**State University of New York - New Paltz**

FALL 2013 SYLLABUS ENG 399-Understanding Poetry

**Professor:** Joann K. Deiudicibus **Contact:** [deiudicj@zmail.newpaltz.edu](mailto:deiudicj@zmail.newpaltz.edu); 257-2727

**Meeting Time:** T 6:00-8:40PM **Classroom:** HUM111

**Office Location**: JFT 702 **Office Hours**: W 5:00-6:00, or by appointment

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This is a one-credit modular course meeting once a week over six weeks. A different lecturer and/or performer will conduct various class meetings. Thus, students will be exposed to a variety of poetic forms and literary movements, a variety of ways of looking at the genre, and the possibilities that poetry can explore, from the effect of both lyric and narrative poems (and songs), to the power of brief, epigrammatic forms, to the influence of the ballad tradition and beyond. Students will see that there is no one agreed-upon definition for what poetry is, but will perhaps hone a clearer sense of what poetry is for *them,* as individuals, and how it may remain relevant in and coalesce with contemporary, media-dominated culture. Here we hope to reclaim poetry as an art beyond the English class, one of music, meditation, storytelling, political and social critique, and as communal text. *Please note: this modular course will not provide an overview of all poetic sub-genres, forms, and movements. It will include only basic prosody*. *It is not a Creative Writing course.*

**Assignments:** Students enrolled for credit will compose a three-to-four page, double-spaced analytical essay in response to any of the lectures/performances, or an aspect of combined lectures/performances. Please adhere to MLA format and heading. The grades for any writing assignments and for the course are pass/fail. If you do not submit this required assignment, you cannot pass this course. I am available to meet with you regarding this assignment during my office hours. **Note**: we will do in-class writing, and will use Blackboard to share poems, related materials, and as a formal writing space this semester.

**Attendance:** One unexcused absence will result in failure for a modular course.

**Academic Integrity:**

“Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their academic work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offences, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action” (*Faculty Handbook* 33). Plagiarism is the unacknowledged (intentional or unintentional) use of summary, paraphrase, direct quotation, language, statistics, or ideas from articles or other information sources including the Internet.  A student must cite according to the Modern Language Association (MLA) format*.* If a student plagiarizes all or part of a writing assignment, s/he will automatically receive an “F” on the assignment. In severe cases, a student may fail the course, or be reported to the Dean of the College.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):**

“Students with disabilities are entitled to the right to accommodation under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA of 1990. ADA students are responsible for self-identifying to the Disability Resources Center, who will inform me of your needs of accommodation related to the structure of the course” (*Faculty Handbook* 30).

**Texts and Readings**

Most of our readings will be posted on Blackboard one week in advance of each session, or simply handed out for us to look at together in class. I highly recommend you purchase the collection listed below. We are devoting some time to discussing it, and it offers you a glimpse into what some of our own local authors are doing, not only the poets we will meet in class.

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| [Carr](http://www.sunypress.edu/Searchadv.aspx?IsSubmit=true&SearchOptionID=2&txtAuthorSearch=Laurence%20Carr), Laurence & [Jan Zlotnik Schmidt](http://www.sunypress.edu/Searchadv.aspx?IsSubmit=true&SearchOptionID=2&txtAuthorSearch=Jan%20Zlotnik%20Schmidt), Eds. *A Slant of Light: Contemporary Women Writers of*  *the Hudson Valley.* New York: Codhill Press, 2013 Print. |
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**Schedule of Lectures, Performances, and Assignments**

9/3  Joann K. Deiudicibus and James Sherwood: Introduction- “What Is Poetry?

Defining and Understanding the Genre” (Handouts-Terms and Literary Devices; Poets on Poetry; Poetry about Poetry)

9/10 Andrew Higgins: “Form & Poetry”; Dennis Doherty reads from *The Bad Man*, *Fugitive*,

and *Crush Test*

9/17 Pauline Uchmanowicz and Jan Schmidt: Poetry writing night featuring assignments

paired with poems; Larry Carr, Jan Schmidt and special guests: A reading from *A Slant of Light: Contemporary Women Writers of the Hudson Valley*

# 9/24 Lecture/reading TBA; Class discussion: Responses to sessions, and final paper

10/1  Robert Waugh: Poetry that moves “The Hairs on the Back of your Neck”

10/8 **Classroom Change: LC102**

H.R. Stoneback and Mystery Guests: “Poems, Songs, and Ballads”

**10/18 No Class (Friday): Final essay due; submit to Turnitin via Blackboard by noon**