

CRW 2300—Poetry Writing (Class #12502, Section #37B8)

Fall 2020: August 31–December 9

Instructor name: Cheyenne Taylor

Course meeting time: Thurs (R), period 9–11 (4:05–7:05p). Synchronous meetings: 4:05–5:35p Live Online (Zoom); additional work will be asynchronous.

Virtual office hours: R 3:00–4:00p or by appointment (Zoom)

Instructor email: cheyenne.taylor@ufl.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

When we talk about poetry, we tend to focus on the grand scheme—what does this *mean*? How does it make us *feel*? Often, though, we don't stop long enough to think about *how* the poet creates meaning, *how* the poet manages to make us feel that familiar, almost universal and hard to capture feeling: grief, love, heartbreak, awe, nostalgia, etc.

One of the main focuses of this course will be how we evoke the universal through detail—how choosing to focus on the concrete and individual details of lived experience can do a much better job of capturing larger ideas than those abstract words (grief, love, etc.) alone can do. When asked why he thought poetry “endured as an art form,” poet Mark Doty had this to say:

“My guess is that somehow poetry is a vessel for the expression of subjectivity unlike any other; a good poem bears the stamp of individual character in a way that seems to usher us into the unmistakably idiosyncratic perceptual style of the writer. I think we're hungry for singularity, for those aspects of self that aren't commodifiable, can't be marketed...poetry may represent the resolutely specific experience.... If [poems] succeed they are saturated with the texture of the uniquely felt life” (from the Poetry Foundation).

To tune our ears to the nuanced decisions that poets make in creating that texture, we will read, write, and write about poems. We will learn how to do these things with careful attention and attendance to language through weekly readings, writing prompts, and discussions. In these next thirteen weeks we will learn about the craft of our language—after all, as poet and UF alum Adam Vines tells us, “Constructing compelling verse is hard damn work, blue-collar work.” In this course, we will start compiling the tools we need to undertake that work.

In the first half of the course (weeks 1–6), we will build our knowledge and vocabulary to help us read and respond to poetry critically. In the second half of the course (weeks 7–13), we will apply what we've learned, and continue to learn, to our own work as well as our peers' in a workshop environment. Here, we will be practicing our ability to edit and revise a poem for the better as we continue to develop our foundational knowledge of poetry.

REMOTE COURSEWORK / COVID-19 STATEMENT

All of us have felt and will continue to feel the impact of COVID-19 and the epidemic's social and financial fallout. Education is only one of the major life spheres in which we have had to adapt to these changes. As such, this course will take place remotely, and does so under exceptional circumstances. I recognize the difficulty of taking what was originally a face-to-face course into the online arena, and hope the choices I have made as an instructor will make this shift as manageable as possible.

With that in mind, CRW 2300 for Fall 2020 is organized to help us engage our peers in workshop via live sessions, while also mitigating the risk of Zoom fatigue. Instead of meeting synchronously for the full 3-hour course period, we will meet live for 1 hour, 30 minutes. Any further activities and readings must be completed by midnight each Thursday we have class unless otherwise stated. I will send instructions to the class about how to join our Zoom meetings; do make sure to download Zoom before class starts so you can familiarize yourself with how it works.

I plan to record the audio of our meetings, strictly for accessibility purposes. If you are registered with the DRC to receive audio recordings of live sessions or want to request access for another reason, please let me know. I will *not* share video—no one's face will be part of the shared recordings. Still, if privacy is a concern, please feel free to reach out to me.

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition [C] and also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement [WR].
- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University Writing Requirement [WR] ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6,000 words.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication, and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

In this course, I expect you to communicate and respond as a professional student. These expectations include but are not limited to:

- **Preparation:** reading and understanding the syllabus in full, planning and preparing to meet all due dates, asking questions about assignments before “the night before.”
- **Self-initiative:** asking questions when course expectations are unclear, pre-planning if you know of life or work events that will interfere with due dates, checking the syllabus before emailing the instructor, carefully reading assignment feedback.
- **Maturity/Respect:** expecting and developing a willingness to receive constructive criticism, not taking constructive comments personally, making sure that your own comments are constructive and respectful.
- **Community:** being an active team participant, offering a safe and open-minded environment for peers, and contributing helpful, constructive, and encouraging comments on the work of others.

All of these qualities will help you be a successful student and professional colleague. When we all come to the table with energy, enthusiasm, and professionalism, our virtual classroom feels much more like an in-person workshop.

