

English 131

Mary Ann Samyn, ENGL 131, Fall 2002, Poetry and Drama

English 131: Poetry and Drama ~ Fall 2002

Mary Ann Samyn

MWF 11:30 a.m. -12:20 p.m. ~ 320 Clark Hall

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

Texts

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde

Picasso at the Lapin Agile by Steve Martin

Six Degrees of Separation by John Guare

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe by Jane Wagner

American Poetry: The Next Generation ed. by Jim Daniels and Gerald Costanzo

Course Description

This course will introduce you to and/or further your experience of the pleasures and challenges of reading drama and poetry. We will focus on appreciating the techniques playwrights and poets use to communicate meaning and on understanding how those techniques and meanings relate to each of us. The class will include some group work and in-class writing, regular quizzes on the reading, and good-spirited, energetic discussion. Thus you should come to class having read the assigned material, prepared to take notes when necessary and to participate in lively conversations on the reading.

Course Requirements

In addition to completing all reading on time and participating in all class activities, your grade will be based on four short answer/essay exams, two during the drama portion of the class and two during the poetry portion. You should also expect frequent reading quizzes that test your basic knowledge of/familiarity with an assignment prior to our class discussions. Attendance is a crucial part of this class,

and excessive absences will result in a substantially lowered grade (see attendance policy below for details). Tardiness will also detract from your final grade. Finally, remember that attendance without participation is pointless. Come prepared to participate; be determined to enjoy your experience in this course.

Attendance

I take attendance, and participation, very seriously as should you. Your success in this class depends on our ability to create a community that together investigates how language is used in poetry and drama and how those two genres connect with our lives. In order to establish such a community and effectively help one another navigate these texts, everyone needs to be at every class. This means you! Because bad things happen to good people, you're allowed three absences, no questions asked. That doesn't mean that you are entitled to three absences; rather, it means that if for some unavoidable reason you need to be absent, you won't immediately penalize yourself. Beyond three absences, your final grade will suffer (1/3 of a letter grade per absence). Of course you should keep absences, and tardiness, to a minimum. And, if you are absent, be sure to contact me and/or your classmates to find out what you missed.

Weekly Syllabus: like all human documents, this is subject to change...

Week1 Aug. 19, 21, 23 Course introduction, syllabus, intro. Drama

Begin reading *The Importance of Being*

Earnest: finish by Friday, Aug. 23

Week 2 Aug. 26, 28, 30 discuss *The Importance of Being Earnest*

finish reading *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* by

Fri., Aug. 30

Week 3 Sep. 2 (Labor Day), 4, 6 discuss *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*

Week 4 Sept. 9, 11, 13 discuss *Picasso*, exam review

EXAM #1: Friday

Week 5 Sept. 16, 18, 20 finish reading *Six Degrees of Separation* by

Wed, Sept. 18

Week 6 Sept. 23, 25, 27 finish reading *Searching for Signs of*

Intelligent Life in the Universe by Wed.,

Sept. 25

Week 7 Sept. 30, Oct. 2, 4 wrap-up drama, exam review

EXAM#2: Friday

Week 8 Oct. 7, 9, 11 Intro. poetry: **all poetry reading is due**

For Monday of the week it is

Assigned

read Alexie, Arnold, Belieu, Brouwer, Brown

Week 9 Oct. 14, 16, 18 read Davis (both), Dougherty, Duhamel,

Guevara

Week 10 Oct. 21, 23, 25 read Harms, Hayes, Jordan, Joseph, Kasdorf

Week 11 Oct. 28, 30, Nov. 1 **EXAM #3: Monday**

read Kasischke, LaFemina, Levin, Lim-Wilson

Week 12 Nov. 4, 6, 8 read Markus, McDaniel, McLain, Moulds,

Pelizzon

Week 13 Nov. 11, 13, 15 read Powell (D.A.), Prufer, Rosemurgy,

Schwartz, Su

Week 14 Nov. 18, 20, 22 read Suarez, Szporluk, Vazirani, Williams

(Crystal), Zandvakili

Thanksgiving holiday: Nov. 23 (Sat)--Dec. 1 (Sun)

Week 15 Dec. 2, 4, 6 poetry review

EXAM #4 WEDNESDAY

Friday: appreciating literature...