

## ENGL 422: Modern Poetry and Poetics

Trimester 1 2015



Teaching dates:

### WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

### NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Anna Jackson      anna.jackson@vuw.ac.nz      Phone 463 6840      Room VZ 919

### CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Classes are held in VZ808, Mondays from 2pm – 5pm

### COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Announcements will be made in class and also through email.

## COURSE CONTENT

Class discussions will focus on the poetry of five major Twentieth-century poets: Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Elizabeth Bishop, Tom Paulin, and Anne Carson. The sonnet, the ballad and the lyric will be studied, and the issue of the use of conventional form will be discussed in general, along with other issues of poetic theory such as the importance of "voice" or individual style, the role of audience, poetic "progress" and the significance of tradition, the theory and practice of evaluation.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students completing this course will have demonstrated an ability to analyse and communicate a range of issues pertaining to the relation between poetry and poetics. You will have written in depth and detail on the work of a number of poets, showing a familiarity with, and understanding of, an extensive range of poems. You will have developed your ability to work with primary sources to inform your reading of literary works, to construct an argument and to take an informed position on a theoretical issue, and to analyse and appreciate the potential of one or more poetic forms, and, more generally, you will have developed your ability to evaluate poetry and to reflect on the basis for your evaluation.

## EXPECTED WORKLOAD

You should expect to spend, on **average**, about 15 hours per week on work for this course (**apart** from time in class). **Please note that this is a guideline only.** The time commitment will be greatest in the weeks immediately prior to essay submission dates, but you should be putting in a sustained commitment to reading, note-taking and critical thinking throughout the course.

## READINGS

### Recommended texts we will discuss in class:

Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems; The ABC of Reading*

William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems Volume 1.*

Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems, Prose and Letters*

Tom Paulin, *Selected Poems*

Anne Carson, *Glass and God*

### Also recommended:

William Carlos Williams, *I Wanted to Write a Poem: The Autobiography of the Works of a Poet* (1958)

*Pound/Williams: Selected Letters of Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams* (1996)

Tom Paulin, *Writing to the Moment: Selected Critical Essays 1980-1996*

Anne Carson, *Decreation: Poetry, Essays, Opera; If Not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho*

James Fenton, "A Lesson from Michelangelo" and "The Many Arts of Elizabeth Bishop" in *The Strength of Poetry*

The Page: website that collects articles on poetry, and poems, daily

T S Eliot, "Tradition and the individual talent"

Other editions or volumes of works by these poets can be substituted for any of the texts. Essential readings will be provided electronically or by other means where necessary. Students are also responsible for providing access to materials they want to discuss in the student-led discussions.

### ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

This course is entirely internally assessed, with no examination. Each assignment is worth one third of the final mark. Students must do the first assignment and two other assignments, handing in one assignment by each due date. All assignments should be approximately 3,000 words long, with the exception of the poetry portfolio.

1. A research essay focused on the work of one poet or group of poets, reading their work in relation to primary sources outlining their poetics and analysing the relation between their poetry and poetics. This essay requires you to ground your research in the study of primary texts, looking at a range of documents, which will inform your interpretation of the poetry. **Due Friday 28 March**
2. An essay offering a close study of a selected literary form (for instance the sonnet, the villanelle, the ballad). **Due Friday 1 May.**
3. An essay exploring an issue in poetics (such as the use of form, the concept of "voice," the relative importance of tradition and experimentation) with reference to the poetry and poetics of more than one poet. This assignment requires you to engage with contemporary theory and critical writing and to develop your own position in response, drawing on your own interpretations of a selection of literary works you will make yourself. Alternatively, you can submit a portfolio of eight to twelve original works of poetry, with a short essay of between 1,000 to 1,500 words introducing the poetry in terms of your own poetics. **Due Friday 5 June.**

All essays will be assessed in terms of how well they sustain a logically developed argument, how closely they attend to the primary texts, how well written they are as pieces of critical writing, and how well they meet the particular requirements specified for each assignment. The assessment of the poetry portfolio will be discussed in class.

## **ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS**

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found outside the Programme office.

## **PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS**

Due dates for the assignments for this course can be negotiated by the class as a whole. Individual students who require an extension for exceptional reasons must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date and must see me to discuss the situation.

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments.

No work will be accepted without an extension after 25 June, and no work can be accepted after 2 July under any circumstances.

## **MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

To gain a pass in this course you must:

- Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- Attend a minimum of eight classes. Students are expected of course to attend all classes, and should explain any absences.

## **CLASS REPRESENTATIVES**

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

## **STATEMENT ON LEGIBILITY**

You are expected to present work that meets appropriate standards. Work submitted during the course (i. e. work that is internally assessed) should be typed or prepared on a computer. Work submitted in the final examination will obviously be handwritten. You are expected to write clearly. Where work is deemed 'illegible', you will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

## WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study).

Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress). Most statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx) (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).

## COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1    Monday    Poetry and its evaluation  
             2 March

Week 2    Monday    William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound  
             9 March  
             Readings: Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems*; *The ABC of Reading*  
             William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems Volume 1*, and essays and letters  
             handed out in class the week before

Week 3    Monday    Elizabeth Bishop and Tom Paulin  
             16 March  
             Readings: Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems, Prose and Letters*  
             Tom Paulin, "Writing to the moment," in *Writing to the Moment: Selected Critical  
             Essays 1980-1996*; *Selected Poems*

Week 4    Tues 23    Class led by Harry Ricketts. Studies in form: villanelle, triolet, ballad, sonnet.  
             March  
             **Assignment one: due date Friday 28 March**

Week 5    Tues 30    Class led by Harry Ricketts. Form: the lyric.  
             March

Easter Break Friday 3 April – Sunday 19 April

Week 6    Monday    Student-led discussion / Poetry workshop  
             20 April

Week 7                    Anzac day: no class. Instead I will hold individual consultations during the week.  
                                 **Assignment two: due date Friday 1 May**

**School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies**  
**[NAME OF PROGRAMME] COURSE OUTLINE [COURSE CODE]**

Week 8    Monday    Student-led discussion / poetry workshop  
              4 May

Week 9    Tues 13    Student-led discussion / poetry workshop  
              May

Week 10   Tues 20    Student-led discussion / poetry workshop  
              May

Week 11   Monday    Concluding discussion. Reading: Anne Carson, The Glass Essay.  
              25 May

Week 12   Monday 1 June    Queen's Birthday observed: no class.

**Assignment three: due date Friday 5 June**