

Fall 2019 Course Descriptions

Instructor: David McWhirter

Course: ENGL 372

Title: American Poetry

Description: In this course we will explore the development of American poetic traditions, with an emphasis on some major poets of the 20th and 21st centuries, and on the ways in which their poetry reflects the historical, social and cultural contexts in which they wrote. After glancing briefly at the two 19th century poets (Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman) who most influenced their 20th century inheritors, we will explore the work of ten or twelve key figures from the last 100 years. Requirements will include two short papers and one longer paper (totaling about 12-15 pages), a midterm, and a final exam.

Proposed Readings: Poetry by Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, T.S. Eliot, Marianne Moore, William Carlos Williams, Langston Hughes, Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Bishop, Frank O'Hara, Adrienne Rich, Alberto Rios, Cathy Song, and Natasha Trethewey.