

## POET IN THE MODERN WORLD SYLLABUS

**The Poet in the Modern World, ENG 172-01**

Spring 2010

<http://www.timtrask.com>

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*Required Text:* (available in the college bookstore)

Margaret Ferguson, et al., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Poetry, Shorter Fifth Edition*.  
New York: W. W. Norton, 2005.

*Recommended Text* (in addition to an English handbook):

Joseph Parisi, ed., *100 Essential Modern Poems*, Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005.

*Course Description (from College Catalog):* "This course is an introductory study of the various forms, styles, and techniques of poetry as exemplified by the work of established modern and postmodern poets as well as the work of some of the popular poets and songwriters of our own time. This course requires extensive reading and writing."

*Goals:*

1. To gain an acquaintance with the field of modern poetry, particularly poetry written in English.
2. To practice methods of criticism and analysis of poetry.
3. To apply poetic methods in your own writing.

*Objectives:*

1. To do the assigned reading.
2. To write brief summaries, comparisons, and analyses of selected poems.
3. To practice and improve writing skills.
4. To begin a portfolio of writing.

*Grading:* Grades for the course will be weighted as follows:

Attendance/Participation      20% (full credit for perfect attendance)

Examinations/Reports 40%

Writing                              40%

A, A-	90 - 100
B+, B, B-	80 - 89
C+, C, C-	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	below 60

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*Teaching Method & Attendance:* Since it is to be conducted as a seminar, participation in this class is *essential*. It is important that each student be present to listen to presentations and to critique them honestly, fairly, and with a desire to help other students. Attendance and participation count toward your grade. Any student missing more than four classes will be in danger of being dropped from the class.

*Submissions:* Please double space all work except lyric poems, use one side of the paper only, and leave margins of 1" on all four sides. No cover sheets; no binders. Put your name and the date in the upper left corner of the first page and fasten the pages with a single staple in the upper left corner.

*Academic Resource Center:* Tutoring and assistance in writing is available in the ARC. I may suggest that you seek assistance in some particular area of writing. You pay for this assistance with your tuition and fees, so make use of it.

*Library resources.* The library at Massasoit is staffed by competent professionals. They can provide access to Internet, assistance in doing research, and help in finding materials.

*Portfolio.* You will be expected to type your work before handing it in for credit. Please do not give me the only copy. Make copies. Put them in a binder and begin a portfolio of your writing. During the final exam period, you will be instructed to bring this portfolio with you. I will check it against my own records and hand it back to you at that time.

*Web resources:* My web page for this class is [www.timtrask.com/poet](http://www.timtrask.com/poet). During this semester, I will be adding materials to that site and will welcome suggestions for making the site richer and more useful.

*Computer usage:* I strongly recommend that every student make frequent use of the computer facilities of the college during the semester. I encourage email and the submission of papers as attachments to email provided that they are prepared using Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect. Whenever possible, we will be looking at each other's work using the computer and a projection monitor. If you want corrections, please submit your work on paper.

*Disability Statement:* Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in the classroom are encouraged to contact a disability counselor as soon as possible. Students with learning disabilities should contact Andrea Henry, at extension 1805. Students with physical disabilities should contact Mary Berg, at extension 1425. Students at the Canton Campus should contact Stan Oliver, at extension 2468.

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*Tentative Calendar:(Details will be added according to the needs and preferences of the class)*

January

### **Part One: Reading and Summarizing Poetry**

- 25 Introduction; where does poetry come from?
- 27 Older forms (read section beginning p. 1263)
- 29 Older forms, cont'd.

February

- 1 Intro to Modern Poetry
- 3 Intro to Modern Poetry, cont'd.
- 5 Poetry List (handout)
- 8 Presentations of favorite poems
- 10 Presentations of favorite poems
- 12 Presentations of favorite poems (**Deadline for first writing assignment: reading**)
- 15 **Presidents' Day (No classes)**
- 17 Summary presentations
- 19 Summary presentations
- 22 Summary presentations
- 24 Summary presentations
- 26 Critical tools and methods (**Deadline for second writing assignment: summary**)

### **Part Two: Critiquing Poetry**

March

- 1 Critiques
- 3 Critiques
- 5 Critiques
- 8 Critiques
- 10 (**Deadline for third writing assignment: critique**)
- 12 Writing poetry
- 15 **Spring Break (No classes)**
- 17 **Spring Break (No classes)**
- 19 **Spring Break (No classes)**
- 22 Writing poetry
- 24 Choosing projects
- 26 Working the list
- 29 Working the list
- 31 Working the list

April

- 2 Working the list
- 5 Working the list
- 7 Working the list
- 9 Working the list
- 12 Working the list

- 14 Working the list
- 16 Working the list
- 19 **Patriots' Day (no classes)**
- 21 Check on project progress
- 23 Working the list
- 26 Working the list
- 28 Working the list
- 30 Working the list

May

- 3 **(Deadline for fourth writing assignment: critique or poetry)**
- 5 Final presentations
- 7 Final presentations
- 10 Final presentations
- 12 Last class; wrapping up.

