

Syllabus English 4309, Sum I 2020

First Summer Semester, English 4303:– American Literature: Confessional Poets

The class is a web delivered class. It is also a one-student independent study class tailored to meet the requirements of a student's McNair Research project.

Instructor: Nelson Sager, Prof. of English, Emeritus. E-mail: nsager@sulross.edu

TEXTS : *Robert Lowell: Collected Poems.* Ed. By Frank Dewart and David Gewanter. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003. ISBN: 9780374530327.

The Collected Poems: Sylvia Plath. Ed. By Ted Hughes. New York: Harper, 1960. ISBN: 0060909005.

The Complete Poems: Anne Sexton. New York: Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt Books, 1999. ISBN: 9780395957769

Heart's Needle. W. D. Snodgrass. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959. ISBN: 0394722205

Not for Specialists: New and Selected Poems. W. D. Snodgrass. BOA Editions Ltd., 2006. ISBN: 978-1929918775

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSED OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES: The student in this course will study the poetic works of the following American Literature Confessional Poets: Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, and W. D. Snodgrass and other poets related to the development of the category of “Confessional Poetry”:

- (1) to become familiar with the characteristics of “Confessional Poetry” in American Literature;
- (2) to identify the basic techniques and subject matter used in the creating this type of poetry that distinguish it from other sub-generic poetic formats in American Literature;
- (3) to discover what critical works have been written about these major “confessional poets.”
- (4) to establish a set of criteria that can be used to evaluate the achievement of “confessional poems” as a part of the poetic canon of American Literature during the 20th century.

For the Purposes of Program Outcomes, the Course Objectives for this course are as follows: Students in this course will be able to

Understand and apply the vocabulary and techniques used in the critical analysis of poetry.

respond effectively in written critical analysis essays and visual presentations that define and explicate “confessional poetry” as created during the latter part of the 20th century in American Literature..

develop and organize these essays and presentations in expository, persuasive, and research-based modes.

conduct online research using library databases and credible web sites.

GRADING: The final grade in the course will be determined from the following weighted assignments:

- (1) participation in the on-line meetings of the class in which the poetry is critically analyzed
- (2) produce a written report of critical analysis and research conducted on selected poems of these poets and present an oral report of the research discoveries

Attendance/Participation: [20 points]

Submission of Written Report of Research [40points]

Presentation of Research Conducted and Discoveries Made [40 points]

Letter Grade Equivalent:

A = 89.51-100+; B = 79.51- 89.5; C = 69.51-79.5; D = 60-69.5;

F = any average below 60

Americans with disabilities Act

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact [Mary Schwartz](#) in counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203

- Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

- **Tentative Schedule of Assignments and Activities:**

- May 20 First Class Day;
- May 25 Holiday, Memorial Day
- May 26 Intro to class; Setting the parameters of the research project; discuss required submissions and activities in the McNair program; develop a working definition of "Confessional Poetry"; select poetry examples from the following representative poets: Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton and W. D. Snodgrass; and other relevant American poets writing during the latter part of the 20th century.
- June 02 Mentor/Student conference
- June 04 Mentor/Student conference
- June 09 Mentor/Student conference
- June 11 Mentor/Student conference
- June 16 Mentor/Student conference

- June 18 Mentor/Student conference
- June 23 Mentor/Student conference
- June 25 Wrap Up of Course: Review written commentary and physical presentation of research
- June 26 Submit written report and audio-visual presentation of results