

## English 130: Introduction to Poetry

*“A poet's work is to name the unnamable, to point at frauds, to take sides, start arguments, shape the world, and stop it going to sleep.”* –Salman Rushdie

**Course Description:** Introduction to Poetry is a course designed to build off of the skills learned in ENGL 110 in order to improve the practice and understanding of college writing through the exploration of poetry and rhetorical principles. This course emphasizes the importance of reading critically and closely in order to create informed insights about a text, as well as developing sound academic arguments in response to such texts. Writing is understood to be a complex, incremental process that begins with a response to reading and ends with a response to writing. Class discussion, reflection, course readings, writing, revision, research, and editing, are all integral components in achieving the desired outcomes, which are as follows:

**Process and Rhetorical Knowledge:** a student passing English 130 should:

- Develop personal opinions into public statements suitable to the anticipated rhetorical situation.
- Develop and use flexible, practical strategies to research, revise, and edit persuasive public statements.
- Evaluate the authenticity, logic, and persuasive force of information, arguments, and sources in the work of others and in their own writing.

**Academic Discourse:** a student passing English 130 should be able to demonstrate an understanding of academic discourse in the following ways:

- Identify and understand the development and use of academic conventions and practices specific to literary analysis.
- Integrate the conventions and practices of literary critical discourse in their own writing.
- Compose a persuasive, critical argument making use of primary and secondary sources.

**Research Practices and Conventions and Documentation Theory:** a student with a good understanding of research and documentation should:

- Formulate research questions and develop a plan of investigation.
- Limit topic scope, define research objectives, and clarify a thesis informed by genre conventions and reader expectations.
- Accurately document sources and use notes in a minimum of one academic, documentation style.

**Knowledge of Poetry:** an acceptable knowledge of poetry requires the following:

- Identify and distinguish various poetic genres, forms, and styles.
- Identify and explain factors (historical, cultural, economic, political) that affect poetic expression.

- Recognize common, critical terms specific to the poetic effort and the study of poetry.

**General Requirements:** These requirements are in adherence with academic convention as well as the university. It is very important that these requirements are met.

**Attendance:** The pedagogy of English 130 requires attendance and in-class participation. You cannot participate if you are not here, and it is not possible to make up the classes that you miss. You are allowed 2 absences. Each absence thereafter will lower your final grade by one letter grade. Even if you miss due to reasons beyond your control, you cannot achieve the course objectives if you miss more than two weeks of class (4 absences). Tardiness is also unacceptable. Three late arrivals will be counted as an absence.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Presenting someone else's words, work, or ideas as your own is a serious offense in the university. Even unintended plagiarism can result in penalties as severe as dismissal from the university. Often students plagiarize because they fear trying out their own ideas, they procrastinate until they have no other option, or they don't understand how to cite a source. If you find yourself in one of these situations, call me. I cannot help you after the offense has occurred. *Do not submit a paper written for any previous course of study.*

**Conferences:** We will have two individual conferences during the course of the semester. Individual conferences are required and you must come prepared to talk about your writing. Bring two copies of your current draft and author's note. Missing a scheduled conference or showing up unprepared will negatively affect your participation grade.

**Communication:** You are encouraged to visit or call during office hours and communicate by email. Do not submit any papers by email, and do not expect an immediate reply to your emails. Due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) I will only reply to LMU email addresses. Also, FERPA prevents me from discussing your course performance or class activities with anyone outside the university, including your parents, without prior written permission.

**Paper Format:** All drafts must be typed, in 12 point font, and double-spaced with one-inch margins on all sides. All documents must include your name, date, course name, and document typed in the upper left corner. All documentation will be in MLA style. Late papers will not be accepted, nor will I accept papers via email.

**Special Accommodations:** Students with special needs who need reasonable modifications, special assistance, or accommodations in this course should promptly direct their request to the Disability Support Services Office. Any student who currently has a documented disability (physical, learning, or psychological) needing academic accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office (Daum Hall # 224, x84535) as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Please visit <http://www.lmu.edu/dss> for additional information.

**Texts:**

*Literature for Life*, X.J. Kennedy, Dana Gioia, Nina Revoyr  
*Writing in Response*, Matthew Parfitt

**Materials:**

Notebook (for your journal)—you will bring this to class every day  
\$ For printing/making copies

**Class Format:** This class will be driven by student writing informed by the reading of poetry and rhetoric. Five types of assignments will be featured:

**Journals:** You are each required to keep a journal. You can write anything in these journals: your responses to the readings, in-class writing exercises, things you overhear, personal discoveries, observations about poetry's role in the world, questions about what poetry is, what it does, etc. These journals are meant to get you thinking about how poetry is everywhere, and your entries, I hope, will serve as a springboard or a well of ideas as you begin to write your longer assignments. Bring these to class every day, as I will collect them (unannounced) several times throughout the semester. Assigned journal entries should be at least 1 written page long in order to receive full credit.

