

MEDAILLE COLLEGE  
AGASSIZ CIRCLE  
BUFFALO, NY

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: ENG 355  
Course Title: Major Literary Forms: Poetry  
Section: 11 Semester: Fall 06 T 6-10 p.m.  
Prerequisites: Writing 175  
Instructor: Dr. Terri K. Borchers  
Instructor Availability: M 3:30-4:30; MW 5:30-5 p.m.; TTh 5:00-6 p.m., and by appointment  
Office: M212, tel. ext. 2151 E-mail: [tkborch@adelphia.net](mailto:tkborch@adelphia.net)

Statement on Disabilities

Any student with a disability who believes that he or she needs accommodation(s) in order to complete this course must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) as soon as possible. The staff in ODS will determine what accommodations are appropriate and reasonable under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ODS is located in the Main Bldg., Ro. M021, and can be reached by telephone at (716) 880-2391.

Academic Integrity

Medaille's faculty and administration expect all students to complete their academic assignments with honesty and integrity. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on a test, forging a signature or an entire college document) will be dealt with severely, with penalties ranging from an F on a given assignment to failing a course or even academic suspension. Students should consult their **Student Handbook** for full details on the college's policy and procedures for handling formal charges of academic dishonesty.

A. Catalog Description of Course

The course is a study of major literary forms and the structures, techniques, skills, and strategies for reading and writing poetry. The course will examine poetry both within its historical context and in terms of what some of its leading practitioners have written about how and why poetry matters to its readers and writers and the broader culture.

B. Goals and Objectives

- To aid students in better understanding a major literary form: poetry.
- To encourage close reading and interpretation of poetry.
- To provide students with a working vocabulary for the study of poetry.
- To provide the opportunity to write poetry and to write about it in various forms.
- To listen to and critique poetry in workshop sessions, and to be able to use a working vocabulary of poetic terms to discuss the work of published poets and student writers.
- To edit and revise a student's own work and to develop a final portfolio.

C. Outline of Course Content

- I. Introduction of important terminology and techniques, skills, and strategies for reading and writing poetry.  
Voigt and Wordsworth essays.
- II. Sculpture poems – how to write the 360 degree poem, the full dramatization of life experience – and Petah Coyne.
- III. Visual poems – form and collage, Dada, and other visual artists.
- IV. Traditional form poem – villanelle, sonnet, sestina, ottava rima, and other rhymed forms.
- V. War poems and elegy.
- VI. AIDS and Other Life Disaster poems – Doty, Dent, and others.

- VII. Music and voice poems.
- VIII. Analytical paper about Coyne and “resolute” poetry.
- IX. Student performance of own poem; student small group presentations.
- X. Development of response journal(s) – review of published poets and their poetry techniques and writing strategies in relation to student’s own.
- XI. Development of final portfolio.

D. Method of Evaluating Students

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Portfolio (4-5 workshopped and revised poems)	40%
Response Journals – including analysis of student’s own writing	15%
Analytical Paper on Petah Coyne and “resolute” poetry (3 pages)	20%
Oral Performance of student’s own poem	10%
Class Participation – including oral presentations in small and large groups	15%

Class participation involves your preparation for each class meeting and your active engagement with class discussions in small groups and with the entire class. This aspect of your grade also will include your willing and bale work as a workshop member: your ability to help yourself and your peers improve all students’ abilities to write and revise. I will make adjustments for poor attendance as part of this grade.

E. Attendance Policy

Attendance at every class is required. This class is based on a workshop format and you cannot help yourself or your class members if you are not present in class to engage in class discussion and small group activities. I will take attendance at the start of each class meeting and reserve the right to lower a student’s grade by a letter grade for each unexcused absence after the third. When you know in advance that you will not be able to attend a class meeting, you must tell the professor in advance. If you are absent on the day an assignment is to be turned in, your work will not be accepted unless you have contacted the professor in advance. The professor reserves the right to fail any student who misses more than 5 classes. The professor also reserves the right to give “pop” quizzes at any time when classroom discussion indicates that students are not keeping up with the assigned reading. The Medaille College Academic Integrity policy on plagiarism is incorporated by reference into this document. You are responsible to review and follow it for all assignments in this course.