**Particular reading will be assigned in class or chosen by students**

**Assignments are subject to change.**

**Final exams December 14 - 19**

## Trask's Ten Tips for Using the World Wide Web in Research

1. **Be skeptical.** Anyone can post material on The Web. That is both its beauty and its danger. Skepticism is the key to all these tips. Websites come with many email accounts, these days, so the variety is nearly infinite. (NOTE on Wikipedia: Use it carefully, and double check with other sources.)
2. **Look for verification.** Can you verify the information you got from your web source by some other source? Does it fit with or contradict everything else you've seen on the subject?
3. **Consider the source.** Who is the author of the information? Who maintains the site? Why do they do it? A professor providing course materials may be more reliable than a private person with an agenda.
4. **Look for documentation.** Does the author of the information on the website provide sources? Is there a bibliography? Are there notes?
5. **Check the documentation where possible.** Spot check the sources cited by the author. Do they check out? Are they used accurately and fairly?
6. **In general, rely more on books and articles.** It is much more difficult to publish a book or an article in a journal than it is to place material on The Web. Although there are privately published books, they are not usually easy to find. Most books in a college library have been bought at the request of a faculty member or after a check by a librarian. Most journals are subject to editorial and peer review. There are no such controls on most websites. On the other hand, websites can be updated much more rapidly than can either books or journals, so the information may be more current.
7. **Is what you're looking at an original document?** One of the most exciting features of The Web is the availability of original documents that have been scanned or typed in and posted in electronic form. As with any other publishing medium, however, unless the provider of documents is extremely careful, mistakes will be introduced in the electronic form of the document.
8. **Personal anecdotes versus hard research.** Some personal anecdotes are very compelling. However, without verification or replication, they are not to be taken with, say, the importance of hard research that is based on many such sources. A personal account of an event should be considered, but it should not by itself be taken as refutation of broader based studies.
9. **Avoid propaganda sites.** Why does this site exist? Some sites on the Internet exist primarily to promote a particular point of view, to spread a religion, to support a political party, or to grind a private axe. These sites are usually easy to spot because they announce themselves in many ways, but a few of them are more sophisticated, making it harder to see that they have a stake in what they're promoting. That doesn't mean that they are entirely useless, but it does mean that they are not to be relied upon as sources without other verification.
10. **Document the site using MLA style (or the appropriate style for your subject area) documentation.** If you properly document the site, readers will be able to check it easily. Follow a current handbook or style sheet (perhaps the MLA Style Citations for Electronic Sources). Make sure that you include the date that you visited the site. Most sites change on a regular basis, and many of them include the date of the most recent change. Also, sites come and go. For example, if the Internet Service Provider is not paid on time, it may delete a site without notice. The Web is a volatile, rich, dangerous, rewarding, wonderful resource. Use it with caution.

*Tim Trask*  
1997; revised, August, 2008

### ASSOCIATION EXERCISE

stop	petty	sneak	_____
elephant	lapse	vivid	_____
lick	sprinkle	mines	_____
shopping	washer	picture	_____
stalk	trainer	king	_____
sea	home	stomach	_____
walker	main	sweeper	_____
mouse	sharp	blue	_____
envy	golf	beans	_____
board	magic	death	_____
athletes	web	rabbit	_____
pot	butterflies	pump	_____
bald	screech	emblem	_____
note	dive	chair	_____
cherry	time	smell	_____
Southern	console	station	_____
chocolate	fortune	tin	_____
bass	complex	sleep	_____
wicked	bustle	slicker	_____
skunk	kings	boiled	_____
habit	pouch	Road	_____
soap	shoe	tissue	_____
blood	music	cheese	_____
room	Saturday	salts	_____
widow	bite	monkey	_____
chamber	staff	box	_____
inch	deal	peg	_____

## Questionnaire

NAME:

CITY/TOWN:

ZIP:

Student ID Number:

Telephone Number: (    )    -

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_\_

Please list other current classes:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Program of study (i.e., Liberal Arts, Business, Diesel, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

This will be my (circle one) FIRST SECOND THIRD \_\_\_\_\_ semester at Massasoit.

I went to high school at \_\_\_\_\_

I am a transfer student from \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any problems with reading that would keep you from completing the assignments for this class (if "yes," please explain):

Do you have any problems with writing that would keep you from completing the assignments for this class (if "yes," please explain):

Are you a veteran?        Dates of service:

Is English your native language?    Yes    No

If "no," what is your native language? \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: