

Introduction to Modern Poetry

Course Convenor: Dr Chris Powici

Module Code: CST936

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Session and Semester: Spring 2011

SCQF Level: 7

SCQF Credit Points: 11

Module Overview:

This module aims to introduce students to the rich variety of poetry from Britain, Ireland and America over the last hundred years. As well as engaging with different forms and styles of poetry, the module will explore the historical contexts that influence literary production, and show how individual poets from both sides of the Atlantic have responded to the major political, cultural, and artistic movements of a fascinating and turbulent century. The course will culminate with a live reading by a contemporary poet.

Texts

This course looks at poetry from Britain, Ireland and the USA since 1900. The set texts for the course are *The Bloodaxe Book of 20th Century Poetry* (ed. Edna Longley) and *The Penguin Book of American Verse* (ed. Geoffrey Moore). Other poems, not featured in these anthologies, but relevant to the course, will be made available to students.

The university library has a number of books on the work of individual poets, and on the subject of poetry generally. These include Michael Schmidt's *Lives of The Poets*, which contains illuminating commentaries on the life and work of many of the poets featured on the course, and *52 Ways of Looking at a Poem* by Ruth Padel. This is an insightful and readable introduction to how poetry works and the themes and issues that poetry engages with. Another very valuable text is *Strong Words: Modern poets on Modern Poetry* edited by W.N Herbert and Matthew Hollis. Besides these, there a host of other studies of poetry in the library, and the introductions in the two anthologies are intelligent and helpful guides. But bear in mind that, on this course, it is *your* views that count.

Essay Questions:

The essay question will provide an opportunity to discuss the work of some of the main poets and principle themes covered by the course.

Student Presentations

These will take the form of a 10-15 minute introduction to the work of a poet of your choice. Advice will be given on how to write a presentation and equipment, such as an overhead projector, will be made available.