**Reading Blogs:** These assignments are more formal than your journal entries, but less so than your working drafts and polished papers. Blogs will often be assigned alongside your readings in *Literature for Life* or as a way for you to post ideas about your paper topics. These will be posted on MYLMU Connect and are due before class time. Late blogs will not receive credit.

**Working Drafts:** These are the initial and revised drafts that will be generated before the complete draft is turned in. You will have two opportunities to workshop and revise your drafts before handing in the polished paper. Hard copies of the working drafts are due during the class meeting before the in-class workshops, and you are required to bring in the correct number of copies: one for yourself, one for me, and one for each of your group members. Late or electronic drafts will not receive credit.

**Peer Responses:** 1 ½ page responses will be due on each in-class workshop day, and these will be personal and intellectual responses to your peers' papers. See the "Peer Review Best Practices" handout on Blackboard for suggestions about writing a peer response. You will turn these in to your partner(s), as well as to me. Late or electronic peer responses will not receive credit.

**Polished Papers:** You will turn in three polished papers throughout the semester. You will have the opportunity to workshop each paper twice before it is due. Late or electronic papers will not receive credit. The assignments will be as follows:

Due 2/28: Polished Paper 1: What is Poetry? 3-5 pages (*LFL* p. 189)

Due 4/4: Polished Paper 2: Compare and Contrast, 5 pages

Due 5/7: Polished Paper 3: Poetry in Context, 7-10 pages

**Class Routine:** Each week we will follow a set routine, though this will be altered slightly as we transition from the focus on reading to focus on writing. If this routine is interrupted it will be expressly stated in class. Homework and assignments will be written on the board the class before they are due.

**Tuesday:** The assigned readings due on Tuesdays will primarily come from *Writing in Response*. Class discussions and activities will focus on active reading practices, then transition into the writing process (invention, drafting, and revision). Most of your drafts will be due on Tuesdays as well, and on these days you will need to bring in copies for Thursday's workshop.

**Thursday:** Thursday's readings will primarily come from *Literature for Life*, and class activities/discussions will engage with the poetry (and sometimes, prose) assigned. Thursdays will also (usually) be our in-class peer workshop days.

### **Grades:**

You must earn a 'C' or better to pass this course. You will not receive a letter grade on individual drafts. You are always free to ask me about your grade at any time during the semester. If you complete all the assignments, show up on time and participate in class, you will have earned a 'C.' Grades above a 'C' are granted to student work that is superior. Grades will be based upon the following:

#### **Quality of Invention, Revision, and Editing:**

1. Ability to guide a piece of work through various stages of revision
2. Success at writing an organized, coherent presentation of your ideas and/or research material with a clear and meaningful purpose in your polished piece(s)
3. Ability to persuade, move, or affect your intended audience.

#### **Quantity of Assigned Work:**

1. Completed drafts, peer responses, journals, blogs, and in-exercises.
2. Ability to understand and complete assignments on time
3. Depth of intellectual engagement of assignments and critical acuity

#### **Quality and Spirit of Participation:**

1. Attendance, effort, preparation, and intellectual engagement in workshops
2. Attendance, effort, preparation, and intellectual engagement in class discussion: Everyone is expected to talk in class and I will award points for contributing to class discussions. Failure to participate will negatively affect your participation grade, so you should aim to participate at least once per class.

### **Grade Breakdown:**

Participation/Informal Assignments	15%
Peer Responses	10%
Polished Paper 1	20%
Polished Paper 2	25%
Polished Paper 3	30%

## Course Schedule

LFL: *Literature for Life*  
WIR: *Writing in Response*

### **Week 1 : Introductions**

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Tues., Jan 15: Introduction, Syllabus

Thurs., Jan 17:

*Read:* WIR Introduction (pp.1-18); LFL Chapter 1 (pp. 3-16)

*Write:* Journal entry

### **Week 2 : Reading with Purpose**

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Tues., Jan 22:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 1-Reading with a Purpose (pp. 21-42)

*Write:* In-class exercise “A Rose for Emily” (journal)

Thurs., Jan 24:

*Read:* LFL Reading a Poem (pp. 50-78)

*Write:* Reading blog: LFL p. 55 “Writing Assignment on Reading a Poem”

