ENGLISH 251A (05)

The Practice and Theory of Criticism

Fall 1989

10:30 MWF in HH 150
Instructor: W.R. Martin
For Consultations: Office Hours – 9:30 MWF, HH 222
Home Telephone: 884-4575

General
This term course will be devoted to the appreciation of poetry and the understanding of literary terms. I shall often give information and make observations about the poems, but I'll try to avoid giving lectures. I want you to gain confidence and to learn to exercise your own critical skills, so the method will generally be that of question and class discussion.

Texts

Assignments and Grades
1. There will be about 7 assignments written in class or at home on poems or passages virtually unseen. Only the best 6 assignments written by a student will be taken into account, making up about 66% of the final grade.

2. Each member of the class is invited to team up with two others to choose a poem and to lead the class discussion of it. (The team must get my approval of the poem they choose and are urged to come and discuss it with me before they present it.) As there will probably not be enough sessions available to accommodate all the members of the class in this project, those who don't get the opportunity to engage in a class presentation will write an assignment — longer than those referred to in the first paragraph — at the end of term, making up about 33% of the final grade.

3. A student's final grade may be raised because of helpful or interesting participation in class discussion, but not lowered because of silence. If a student's work has shown clear improvement during the term, the final grade will not be arrived at as a strict arithmetical average but will reflect the improvement.
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Texts
The Norton Introduction to Poetry, ed. J. Paul Hunter, 3rd
edition.
A Handbook to Literature, C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon,

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