

# English 213

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Mary Ann Samyn, ENGL 213, Spring 2003, Creative Writing: Poetry

English 213: Poetry Workshop ~ Spring 2003

MW 2:30-3:45 pm~ 123 Armstrong

**Mary Ann Samyn**

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Office Hours: MW 1:30-2:20 and by appt.

## Texts

*The Poet's Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry*: Kim Addonizio & Dorianne Laux

*The New Young American Poets*: ed. Kevin Prufer

**Other Resources:** interesting and helpful. . .

The Academy of American Poets: [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org)

Poetry Society of America: [www.poetrysociety.org](http://www.poetrysociety.org)

The Associated Writing Programs: [www.awpwriter.org](http://www.awpwriter.org)

Poetry Daily: [www.poetrydaily.org](http://www.poetrydaily.org)

Poets & Writers Magazine: [www.pw.org](http://www.pw.org)

Web del Sol: [www.webdelsol.com](http://www.webdelsol.com)

## Course Description

English 213 is an introduction to the pleasures of reading and writing poetry within a community of writers. The class depends on the workshop model—the understanding that we are all craftspeople working together to hone our skills by studying the poems of more accomplished writers, developing a vocabulary

with which to talk about those poems, identifying our own material for poetry, and sharing and critiquing each other's work with generosity and vigor.

We'll spend our time discussing poetry from our texts, generating material through freewriting and other activities, and doing close readings of your poems. You will be responsible for submitting all assignments on time and in multiple copies when required and for reading and responding to your classmates' work both verbally and in writing. Our course goals include not only writing poems but also learning how to return to those pieces in revision. We will also discuss general issues of craft (the line, rhythm, figurative language, white space, etc.) as we discover how a writer's vision of the world moves from inside to outside, from a private space to the public space of the page.

### **Course Goals**

3 participate in a community of writers and readers through workshops and conscientious completion of all reading and writing assignments

3 employ critical writing, thinking, and reading processes in responding to the work of professional authors and other students

3 develop a process for writing poetry

3 acquire and use a vocabulary to express the formal and thematic aspects of poetry

3 revise poems based on workshop feedback

3 develop a sense of writing as a way to understand the world around us

3 consider and express the connections between writing and the other arts

3 evaluate your own work by identifying weaknesses and acknowledging and building on strengths

### **Evaluation**

In addition to a final portfolio (original drafts and revisions and a final essay about your work), your grade will also be based on the six poems brought to class (with copies, ready for workshop, not first drafts), six responses to our anthology, and your general preparedness for class and willingness to participate in all workshops, discussions of the reading, in-class activities, and other assignments.

### **Attendance and Participation**

I take attendance seriously; so should you. This class is, I assume, something you're choosing to take, so attendance shouldn't really be an issue. There are many more people who want to be in this class than can be, so if you're not truly interested in learning to become a better poet, please let someone else have your spot. The attendance policy is as follows: you're allowed (but not entitled!) to three absences. Beyond that, your final grade will go down 1/3 of a letter for each absence. Once you reach ten absences, you will fail the course--no matter how "well" you're doing. how good a writer you are, what your reasons for being absent. Excessive tardiness 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. Attendance without participation is pointless; you'll want and need to participate if you want to get an A or B in this class.

**Please remember to keep this syllabus and all other course handouts.**

### **Course Schedule**

**Week 1** January 13 Course introduction: what are the characteristics of

contemporary poetry? What does it mean to be a

poet?

January 15 Reading: *Poet's Companion* (PC): 19-29, 85-93

**Week 2** January 20 MLK Day: no class

January 22 In-class writing

Response #1 (typed, one page) due (*New Young*

*American Poets*)

**Week 3** January 27 Poem # 1 due: revised from last week: two copies

January 29 Reading: PC 30-38, 94-103 and bring a photo to

class

**Week 4** February 3 Poem #2 due: photo: bring enough copies for the

whole class

Workshop

February 5 Workshop

Response #2 due (*New Young American Poets*)

**Week5** February 10 Workshop

February 12 Reading: PC 39 45, 104-114

Response #3 due (*New Young American Poets*)

**Week6** February 17 Discussion

February 19 Poem #3: elegy due: bring enough copies for the

whole class

Workshop

**Week 7** February 24 Workshop

February 26 No class: I'll be at the AWP Conference.

**Week8** March3 Workshop

March 5 Workshop

Reading: PC 46-63

Response #4 due (*New Young American Poets*)

**Week 9** March 10 Poem #4 due: shadow/taboo poem with copies

Workshop

March 12 Workshop

**Spring Break**

**Week 10** March 24 Workshop

March 26 Reading: PC 64-81

Response #5 due (*New Young American Poets*)

**Week 11** March 31 Poem #5 due: witnessing/place poem with copies

Workshop

April 2 Workshop

**Week 12** April 7 Workshop

April 9 Reading: PC 115-128

Response #6 due (*New Young American Poets*)

**Week 13** April 14 Poem #6 due: imitation with copies

Workshop

April 16 Workshop

**Week 14** April 21 Workshop

Reading: PC 186-192: Revision

April 23 Finish up workshop, etc.

**Week 15** April 28 Work on portfolio

April 30 Last day of class: portfolio due