### **Week 3 : Active Reading and Writing about Literature**

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Tues., Jan 29:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 2-Active Reading (pp.44-62)

*Write:* In-class exercise “A Rose for Emily” (journal) part 2

Thurs., Jan 31:

*Read:* LFL Writing About Literature (pp. 127-136)

*Write:* Journal entry

### **Week 4 : Further Strategies for Active Reading, Poems about Family**

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Tues., Feb 5:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 3-Further Strategies for Active Reading (pp.63-89)

*Write:* Journal entry

Thurs., Feb 7:

*Read:* LFL “Families” (pp.338-357)

*Write:* Reading blog-paper 1 topic (bring to class)

### **Week 5 : Writing to Discover and Develop Ideas, Poems about Love**

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Tues., Feb 12:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 4-Writing to Discover and Develop Ideas (pp. 93-109)

*Write:* Work on Polished Paper 1

Thurs., Feb 14:

*Read:* LFL “Love” (pp.508-530)

*Write:* Draft 1 of Polished Paper 1 due

### **Week 6: Developing an Argument, Poems about Life’s Journey**

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Tues., Feb 19:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 5-Developing an Argument (pp. 110-148)

*Write:* Peer responses to Draft 1 of Polished Paper 1 due

Thurs., Feb 21:

*Read:* LFL “Life’s Journey” (pp. 793-818)

*Write:* Draft 2 of Polished Paper 1 due

### **Week 7 : Writing about a Poem**

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Tues., Feb 26:

*Read:* LFL Writing about a Poem (pp. 169-189)

*Write:* Peer responses to Draft 2 of Polished Paper 1 due

Thurs., Feb 28:

*Read:* TBD

*Write:* Polished Paper 1 due

**Week 8: Spring Break, No Classes**

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**Week 9: Organizing the Essay**

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Tues., March 12:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 6-Organizing the Essay (pp. 150-190)

*Write:* Reading blog-Polished Paper 2 topic

Thurs., March 14:

*Read:* LFL Reading an Essay (pp.106-123)

*Write:* Journal entry

**Week 10: Crafting Sentences**

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Tues., March 19

*Read:* WIR Ch. 7-Crafting Sentences (pp. 217-237)

*Write:* Draft 1 of Polished Paper 2 due

Thurs., March 21:

*Read:* LFL Hemingway: "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" (pp.920-924)

*Write:* Peer response(s) to Draft 1 of Polished Paper 2 due

**Week 11: Writing With Style**

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Tues., March 26:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 8-Writing with Style (pp. 239-264)

*Write:* Draft 2 of Polished Paper 2 due

Thurs., March 28: No classes, Easter

**Week 12: Writing about Literature continued, Individual and Society Poems**

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Tues., April 2:

*Read:* LFL Writing About Literature (pp. 138-146)

*Write:* Peer response(s) to Draft 2 of Polished Paper due

Thurs., April 4:

*Read:* LFL "The Individual and Society" Poems (pp. 942-959)

*Write:* **Polished Paper 2 due**

**Week 13: Conducting Research, Writing a Research Paper**

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Tues., April 9:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 9-Conducting Research (pp. 267-295)

*Write:* Reading blog-Polished Paper 3 topic (begin researching)

Thurs., April 11:

*Read:* LFL Writing a Research Paper (pp. 204-222)

*Write:* Compile a bibliography/list of consulted works for Polished Paper 3

**Week 14: Conducting Research continued, Personal Identity Poems**

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Tues., April 16:

*Read:* WIR Ch.9-Conducting Research (pp. 296-313)

*Write:* Draft 1 of Polished Paper 3 due

Thurs., April 18:

*Read:* LFL "Personal Identity" Poems (pp. 1102-1130)

*Write:* Peer responses to Draft 1 of Polished Paper 3 due

**Week 15: Documentation**

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Tues., April 23:

*Read:* WIR Ch.9-Conducting Research (pp. 314-327)

*Write:* Draft 2 of Polished Paper 3 due

Thurs., April 25:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 10-Documentation (pp. 329-351)

*Write:* Peer response(s) to Draft 2 of Polished Paper 3 due

**Week 16: Documentation continued, Nature and the Environment Poems**

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Tues., April 30:

*Read:* WIR Ch. 10-Documentation (pp. 353-361; 378-379)

Hannah Dow

*Write:* Work on Polished Paper 3

Thurs., May 2:

*Read:* LFL “Nature and the Environment” Poems (pp. 1260-1280)

*Write:* Journal entry

**Week 17: Finals**

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Monday May 6: Finals

Tuesday, May 7: **Polished Paper 3 due**