

# Beginning Poetry Writing

CRW 1301

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## Course Description & Objectives:

We read poems; we write poems; we read the poems we wrote; we write about the poems we read.

This course fulfills the University's 6000 word requirement *in addition to* the poems you'll write throughout the semester. A revision of 6 poems is required for the final portfolio, as well as my original copies of all 10 of your poems (the first draft).

This is a General Education course providing student-learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general.education.requirement.aspx>

## Required Texts:

Donald Hall, *To Read a Poem* (available on Amazon)

Tentative Schedule:

\*Note: The assigned homework is due on the day they are listed in the syllabus. therefore, All of the readings are subject to change, but will always be available as PDFs on Canvas.

Week 1:

Read: *To Read a Poem* (hereafter “*TRAP*”): Introduction, “To the Student”

Week 2:

Read: Robert Frost

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 1: “Good Poems”

Poem (Not for Workshop)

Week 3:

Read: Marie Howe

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 2: “Poems Are Made of Words”

Poem (Not for Workshop)

Week 4:

Read: Elizabeth Bishop

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 3: “Images”

Poem (Not for Workshop)

Week 5:

Read: Sylvia Plath

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 4: “Figures of Speech, Especially Metaphors”

Poem (Not for Workshop)

**Response Paper #1**

Week 6:

Read: Louise Gluck

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 6: “Symbols and Allusions”

Poem (will be workshopped next week) (**bring 20 copies from here on**)

Week 7 Workshop Begins In Class:

Read: Seamus Heaney

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 7: “The Sound of Poems”

Poem (Workshop)

Edits: 30 Words on Each Peer Poem

Week 8:

Read: Michael Hoffman

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 5: “Tone, with a Note on Intentions”

Poem (Workshop)

Edits: 30 Words on Each Peer Poem

Week 9:

Read: Nick Flynn

Read: Jack Gilbert

**Response Paper #2**

Poem (Workshop)

Edits: 30 Words on Peer Poems

Week 10:

Read: T.S. Eliot

Read: *TRAP* Chapter 8: “Meter and Rhyme”

Poem (Workshop)

Edits: 30 Words on Peer Poems

Week 11:

Read: Gwendolyn Brooks

Read: Terrance Hayes

*TRAP* Chapter 9: “Forms and Types of Poetry”

Poem (Workshop)

Edits: 30 Words on Peer Poems

Week 12:

Read: Yusef Komunyakaa

Read: Rita Dove

Poem (Workshop)

Edits: 30 Words on Peer Poems

Week 13:

Read: John Ashbery

Read: Wallace Stevens

Poem (Workshop)

**Response Paper #3**

Edits: 30 Words on Peer Poems

Week 14:

**Revised Portfolio**

**Reflection Paper**

List of Assignments and Points:

Poems (12 @ 10 points each)	120	
Workshop Participation (7 @ 10 pts)	70	
Recitation	50	
Memorized Recitation	60	
200-Word Response Email (5 @ 50 pts)	250	[1000 words]
Response Paper #1	100	[1500 words]
Response Paper #2	100	[1500 words]
Response Paper #3	150	[2000 words]
Revised Portfolio	50	
Reflection Paper	50	[500 words]
 Total points:	 1,000	 [6,000 words]

Description of Assignments:**Poems / Workshop**

There are fourteen classes. For Weeks 2-5 you will turn hard copies of poems in to me and I will mark them up. Starting on Week 6, you will turn in poems to the whole class (**20 copies**) that they will comment on and discuss the following week. For example, on Week 6 you will bring 20 copies of your poem in, and then on Week 7 we will workshop those poems turned in from last week and commented on by your peers. (Of course, you must also bring *new* poems in on Week 7, so that the cycle repeats itself.) This repeats till Week 13, when you turn in your last workshop poems; these will be workshopped Week 14.

Note that not each workshop will have time for each student, but instead we will go on a rotating cycle. Still, you must comment on every peer poem for the benefit of their work.

Students are responsible for reading their peers' poems at least three times, writing at least thirty words on them (positive *and* critical), and bringing them to class. Failure to do so will affect your attendance grade; occasionally I will come around and check.

Class attendance does not mean just showing up: students should be a vocal, but respectful, participant in workshops. Be specific with your comments, written and verbal, since greater detail will help the poet in question.

*Requirements:*

1. To receive credit, poems must:
  1. have 1" margins (and no double-spacing)
  2. be left-justified (not center- or right-, although indentation and other variations in form are allowed)
  3. be written in Times New Roman font, size 12
  4. have a title
  5. have your name and the assignment number at the top of the page.
2. Poems must respond to the assignment given. **No end-rhyming** unless the prompt says it's OK.
3. Poems must be written in complete sentences (if you eliminated the line breaks, the text would read coherently and be grammatically correct). No fragments are allowed.

Each week there will be an option for your poem assignment: follow a given prompt or write whatever poem you like.

### **Response Emails**

Five times of your choosing throughout the semester, you must send me a 200 word response email to a poem or poems from that week's reading. Detail your experience reading it, what memories or feelings it invoked, what it inspired in your own writing or thinking, and anything else.

### **Recitation**

For the first recitation, you will bring in a poem of at least 14 lines to read to the class. Choose a poem from outside our readings: explore the Poetry Foundation website, [poetryfoundation.org](http://poetryfoundation.org).

### **Memorized Recitation**

For the second recitation, students will recite a memorized poem. The memorized poem must be at least 14 lines in length.

