25%):
   - Active participation in discussing your classmates' poems
   - Written responses to your peer's poems
   - Active participation in discussion of readings
   - Response to visiting poet's reading
3. Critical work (25%)
   - Final annotation (3-5 page essay)
Special Needs:

If you need any special accommodations, please let me know.

The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.
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**Week 1**
January 18
**Introduction to course**

**Week 2**
January 25

**Due:** Poem 1

**Week 3**
February 1
**Read:** “Nuts and Bolts,” Richard Hugo; Poems: “The Butcher Shop,” Simic; “Midsummer, Tobago,” Walcott; “Poppies in July,” “Tulips,” Plath; “Heroic Simile,” Hass; and others (all photocopies)

**Workshop:** Poem 1

**Week 4**
February 8
**Workshop:** Poem 1

**Due:** Poem 2

**Week 5**
February 15
**Read:** “Accent and Duration,” “Syntax and Line” & “Technical Terms and Vocal Realities,” Pinsky; passages from *Rhyme’s Reason*, Hollander (photocopy); poems: selections from Keats, Dickinson, Frost, Merrill, Brooks, Gunn, Schnackenberg

**Workshop:** Poem 2

**Due:** Poem 2

**Week 6**
February 22

**Workshop:** Poem 2

**Due:** Poem 3
Week 7
March 1
Workshop: Poems 2 & 3

Week 8
March 8
Workshop: Poem 3
Due: Poem 4

Week 9
SPRING BREAK

Week 10
March 22
Workshop: Poem 4

Week 11
March 29
Workshop: Poem 4
Due: Poem 5

Week 12
April 5
Read: Remnants of Another Age, Nikola Madzirov
Workshop: Poem 5

Week 13
April 12
Madzirov Reading

Week 14
April 19
Read: Selection from Letters to a Young Poet, Rilke (photocopy)
Workshop: Poem 5
Due: Poem 6
Week 15
April 26
Workshop: Poems 5 & 6

Week 16
May 3
Workshop: Poem 6

Week 17
May 10
Exam Period: You will be expected to hand in a portfolio including a final annotation, your earlier annotation, all poems written for the course, at least three revisions, and all written comments you have received during the semester.