

Ph.D. Programme in English Literature  
Department of English Language and Literature  
Faculty of Foreign Languages  
University of Jordan

Course number: 2201949

Course title: Contemporary Poetry

Instructor: Dr. Samira al-Khawaldeh

**Course Description:**

This course examines traditions and experimentations in modern Anglo-American and Irish poetry. However, before grappling with the major poetry schools, such as Symbolism, represented by such poets as W.B. Yeats and William Carlos Williams, and Imagism, represented by Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, the course traces the cultural and the socio-political factors that had influenced the sensibilities of modern poets on both sides of the Atlantic and paved the way for the development of new sets of poetics in poetry. The works of postmodernist poets will be studied at length.

**Learning outcomes:** Students are expected to

- identify major poetry groups, movements, and trends,
- recognize major poets, their poetry and their world,
- be able to historically and artistically map contemporary English poetry with the intricate influences and subtle connections,
- answer questions relating to problematic areas such as the function of poetry, the distance between art and society, and
- write a scholarly research paper tackling a specific problem in contemporary poetry.

**Methods:** The teaching and learning will be conducted through

- discussion, analysis;
- students' presentations on assigned topics and their research papers;
- applying a comparative and critical approach to different poetry movements; and
- Videos, and guest speakers.

**Course content:**

The focus is on exploring, analyzing, and comparing poems; however, students are encouraged to regularly refer to the rich critical, theoretical, and analytical scholarship surrounding the genre.

**Course evaluation:**

Presentations and participation: 10% of the grade

Term papers: 20%

Mid-term test: 30%

Final exam: 40%

The term paper: Each student writes a term paper of approximately 3000 words on a topic approved by the instructor. Deadline for submitting the hard and the soft copy is 1 April.

**Weekly schedule:**

**Week**

**Topic**

**Week 1** Introduction: tools of analysis, theoretical frameworks, and definitions

**Weeks 2-4** Poetry and war, poetry and ethics  
*First World War poetry, Second World War Poetry, war poetry since 1950, war poetry now*

**Weeks 5-7** In focus: Ezra Pound

**Week 8** **Mid-Term Exam** Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 4 pm.

**Term paper Saturday 1 April**

**Weeks 9-11** Anti- and post-colonial poetry

**Weeks 12-14** Poetry now:  
Roy Fisher  
Ruth Padel  
Paul Muldoon  
Thom Gunn  
W. S. Merwin  
Adrienne Rich  
William Stafford  
Mark Strand

**Week 15** Students' presentations of research topics

**Week 16** **Final exam**

**References:**

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