

The Virtues of Poetry

Section A: Headline Information	
Module title	The Virtues of Poetry: what poetry is and why it matters
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	7/8
Module number/reference	TBC
Module Co-ordinator	Dr Derek Coyle
Parent programme(s)	BA (Honours) in Arts and Humanities
Stage of parent programme	1
Semester (semester1/semester2 if applicable)	1
Module credit units (FET/HET/ECTS)	ECTS
Module credit number of units	5
List the teaching and learning modes	Lectures, class-work, seminar.
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)	College Entry Requirements must be satisfied for entry onto Stage 1.
Pre-requisite module titles	N/A
Co-requisite module titles	N/A
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff (staff includes workplace personnel who are responsible for learners such as apprentices, trainees and learners in clinical placements)	Module co-ordinators, lecturers and tutors must have a minimum Level 9 qualification in English.
Maximum number of learners per module	60
Duration of the module	1 Semester
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week (see * below)	2.33
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)	Lecture Hall, library, study space.
Analysis of required learning effort	
*Effort while in contact with staff	

Classroom and demonstrations		Mentoring and small-group tutoring		Other (specify)		Directed e-learning (hours)	Independent learning (hours)	Other hours (Assignments)	Work-based learning hours of learning effort	Total effort (hours)
Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner					
24	1: 10	4	1:6				47	50		125 hours
Allocation of marks (within the module)										
				Continuous assessment	Supervised project	Proctored practical examination	Proctored written examination	Total		
Percentage contribution				100%				100%		

Section B: Module Descriptor

Rationale for Inclusion of the Module in the Programme and its Contribution to the Overall IPLOs

The course is a fresh introduction to an art that lies at the centre of human civilization. To write a poem is one of the most ancient of creative acts. It is striking that the poems of classic medieval Chinese poets found a fresh audience in late twentieth century America. U. S. poets like Kenneth Rexroth, Gary Snyder, Robert Bly, W. S. Merwin, have given us noteworthy versions of the Chinese masters, Li Bai, Du Fu, and Wang Wei. It would seem, as Ezra Pound famously claimed for Chaucer, 'poetry is always news'. What learners will discover on this course is that poems are open to the future, even as they emerge from the past; and that they are open to endless imaginative possibilities and approaches, to creation and recreation. Poems are one of the most basic forms of human creativity and communication, as humans have consistently produced poetry, in all time periods, across all cultural zones. This course will introduce our learners to this ancient tradition and deepen their appreciation of it.

Poetry is open to the future, to what can be imagined, as poetry allows us to perceive the world in new ways. And poetry allows us to understand in new ways. This happens not only through traversing across cultural horizons, but through the encounter of one imagination with another through the medium of language and poetic form. One of the many virtues of poetry is that it helps keep alive and vibrant the medium we use every day, language. And, through an intense and special use of diction, rhythm, structure and tone, poems need to be heard as well as perceived or read. Thus they enter the human body in complex and layered ways. Poems play,

