

# English 387

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Mary Ann Samyn, ENGL 387, Fall 2005, Topics in Women's Literature

ENGLISH 387, TOPICS IN WOMEN'S LITERATURE: I CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S POETRY

Fall 2005, TR11: 30 a.m.-12: 45 p.m.. 207 Armstrong

Mary Ann Samyn

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Office Hours: TR 1:15-2:15 p.m. and by appt.

## Course Description

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In this course we will read the work of several important contemporary women poets who are advancing both the field in general and our understanding of what it is to write "women's poetry" and/or to be "woman poet." Our readings will include work by Rae Armanirout, Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge, Lucii Brock-Broido, Joie Graham, Barbara Guest Lyu Hejinian, Brenda Hillman, Susan Howe, Am Lauterbach, Harryette Mullen, and others: some of whom write about "women's topics" (whatever din means) and some of whom don't.

*American Women Poets in the 21st Century: Where Lyric Meets Language* edited by Claudia Rankine and Juliana Spahr

## Count Requirements and Evaluation

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The reading load for this course is rather intense and you will be responding, in carefully written, concise one-page analyses, to each poet. You will also take a mid-term exam and work up a final project, a study guide (to be described in full later in the semester), for a poet of your choice. As with any 300-level class I'm looking for consistent engagement with the texts, technically clean and elegant writing, an sophisticated critical inquiry. You should also expect to do a fair amount of in-class work, both critica and creative, in groups and individually. I also anticipate lively class discussions in which all memben participate. If you have any questions about any of these requirements, please don't hesitate to ask me.

## Attendance Policy

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I take attendance seriously, don't you? Attendance means being in class, on time, with all homework (reading and writing assignments) completed, and being ready to participate. Anything less will be counted as an absence. You're allowed (but not entitled) to three absences. Beyond that, your final grade will go down 1/3 for each absence. If you are absent more than six times, you will fail the course no matter how "well" you're doing. Excessive tardiness (as defined by me) and lack of participation (again, as defined by me) will also result in a lowered final grade. If you are absent for some unavoidable reason, it's your responsibility to contact me and/or a classmate and keep up with all assignments. Note: I do not accept late work.

## Social Justice

WVU is committed to social justice, as am I. That means you can expect a learning environment that is constructive, based on mutual respect and non-discrimination. If you have any questions, please let me know.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism, as you no doubt know, is passing off someone else's work as your own. Please don't do this; it will only complicate my life and quite possibly change the trajectory of yours in very serious ways.

## Schedule

**Note:** All assignments are due on the date they appear. I do not accept late work. In general we'll discuss each poet's poems on the Tuesday and her poetic statement and the essay about her work on Thursday. Note, however, that some of the later responses require you to reflect on the writer's poetic statement, and you may find it useful in any case to read a writer's entire section at one time.

### Week 1

**August 23** Course intro, syllabus, etc.

**August 25** Read Introduction. Whiunan & Dickinson a brief history of American poetry; The Lyric Poem

### Week 2

**August 30** Rae Armanirout: read poems and write analytical response #1 for today

**September 1** Rae Armantrout: read her poetic statement and Hank Lazer's essay

Week 3

**September 6** Mel-Mei Berssenbrugge: poems and analytical response #2

**September 8** Mei-Mel Berssenbrugge: poetic statement and Linda Voris' essay

Week 4

**September 13** In-class exercise

**September 15** no class: I'll be reading at BGSU.

Week 5

**September 20** Lucie Brock-Broido: poems and analytical response #3

**September 22** Lucie Brock-Broido: poetic statement and Stephen Bun's essay

Week 6

**September 27** Jade Grahant poems and analytical response #4

**September 29** Jorie Graham: poetic statement and Thomas Gardner's essay

Week 7

**October 4** Barbara Guest: poems and analytical response #5

**October 6** Barbara Guest: poetic statement and Sara Limquist's essay

Week 8

**October 11** Prep for exam

**October 13** Exam

Week 9

**October 18** Lyn Hejinian: poems and analytical response #6

**October 20** Lyn Hejinian: poetic statement and Craig Dworkin's essay

Week 10

**October 25** Brenda Hillman: poems and analytical response #7 Introduce study guide project

**October 27** Brenda Hillman: poetic statement and Lisa Sewell's essay

Week 11

**November 1** Susan Howe: poems and analytical response #8

**November 3** Susan Howe: poetic statement and Ming-Qian Ma's essay

Week 12

**November 8** Ann Lauterbach: poems and analytical response #9 Study guide proposal due

**November 10** Ann Lauterbach: poetic statement and Christine Flume's essay

Week 13

**November 15** Harryette Mullen: poems and analytical response #10

**November 17** Harryette Mullen: poetic statement and Elisabeth Frost's essay

**Thanksgiving Holiday**

Week 14

**November 29** Study guide draft due Workshop

**December 1** Workshop

Week 15

**December 6** Study guide due Presentations

**December 8** Presentations

Questions? Please ask me.