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Completion of Assignments:** You must complete *all* major writing assignments to receive credit for this course—completion means meeting the word count requirements and following any prompt guidelines.

- Attendance:** Attendance at live Zoom meetings is mandatory, and repeated tardiness will result in a lowered overall grade. You are allowed to miss two classes; any absences in excess of two will result in failure of the course. If you have documented extenuating circumstances, such as illness or family emergency, please reach out to me; I will handle such situations on a case-by-case basis. If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates and to submit the next class' assignments on time.

UF's official attendance policy:

Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first class meeting.

In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g. jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons may also be approved.

Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.

Students cannot participate in classes unless they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.

If a student does not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and they have not contacted the department to indicate their intent, the student can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped, however. The department will notify students if they have been dropped from a course or laboratory.

The university recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

- Late Papers/Assignments:** Late assignments are penalized by half a letter grade for every calendar day past the due date. To avoid losing additional points, attach your late, completed assignment to your email in addition to uploading it to Canvas. Assignments submitted after Tuesday (five days beyond the due date) will not be accepted. I will consider extensions only in extenuating circumstances with advance notice (at least 24

hours before the deadline).

4. **Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism:** UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.
5. **Students with disabilities** who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor at the beginning of the semester.
6. For information on **UF Grading Policies**, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
7. **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, at cblount@ufl.edu. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
8. **Course Evaluations:** Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>
9. **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Students who are in distress or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF’s Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>
10. **Classroom Behavior and Etiquette:** The classroom is a safe space. As such, behave in a respectful manner in class—listen thoughtfully and engage in any discussion with respect. If you do not, you will be asked to leave and be counted as absent. Bear in mind always that we are the product of different backgrounds and different sets of

experiences. The purpose of the workshop aspect of this course is to help each other become better writers and critical thinkers through community.

- a. *Zoom etiquette*: Prepare to connect to Zoom with both video and audio so that we can best approximate a face-to-face situation. Our meeting will be set up to mute everyone on entry to reduce background noise, but feel free to unmute yourself to speak up, ask questions, etc. as you would in a normal classroom setting. If you are unable to join on camera, please send me an email explaining the situation.
- b. *Email communication*: Please remember to include a greeting, use complete sentences, and have an appropriate signature when emailing me or anyone else in this classroom. I try to respond to email within 24 hours during business days, and regularly check my email during the hours of 9am–7pm. Check your email regularly, as this is how I will communicate with you to send announcements, changes to the schedule, cancelled class, etc.

11. **Technology**: Make sure that you have Zoom installed on your computer and that you have reliable access to a working video camera and microphone. As a student at UF, you have access to a Microsoft 365 account. If you do not have Microsoft Word or a way to save your documents in .doc or .docx format, please install the program (free via UF) as soon as possible. [Click here](#) and choose “Go to Service” for installation & instructions.

12. **UF’s Policy on Harassment**: The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/>

REQUIRED TEXTS

You may purchase hard copies or electronic copies of the texts. I would encourage you, if purchasing hard copies, to buy used, and if possible, to consider buying from local or independent booksellers. Gainesville’s own Book Gallery West (www.bookgallerywest.com) and Third House Books (www.thirdhousebooks.com/order-online) have online purchase portals, or you can visit sites like AbeBooks.com and Bookshop.org to shop independent booksellers across the nation. Of course, in a pinch, Amazon.com is always an option, too.

These books are listed in the order we will be using them, so please have access to the textbook and Doty’s collection as soon as possible. You’ll need to have portions read and ready to discuss in Week 2.

- Michelle Boisseau, Hadara Bar-Nadav, & Robert Wallace, editors. *Writing Poems*, 8th edition. ISBN: 978-0205176052

- Mark Doty. *Deep Lane*. ISBN: 978-0393353228
- Ada Limón. *Bright Dead Things: Poems*. ISBN: 978-1571314710
- Vieve Francis. *Forest Primeval*. ISBN: 978-0810132436
- Jericho Brown. *The Tradition*. ISBN: 978-1556594861
- Karen Solie. *The Caiplie Caves*. ISBN: 978-0374117962 or 978-1529005325 (either version is fine).

