

English 313

Mary Ann Samyn, ENGL 313, Fall 2002, Creative Writing: Poetry

English 313: Poetry Workshop ~ Fall 2002

Mary Ann Samyn

MWF 2:30-3:20 p.m. ~ 106 Woodburn Hall

Office: 463 Stansbury ~ 293-3107 ext. 453 ~ MaryAnn.Samyn@mail.wvu.edu

Office hours: MWF 10:00- 11:20 a.m., 1:00- 1:20 p.m. and by appt.

Texts

Bendall, Molly. *Ariadne's Island* Oxford, OH: Miami UP, 2002.

Dunn, Stephen. *Loosestrife*. New York: Norton, 1996.

Mullen, Laura. *After I Was Dead*. Athens, GA: U of Georgia P, 1999.

Young, Dean. *Skid*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2002.

one other book of your choice, either bought or taken from the library

literary magazines: which you'll borrow from/ read at the library

Other Resources: interesting and helpful...

The Academy of American Poets: www.poets.org

Poetry Society of America: www.poetrysociety.org

The Associated Writing Programs: www.awpwriter.org

Poetry Daily: www.poetrydaily.org

Poets & Writers Magazine: www.pw.org

Web del Sol: www.webdelsol.com

Course Description

In this workshop you will hone your craft as a poet. You will also read as a writer; that is, you will read with an eye toward identifying the inner workings/ architecture/ music/ image patterns/explorations/ risks of a poem. This class assumes that you've done a fair amount of reading and writing already and that you hunger for more. English 313 should simultaneously satisfy that hunger and leave you wanting more.

Course Requirements

In addition to producing six finished poems by the end of the term, you will read and write extended responses to each of our texts and to one additional book of contemporary poetry of your own choosing (with input from me, of course). You will also present this book/ this poet to the class. In addition, you will spend time throughout the semester reading literary magazines and choosing one to present to the class. We will discuss more about both of these projects as the semester progresses. Your semester's work will culminate in a final portfolio of revised poems (and multiple drafts) and an essay reflecting on yourself as a poet/reader/ thinker/ artist. Your grade will be a reflection of all of these assignments and any others that may occur during the semester. Your general attitude will, of course, also be a large factor. Each assignment is designed to help you both clarify your poetic vision/ interests/ ambition (which, by the way, I don't equate with "fame" or anything like that...) and, I hope, challenge those things. You should also have fun; after all, we're talking about language here: what could be better?

As with any course, I expect participation, which should be no problem for you. This is a workshop and that means, as you know, that our success depends on everyone's readiness for class and willingness to give feedback that is honest and constructive while also taking into account the human element of creativity. Therefore, we'll be tough on poetry but kind to poets. OK? OK.

Attendance

I take attendance seriously; so should you. This class is, I assume, something you're choosing to take, so attendance shouldn't really be an issue. In case it is, however, here's the policy: you're allowed (but not entitled!) to three absences. Beyond that, your final grade will go down 1/3 for each absence. Excessive tardiness will also result in a lowered final grade. If you are absent for some unavoidable reason, it's your responsibility to contact me and/ or a classmate and keep up with all assignments.

Due dates/schedule/etc.

You should expect that in any given week we'll spend approximately two days workshopping your poems. The third day will be devoted to discussing the reading, doing writing exercises, thinking about weird stuff, making art. Below are some due dates for the major non-poem assignments of the semester. You need to bring in at least four poems to workshop; you can bring more, time permitting (though of course not in

batches of five or ten . . .). We'll do our best to spend "equal" time on everyone's work and keep the workshop moving. Ideally, you'll turn in poems the class before we actually workshop them. That way, everyone can come to class having already read and commented on the poems. I may give poem assignments from time to time, depending on your interests/ needs. Once the workshop gets going, we'll have a better sense of our time (or time constraints) and then we can make adjustments.

Wednesday, Sept. 4 response to Stephen Dunn due

Wednesday, Sept. 18 response to Molly Bendall due

Wednesday, Oct. 9 response to Dean Young due

Wednesday, Oct. 30 response to Laura Mullen due

Monday, Nov. 11 response to the book of your choice due

week of Nov. 11-13-15 presentations on your books

week of Dec. 2-4-6 presentations on lit. mag. reading

Friday, Dec. 6 final portfolio due

Questions? Please ask. And e-mail, call, come see me anytime.