F. Required Texts

Ferguson, et. al. (eds). *Norton Anthology of Poetry*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed.  
 Materials on hard copy and e-reserve at Medaille library, including books on traditional and formal poetry; a book about Petah Coyne; books by Turner and Tory Dent; a chapter by E.B. Voigt and an essay by William Wordsworth; several individual poems not included in the required texts.

G. Suggested Reading

*Poets and Writers; AWP Chronicle*; other anthologies and poetry texts by any and every author of your choosing. Read widely and often in a variety of periods and styles or forms.

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

This weekly schedule may change as the semester progresses. As a result, you are responsible to attend every class period; to keep up with any changes in assignments or due dates.

WEEK ONE – Aug 26 Sat

Introduction. Distribute syllabus and H/Os. Field trip to look at nearby visual art and sculpture. Read all handouts, essays by Voigt and Wordsworth, and go see Petah Coyne exhibit at Albright Knox. Read list of Sculpture/360 Degree Surround of total dramatic presentation of life experience poems.

Write 1<sup>st</sup> student poem. Discuss 1<sup>st</sup> student poem.

Begin Sculpture/360 Degree Surround poem.

WEEK TWO – Sept 5 (Tues two hours)

Discuss handouts and Voigt and Wordsworth essays.

Discuss “resolute” poetry and form or structure of poem – the Sculpture/360 Degree Surround of total dramatic presentation of life experience in a poem.

Workshop student poems. Revise student poems.

WEEK TWO – Sept 8 (Fri two hours)

Visit Albright Knox and commune with Petah Coyne and visual art.

Revise 1<sup>st</sup> student poem. Begin essay on Coyne and “resolute” poetry.

Read list of Visual/Painting/Concrete poems. Find the work of at least one Dada artist and bring pictures and information about the artist’s work to class.

Begin a Visual/Painting/Concrete poem.

WEEK THREE – Sept 12

Discuss Visual/Painting/Concrete poems and the work of Dada and other visual artists.

Workshop student poems. Revise student poems. Work on Analytical Paper.

Read handouts on sestina, villanelle, sonnet, ottava rima, and other traditional forms. Read list of Traditional Form poems. Find additional traditional form poems and bring them to class.

WEEK FOUR – Sept 19

Discuss traditional forms and list of Traditional Form poems. Workshop student poems. Revise student poems.

Read list of War Poems and Elegy.

Begin a war poem or elegy. Continue work on writing and revising other student poems.

WEEK FIVE – Sept. 26

Discuss War Poems and Elegy. Workshop student poems. Revise student poems.

Read list of HIV and Other Life Disaster poems. Find additional HIV and/or Other Life Disaster poems and bring them to class.

Begin an HIV or Other Life Disaster poem.

**DUE: SEPT 26 INTRODUCTION, MAP OF DIRECTION, AND THESIS FOR PETAH COYNE/RESOLUTE POETRY PAPER.**

WEEK SIX – Oct 3

Discuss HIV and Other Life Disaster poems. Workshop and revise student poems.

Read Music/Voice poems. Find additional Music/Voice poems and bring them to class.

Begin a Music/Voice poem. Begin 2-page essay on the development of student’s own writing.

**DUE: OCT 3 – POETRY RESPONSE JOURNALS.**

WEEK SEVEN – Oct 10

Discuss Music/Voice poems. Workshop and revise student poems. Workshop and revise 2-page essay on development of student’s own writing.

**DUE OCT 10: GROUP PRESENTATION ON POEMS.**

**DUE OCT 10: PETAH COYNE/RESOLUTE POETRY PAPER.**

WEEK SEVEN – Saturday Oct 14

**DUE: GROUP PRESENTATION ON POEMS.**

**DUE: STUDENT DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE OF OWN POEMS.**

**DUE: STUDENT PORTFOLIOS THAT INCLUDE REVISED STUDENT POEMS AND  
RESPONSE JOURNALS.**