### **Response Papers**

You will have papers due throughout the semester asking you to write on a poem we have read alone but not talked about in class. This will not involve research or reading secondary criticism; rather, you may discuss the poem however you like, paying attention to the themes we have read in *TRAP* and discussed in class and workshop.

### **Portfolio (Critique of Work)**

Near the end of the semester, you will revise at least six poems, taking into account my feedback and the feedback of your peers, as well as your own vigorous reexamination of each poem. In a 500-word introduction to these poems, you will reflect on your writing processes for the poems you've written throughout the semester, you will discuss your revision tactics, and you will examine your own growth as a poet. You will also look at your poems as a collected body of work and examine any themes or questions that arise from them being put into proximity.

**Grading Scale**

<b>A 4.0 93-100%</b>	<b>C 2.0 73-76%</b>
<b>A- 3.67 90-92%</b>	<b>C- 1.67 70-72%</b>
<b>B+ 3.33 87-89%</b>	<b>D+ 1.33 67-69%</b>
<b>B 3.0 83-86%</b>	<b>D 1.0 63-66%</b>
<b>B- 2.67 80-82%</b>	<b>D- 0.67 60-62%</b>
<b>C+ 2.33 77-79%</b>	<b>E 0.00 0-59%</b>

Grade	Essays	Poems
A	An “A” paper responds to the assignment prompt in full. It presents an original, specific, and clearly worded argument supported by sufficient evidence from authoritative sources. Writing style is engaging, clear, and concise, and the paper employs a logical organization. It is free from mechanical or formatting errors and cites sources using the proper citation format.	An “A” poem responds to the assignment prompt in full. It uses vivid and carefully considered language and follows an original and cohesive vision. It employs poetic techniques discussed in class to a constructive purpose. Its sentences make complete grammatical sense and it is free from mechanical or formatting errors.
B	A “B” paper responds to the assignment prompt. It presents an original argument, but ideas may need further development or clearer articulation. The argument is supported by evidence. Writing style is generally clear and organization is logical, but there is room for improvement. There are very few mechanical errors and sources are cited properly.	A “B” poem responds to the assignment prompt. It presents a unique vision, but ideas may need further development. It uses poetic techniques but could be doing more to bring craft and drama to the poem. Language used is effective but may need some refining. There are very few mechanical errors.

C	<p>A “C” paper may not fully respond to the prompt. Argument is overly broad or in need of clarification and development. Some evidence is used to support the argument, but claims are not sufficiently defended. Writing style lacks clarity and organization is problematic. Several mechanical errors or incorrect citations.</p>	<p>A “C” poem may not fully respond to the prompt. Vision is disjointed or overly clichéd. Poetic techniques are not used to their fullest potential. Language seems hastily chosen or unoriginal. There are several mechanical errors.</p>
D	<p>A “D” paper does not fully respond to the assignment prompt. Argument is underdeveloped or nonexistent. Little or no evidence is used to support claims. Writing style and organization are unclear. Many mechanical errors or incorrect citations.</p>	<p>A “D” poem does not fully respond to the assignment prompt. Poem seems hastily written with little overall vision to hold it together, unoriginal word choices, and many mechanical errors. Poetic techniques are missing or misused.</p>
E	<p>An “E” paper fails to respond to the assignment prompt <u>(including papers that do not meet the minimum word requirement)</u>. Papers that are late or plagiarized will also receive an “E.”</p>	<p>An “E” poem fails to respond to the assignment prompt. Poems that are late or plagiarized will also receive an “E.”</p>

## Course Policies and Procedures:

### **Attendance and Tardiness**

I excuse student athletes for athletic events, students in the band or theater who need to travel for a university-sponsored event, etc., but *only* if you notify me ahead of time. You also must make up the work.

On the fourth, fifth, and sixth absence, I knock your course grade down a letter. With a seventh absence, you fail the course. Arriving to class late (after a five minute grace period) is half an absence.

### **Statement on Attendance**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### **Classroom Etiquette**

No phones or laptops. We're learning to pay attention to poems and the people around us talking about them.

### **Submission Requirements**

Assignments must be submitted by the correct time on the day assigned and in the specified format.

Mode of Submission: Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the day assigned and in the assigned and in the assigned format. Each assignment will have specific features, but in general, writing assignments are on 8-1/2" x 11" white, smooth-edged paper, double-spaced with 1" margins on all sides, and on one side. If hand-written, the hand-writing must be legible and in either a No. 2 pencil or ink that is blue or black. All out-of-class essays must have rough drafts that show individual revisions.

### **Extra Credit Opportunities**

Students may earn extra credit by attending the MFA@FLA reading series—readings of original poetry and fiction by students in UF's Creative Writing MFA program. These readings take place certain Thursdays at 8 p.m. at Volta Coffee downtown and last approximately 45 minutes. Each reading attended (with a short paragraph about the experience) is worth 5 points of extra credit.

You may also come to office hours with new, original poems for a one-on-one workshop with me; do this three times, and on your next response paper you get a 10% grade increase. You may even email your poem ahead of time so I can get a closer feel for it.

### **Grade Appeals**

In 1000- and 2000- level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

### **Statement of Composition (C) Credit and Humanities (H) Credit**

This course can satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

### **Statement of Writing Requirement**

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: <http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/writing-requirement.aspx>

### **Statement of Student Disability Services**

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

### **Statement on Harassment**

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from gender discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

### **Statement on Academic Honesty**

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>