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment	Word count	Points available
Prompts (x10)	-	12 (x 10)
Discussion Board Posts	150 (x5)	15 (x5)
Critical Reviews	650 (x5)	55 (x5)
Final Critical Analysis	1,000	200
Workshop & Participation	-	100
Recitation	250	55
Journal Submission	-	25
Chapbook	750	150
Total	6,000	1,000

- **Prompts and Poems:** We are here to write poetry as well as talk about it. As such, I will assign one prompt per week, which will contain guidelines for your poems. These prompts are intended to stretch your creative muscles and make you think beyond the initial instinct. A copy of your poem is to be turned in on Canvas (you will be required to post the poems to a discussion board for your peers as well when workshop begins). I will return them with my comments and feedback with a full or partial credit according to the following scale:

No Credit 0 pts.	Low Partial Credit 6 pts.	High Partial Credit 10 pts.	Full Credit 12 pts.
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Drafts that receive full credit will:

- Adhere to the assigned prompt,
- be turned in to me (and the rest of your classmates) on time,
- have 1-inch margins, single-spaced, and be written in a clear, 12 pt. professional font,
- be left-justified (not center- or right-, although indentation and other variations in form are allowed depending on the prompt for the week),
- employ correct spelling and grammar,
- be titled (no “Untitled” poems),
- demonstrate thought and preparation.

Do not write these poems five minutes before class. I will anticipate, as a mentor once said to me, “full efforts at writing well.” Late, missing, and unlabored poems will earn no credit.

- **Discussion Board Posts:** You will be expected to post to themed discussion boards five times throughout the semester. Each board will have a prompt related to major poetic craft concerns. Each entry must be at least 150 words long and written formally, including proper grammar, spelling, and audience consideration. You will also respond to at least two of your peers’ posts per cycle.
- **Critical Reviews:** To become a good writer of poetry, you must first be an informed and engaged reader of poetry. To that end, for the five poets we read, you will be asked to write a review of the collection, focusing on one or more poems to serve as examples of the poet’s style, aesthetic, poetic choices, etc. as you choose. Your review should be a considered critique of the poet in question, paying particular attention to the poetic devices/strategies the poet employs. The response should not simply say “I liked this poem” or “The poet did a good job.” Go deeper than that—we’ll discuss approaches and angles to this in class, and I will also provide supplements & examples via Canvas for your reference. Quotations must not exceed 10% of the paper’s word count and must be correctly cited. Papers should employ MLA format.
- **Final Critical Analysis:** For this assignment, you will be asked to critically analyze either:
 - a poet we have read, looking at two to three poems (at least one of which was not discussed in class) that you believe to be a good representation of the poet’s stylistic choices,
 - an entire collection, focusing on poetic devices employed by the poet in the poem,
 - one poem from a poet we have read, providing a close reading of that poem, or
 - a poetic device employed by more than one poet we have read throughout the course, bringing them into dialogue with each other.Further details will be provided on the Canvas assignment page.
- **Workshop:** Workshop is a participation-based grade. To receive full credit for workshops, you must be there and be prepared. I expect you to come to class having read each piece carefully *at least* once. Formulate a response wherein you note the piece’s strengths and weaknesses, as well as provide ideas for the next draft. You should make notes on the poem itself, either via Word’s Review/comments feature or typed up as a separate document. You must make *at least* four comments: two outlining devices that worked throughout the poem and two in critique, as well as annotated suggestions and comments throughout. Complete these before class begins and send them to your

peers & to me before the end of the day.

You should be honest, constructive, and encouraging. The Golden Rule of Workshop is to critique others as you would like to be critiqued. The workshop grade of those who fail to respect their peers' thoughts, feelings, and efforts will be affected accordingly.

- **Participation:** Being prepared for this course means not only doing the reading and writing, but also participating in discussion and engaging in class. You should have the required reading material with you during all live class meetings and participate in all asynchronous activities/exercises as well. Be prepared and ready to contribute to the discussion of each day's material. Everyone is expected to contribute during workshop.
- **Recitation:** You will recite from memory a poem of your choice in a video recording towards the end of the semester. This is a great way to *tune your ear* to the variations of meter, rhythm, rhyme, and the other aural characteristics of poetry. The poem you recite is up to you (i.e. it can be the work of ANY poet), as long as it is at least 14 lines and approved by me before the recitation. In addition, you will be required to prepare a short introductory passage about the poet, the poem, and why you chose the poem with reference to the poem's qualities.
- **Journal Submission:** Sending work to literary journals and magazines is an integral part of the writing life—after all, we want our messages heard, right? You will submit (at least) one of your revised poems for consideration to a literary magazine, forwarding me the email confirmation as evidence. We'll talk about how to do this in class!
- **Chapbook:** The final project for this course will be a chapbook, which will include at least 5 revised, "finished" poems. Your chapbook will also include a cover and title, a **300-word Artist Statement**, a **300-word reflective piece** that details your revision process, and a **150-word letter** to a current (living) poet whose work you admire. You may also include any other design/visual elements you wish, provided you create them on your own or have permission to use them.

SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE

This tentative schedule is subject to change. I will always notify you of changes via Canvas announcements and/or email. All readings (including peer poems) should be completed before class. Poems and discussion board posts are due by class time (Thurs, 4:05pm). Critical reviews and discussion board responses are due Thurs by 11:59pm unless otherwise noted. Chapters refer to *Writing Poems*.

Date	Readings/Classwork	Assignments Due
Week 1 (Sep 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Course syllabus & introduction ▪ Ada Limón's "10 Tips for Writing Towards Beauty" (Canvas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce Yourself Discussion Board (by next class)
Week 2 (Sep 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 1: "Starting Out" ▪ First half of Doty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 1 ▪ Discussion Board 1
Week 3 (Sep 17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 2: "Verse" ▪ Second half of Doty ▪ Critical review handouts (Canvas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 2 ▪ Critical Review 1
Week 4 (Sep 24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 7: "Metaphor" ▪ First half of Limón 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 3 ▪ Discussion Board 2
Week 5 (Oct 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 5: "The Sound (And Look) of Sense" ▪ Second half of Limón 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 4 ▪ Critical Review 2
Week 6 (Oct 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 4: "Making the Line (II)" ▪ First half of Francis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 5 ▪ Discussion Board 3
Week 7 (Oct 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 6: "Subject Matter" ▪ Second half of Francis ▪ "Workshop Guidelines" handout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 6 ▪ Critical Review 3
Week 8 (Oct 22) <i>Workshop Begins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 3: "Making the Line (I)" ▪ First half of Brown ▪ Your peers' poems (poem 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 7 ▪ Comments on your peers' poems for workshop ▪ Discussion Board 4
Week 9 (Oct 29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 8: "Tale, Teller, and Tone" ▪ Second half of Brown ▪ Your peers' poems (poem 7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 8 ▪ Comments on peers' poems ▪ Critical Review 4
Week 10 (Nov 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 9: "The Mysteries of Language" ▪ First third of Solie ▪ Your peers' poems (poem 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 9 ▪ Comments on peers' poems ▪ Discussion Board 5
Week 11 (Nov 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 10: "Finding the Poem" ▪ Second third of Solie ▪ Your peers' poems (poem 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poem 10 ▪ Comments on peers' poems ▪ Critical Review 5
Week 12 (Nov 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 11: "Devising and Revising" ▪ Finish Solie ▪ Your peers' poems (poem 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comments on peers' poems ▪ Final Critical Analysis (by Fri) ▪ Recitation (by Tues 11/24)
Nov 26 – NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break		

Week 13 (Dec 3)	Last day of class! Discussion of the world of poetry today, next steps, & AMA. Course evaluations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapbook ▪ Journal Submission
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There is no final exam for this course; your Critical Analysis & Chapbook serve as your final projects.

GRADING SCALE + RUBRIC

Letter	GPA	%	Points	Letter	GPA	%	Points
A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

"A"- A paper at this level is truly high quality. It demonstrates a clear understanding of critical concepts, creatively addresses the subject matter, and exceeds the expectations of critical analysis. A paper with this grade will be free of grammatical errors.

"B"- A paper with this grade has met the standards of the assignment at a high quality level. This assignment may need revision but is organized in a logical way and avoids fallacies or mistakes in critical analysis. A paper with this grade may contain grammatical errors but will be readable.

"C"- A paper that earns a "C" has done everything that was required, but no more. This assignment may require significant revision to more thoroughly examine critical elements, or it may need reorganization. A paper with this grade will generally contain a few grammatical errors but will still be readable.

"D"- This paper does not adequately fulfill the assignment to a satisfactory degree. One portion of an assignment may not have been touched upon or there may be a misused critical element. Papers with this grade tend to be disorganized and contain many grammatical errors.

"E"- This paper does not address the assignment prompt or is unreadable/incomplete.