	<p>and have played, a central role in human engagement with others and with the world. This course will be an articulate exposition of this fact.</p> <p>In this course, learners will examine boldness, change, compression, excess, intimacy, otherness, surprise and wordliness, in a range of poems both classic and contemporary. We will explore how the mind of the poet supplies a light to the minds of others, kindling their imaginations, helping them to live their lives at a deeper level. We will journey into poetry in this course, one of the most ancient of arts, found in Christian, Judaic, and Islamic traditions; in Western and Eastern civilizations; in fact, amongst all peoples of the planet earth. Every civilization known to us has produced poetry. This course is an introduction to an art that is central to what it means to be human. It will enrich and deepen the consciousness, sensibility, and humanity of all the learners who take it.</p>
<p>Module Aims and Objectives</p>	<p>This course aims to inspire confidence in learners that when they encounter poems that they will be able to read them, comprehend them, and analyse them. This course aims to inspire a love and appreciation for the art of poetry in learners, based on the knowledge that great poetry is difficult to write, and by their ability to grasp and demonstrate the multifaceted dimensions of a great poem. This course aims to produce advocates of poetry in the public and educational domain, based on their understanding of the many traditions of poetry, and through their mastery of the language used to articulate the complex combination of elements that are held in tension in great poetry.</p>
<p>Minimum Module Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>On successful completion of this module, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read any poem closely with some confidence that they can carry out a ‘strong’ (convincing) reading of the poem. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8) 2. Analyse poetry from a variety of perspectives, informed by classic and contemporary poems. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8) 3. To apply the critical vocabulary of poetry with precision and accuracy; that is, to know what metaphor, simile, quatrains, couplets, oxymoron, and synaesthesia are, for example, and to be able to identify them in unseen poems. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8) 4. To evaluate the use of literary techniques like irony, ambiguity, allusion, intertextuality and undecidability as they are used in poetry. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8)
<p>Information Provided to Learners about the Module</p>	<p>College Prospectus specifies module name, stage and ECTS.</p> <p>College website and programme handbook to contain (in addition to above) short description of module content, module learning outcomes, prerequisite modules, and assessment mechanisms.</p> <p>Module handbook to contain (in addition to above) schedule of classes and topics, detailed assessment information with titles and submission dates, full bibliography and list of learning resources.</p> <p>Diploma Supplement contains module name, code, stage and ECTS.</p>
<p>Module Content, Organisation and Structure</p>	<p>We will interact with ideas about poetry by Parini, Hirsch, Longenbach, Furniss and Bath. We will interrogate Hirsch’s claim that ‘poetry is a form of necessary speech.’ Our selection of poems will include classic and contemporary poets, primarily drawn</p>

	<p>from English language traditions, but not exclusively. These may include a selection from the following, amongst others: Shakespeare, Donne, Wordsworth, Browning, Eliot, Auden, Moore, Williams, Stevens, Larkin, Hughes, Plath, Rich, Bishop, Ashbery, Strand, Glück, Armitage, Oliver, Merwin, Yeats, Kavanagh, Mahon, Heaney, Longley, Boland, Higgins, Meehan, Grennan, Quinn.</p> <p>In this course we will read poems together, closely, intently, analytically; a great range and variety of them. We will examine and evaluate the significance and importance of individual words, syntax and the poetic line, alongside images, simile and metaphor. We will explore verse forms and poetic conventions. We will recognise and evaluate a variety of poetic tropes and figures. We will identify and define a range of poetic rhythms and metre, sounds and rhyme.</p> <p>Through their continuous assessment pieces, and the essay, learners will be encouraged to discover, develop and strengthen their own critical voices. They will be exposed to the critical vocabulary that has been developed to articulate and comprehend the many strategies by which a great poem exists. After a few weeks in, learners will at certain points be broken up into smaller groups and asked to examine an unseen poem, to identify salient features and to come to a critical consensus about the poem, what works within it, and how. They will then be asked to present their findings to the class and persuade them as to the validity of their reading. Learners will be asked to host a virtual tutorial by which they discuss, examine and evaluate over the course of a three minute presentation a poem they have been assigned. These tutorials will be shared amongst the class via Moodle.</p>
Module Teaching and Learning Strategy	<p>The teaching strategy will consist of lectures in which contexts will be explored, the craft and technique of poetry discussed, and in which close reading of a wide range of poems will be initiated and demonstrated. Class participation will be encouraged and pursued. In-class guided activities will be engaged with. Moodle support will be used.</p>
Work-Based Learning and Practice-Placement	<p>Non-applicable</p>
E-Learning	<p>Moodle will be used to present course material and to provide links to readings and discussions of poetry from University websites, like the poetry classes delivered on-line by Yale. Also, to provide links to classic portals into poetry like the Academy of American Poetry and the Poetry Foundation. The Woodbury Poetry Room in Harvard University is another rich on-line source that will be used. UCD have also put on line an excellent Irish Poetry Reading Collection that will be used.</p>
Specifications for Module Staffing Requirements	<p>Staff:Learner ratio is typical of the overall programme approach with a maximum of 60 learners</p> <p>Staffing requirements: 1 lecturer</p> <p>The maximum tutor:learner ratio is 20</p> <p>However, as a cross-programme module, additional staff will be required where the maximum number of learners exceed the resources available.</p>
Module Summative and Formative Assessment Strategy	<p>Assessment of this module is by two mini-assignments (25% x 2), which will be formative in nature, and an essay (50%), which will be formative and summative.</p>

