

English 434A: British and Irish Poetry, 1914-1950



Instructor: Magdalena Kay
Email: magdakay@uvic.ca

Course description:

This course provides a survey of British and Irish poetry during the first half of the twentieth century. It begins with the explosion of avant-garde energy known as Modernism, moves through the arresting poetry of the Great War, and ends with the turbulent period before World War II. It considers the ways in which poets experimented with form as well as content; it asks what sorts of pressures compelled them to reject experimentation as well as to embrace it.

This course will include both lecture and class discussion. Class meetings will frequently focus on one especially important, representative, or complex poem. We will read poetry closely, paying attention to its details, as well as more distantly, in terms of its large cultural significance.

Proposed assignments:

Assignments will typically include a short paper (15%), a long paper incorporating secondary sources (40%), a midterm (15%), and a final exam (40%). Participation is expected.

Proposed reading list:

The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry, vol. 1

T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*

Additional poems and essays to be announced