What is poetry and how does one read it? Do we read it at all? Is there a difference between a poetry reader and a prose reader? What if we imagine that poetry today is as viable an expression of culture, philosophy, politics, sociology, identity, art, and the vitality of language as it was during ancient Greek writing or perhaps the Romantics? This course aims to enliven the poetic genre and dispense with any skepticism about its difficulty or elitism. Poetry, the act, and poetics, the theory behind that act, are as vital as ever. We will explore three major poetic movements in British and American poetics: the Romantics (18th Century), the Modernists, and the Postmodernists or postwar poets. With emphasis on debated formal traditions and poetic devices, this course offers an array of significant poems as resources for understanding poetry composition/attitudes and for finding pleasure in reading them.

**Required Texts:**
ALL background/theoretical reading material will be made available as PDFs on Studium or will be distributed as photocopies.

***Please purchase a notebook to bring to class each week for your journal entry (see below).**

**Course Policies:**
1. Please read each week’s material BEFORE class and bring the reading(s) to class. It is the student’s responsibility to gather the required poetry readings. Your participation is crucial, and you won’t have anything to contribute if you haven’t done the reading.
2. All assignments are due on the date specified. Exceptions may be made in the case of illness or family emergency (please contact me to discuss).
3. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. (I encourage you to purchase a style manual (MLA, APA, Chicago) if you don’t already own one.) University policy on the issue of plagiarism is clear, and if you have any questions about violations of academic integrity, please consult me or refer to the University website: [http://www.integrite.umontreal.ca/reglementation/officiels.html](http://www.integrite.umontreal.ca/reglementation/officiels.html)

**Assignments & Grading:**
We will begin each class with an open journal session. You will have 20 minutes to respond to a question, proverb, creative prompt, theme, image file etc. in whatever way you wish. I will collect your journals every two weeks, and you will be graded on the seriousness of your responses and whether or not you are engaging with the material in your writing—(i.e. show creativity and constructive thinking). You will have one presentation during the course and two short quizzes (1 announced and 1 unannounced). Lastly, a final exam that will be on selected readings from the course material.
Participation: 10%
Journal: 15%
Presentation: 15%
Quiz: 30% (2 in total)
Final Exam: 30%

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Course Introduction: What is Poetry? Who is the subject? Who is the reader? What is the tone? What is diction (connotation & denotation)?

Week 2: Poetry and Sound (alliteration, assonance, meter, rhyme, rhythm)

- Selected Readings: **William Blake**: The Tyger, **William Wordsworth**: We Are Seven, Composed Upon Westminster Bridge- **Lord Byron**: When We Two Parted, We’ll Go No More A-Roving- **Percy Shelley**: To A Skylark

- NOTE: create weekly schedule for PRESENTATIONS

Week 3: Figurative Language (metaphor, simile, symbol, allegory, parody, allusion)

- Selected Readings: **John Keats**: Ode on a Grecian Urn, **S.T. Coleridge**: Kubla Khan, Rime of the Ancient Mariner (Part 1), **Edgar Allan Poe**: Dreams, Alone, The Raven

Week 4: Formal Patterns

**Closed Form**: sonnets, stanzas (couplets- tercets- quatrains- sestinas), ballads, epigrams

- Selected Readings: **Shakespeare**: Sonnet 116, **Robert Frost**: Acquainted with the Night, **John Donne**: Song, **Langston Hughes**: Two Somewhat Different Epigrams

- Quiz I (15%)

Week 5: Open Form: Free Verse (lineation, rhythm)

- Selected Readings: **Amy Lowell**: September, 1918, St. Louis, Venus Transiens, **William Carlos Williams**: Spring and All, The Red Wheelbarrow, Portrait of a Lady, **Gertrude Stein** (Student’s Choice)
Week 6: Imagism (formation, definition, style)

- Selected Readings: Elizabeth Bishop: The Fish, The Armadillo, One Art, Ezra Pound: In A Station of the Metro, H.D.: Sea Lily, Mid-day, Stars Wheel in Purple

Week 7: Modernist Poetry: Breaking the Rules (Handout Overview)


Week 8: The Beat Generation

- From the San Francisco Renaissance: Allen Ginsberg: A Supermarket in California, Howl (Part I), Gary Snyder: For All, Riprap, Lawrence Ferlinghetti: A Vast Confusion

Week 9: The NY School of Poets


Week 10: Uncreative & Conceptual poets

- Kenneth Goldsmith: Two Poems from “The Day” ; Lyn Hejinian: from My Life -- [A pause, a rose, something on paper], --[As for we who “love to be astonished”], -- [Like plump birds along the shore] & Charles Bernstein: The Klupzy Girl, Dysraphism.

Week 11-12: Creative Writing Workshops