	<p>For the mini-assignment learners may write two short pieces, which will typically consist of a critical analysis of a poem. They should demonstrate their ability to close read a poem, and utilize the technical vocabulary by which critics discuss poetry. One of these poems will be drawn from the classical ‘canon’ of English literary greats, and the other poem will be by a contemporary author, typically a living poet. These exercises will be formative in nature, preparing the learner for the longer essay. Other options might include a mini-group discussion and analysis of a poem with a class presentation. Or, the presentation of a short virtual tutorial via Moodle by individual learners.</p> <p>In the essay the learner will provide a critical analysis of two poems, one by a poet drawn from the classical canon and the other by a living contemporary. There will be a fruitful tension here, an opportunity to explore the differences and similarities between the pieces: in what ways are they different in terms of diction, form and style, and in what way are they both species of poetry? This essay will be summative as it will draw on all of the experience and exposure the learner has had in class, what they have learned through the shorter written pieces and class discussions, presentations and virtual tutorials, as well as being formative in relation to the rest of the English component of the degree programme. In this course learners are being prepared for later encounters with poetry.</p>
<p>Sample Assessment Materials</p>	<p>The longer essay (1,250-1,500 words) might consist of something like this:</p> <p>‘The intense transformation of energy, the transubstantiation of mute feeling into words, is a key mark of poetry.’ (Hirsch)</p> <p>Assess this statement based on a close critical reading of both John Donne’s ‘Batter my heart’ and Sylvia Plath’s ‘Daddy’.</p> <p>The shorter written piece (750 words) might be something like this:</p> <p>Critically examine John Keats’s ‘Bright Star Would I Wear’ to determine whether it is an English sonnet or not, and evaluate the metaphors he develops across the poem’s series of quatrains.</p>
<p>Reading Lists and Other Information Resources</p>	<p>Essential Reading:</p> <p>Furniss, Tom and Michael Bath, <i>Reading Poetry: An Introduction</i> (Oxford: Routledge, 2007)</p> <p>Hirsch, Edward, <i>How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry</i> (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999)</p> <p>Longenbach, James, <i>The Virtues of Poetry</i> (Minnesota: Graywolf Press, 2013)</p> <p>Parini, Jay, <i>Why Poetry Matters</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009)</p> <p>Other Reading:</p> <p>Hirschfield, Jane, <i>Ten Windows: How Great Poems Transform the World</i> (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2015)</p> <p>Paulin, Tom, <i>The Secret Life of Poems: A Poetry Primer</i> (London: Faber, 2008)</p>

	<p>Wolosky, Shira, <i>The Art of Poetry: How to Read a Poem</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)</p> <p>Wainwright, Jeffrey, <i>Poetry: The Basics</i>, 2nd edn (Oxford: Routledge, 2011)</p> <p>Essential Viewing: Irish Poetry Reading Archive (UCD Digital Collection): https://digital.ucd.ie/view/ucdlib:38488</p> <p>The Poetry Foundation: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/</p>
<p>Module Physical Resource Requirements</p>	<p>Handouts will be provided to learners regularly. A range of reading material, and the core texts mentioned here, will be available in the college library. Internet access in the classroom will be called upon. Learners will need to access online material through college computers.</p>