

CRW 1301: Beginning Poetry Writing

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Course Description and Objectives

This course will provide a critical overview of the process of writing poetry, as well as introduce students to the existing canon. An important element to this course is learning how to really *read* a poem, which we will do often with close consideration. This will prepare us for our own poems, in which we will exercise that same kind of thoughtfulness.

In the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to participate in discussions about other poets' work using the particular set of vocabulary we'll learn. The workshop portion of our class takes off in the second half when you will participate in discussions about the poems of your peers. You'll want to spend the same amount of meticulous time on each.

This combined seminar and workshop approach will help us to understand poetry on a critical level. Not only will we learn to read poetry and write our own poems, but we will also learn how to write about writing.

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-educationrequirement.aspx#learning>

Required Texts

An Introduction to Poetry, Kennedy & Gioia (13th Edition)

The Triggering Town: Lectures and Essays on Poetry and Writing, Richard Hugo

The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Poetry, J.D. McClatchy, Ed. (2nd Edition)

Supplemental readings will be provided by the Instructor. Retain all poems, handouts, and materials from this course. Start a folder or notebook the first week of class, and maintain it. You are responsible for having print-outs of readings and poems in class, and for keeping track of your own grades.

Websites

The Poetry Foundation

The Paris Review

The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

Assignments & Grading

This class meets the University's 6000 word requirement *in addition to* the 10 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).

Poems

You will turn in ten poems that respond to the assigned prompts. The first three will be for me only; poems four through ten will be workshopped.

Workshop Procedure: Bring **copies** of your poem for the rest of the class. Over the course of the week, please read each poem carefully (at least two times), and mark up the copies with feedback. Prepare at least TWO POSITIVE and TWO CRITICAL comments for each poem in a paragraph-like comment at the bottom of the page, and be prepared to share them during workshop. Bring these marked-up copies to class on the day of workshop. At the end of class, you will return the poems to the poets who wrote them.

Requirements:

1. To receive credit, poems must:
 - a. have 1" margins (and no double-spacing)
 - b. be left-justified (not center- or right-, although indentation and other variations in form are allowed)
 - c. be written in Times New Roman font, size 12
 - d. have a title
 - e. 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.

Close Reading Response Papers

You will write five 500-word close reading response papers over the course of the semester. Each paper will critically engage with a poem, proposing a thesis on a specific element in the poem (e.g. use of diction, image, symbol, etc). While each paper must contain a thesis, the papers need not follow an argumentative research paper structure. However, they still require supporting examples from the text. They must be well-organized and thoughtfully written with correct grammar.

Your response may be based on something we recently did that caused you to react in some way. Perhaps it inspired a poem of yours, or maybe you disagree with it. You might even like to examine a poem in further detail. The topic is your choice, as long as it's relevant to our discussion. This is designed as an exercise in both developing your argumentation skills as a critic and exploring your own poetic interests and curiosities.

Recitation

Students will read a poem out loud for the class. The writer must be "legit." Obviously, the writers we will have read in class would work. You may also refer to poets.org or poetryfoundation.org for other options. The poem must be approved by me.

Memorized Recitation

For the second recitation, students will recite a memorized poem. These should not be haikus or poems chosen based solely on length. Note: you may not recite only a part of a longer poem; the memorized poem must be a complete poem. Again, the poem must be approved prior to presenting.

The Paris Review Interview Paper and Presentation

Each student will choose a different Art of Poetry Interview from *The Paris Review* to present for the rest of the class. Students will present throughout the course of the semester, so we have least one presentation to begin class each week. In addition to the presentation, students will write up a 500-word response to the interview, detailing what struck them and what they took from the interview about the poet and also about the craft of poetry.

Book Review

You will find and read a full-length book of poems by a single poet that has been released in the last ten years and write a review of the work in 1500 words. For this assignment, we will practice not only reading poems closely, but also engaging our own critical opinions and examining the way poems work together to form a complete volume.

Final Revisions

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. The portfolio should include *the original copies of all poems with my comments* as well as the revised six poems. The portfolio will be graded as a whole based on the quality of your revisions and the scope of your improvement throughout the semester.

Introduction to Final Portfolio

For the first part of this assignment (~500 words), you will reflect on your writing processes for the poems you've written throughout the semester, you will discuss your methods of revision, and you will examine your own growth as a poet. For the second part, you will discuss how at least two of the poets we've read or discussed this semester have influenced you; in doing so, you must analyze at least one poem by each, including line quotations (~500 words). Finally, you will examine your poems as a collected body of work and discuss themes, recurring images, and/or questions that arise from them being put into proximity. You could consider this portion your "artist statement" (~500 words). Make sure that all three sections added together total at least 1,500 words.

Participation

Because this is a discussion- and workshop-based class, you are expected to be an active participant.

Class discussion:

To receive full participation points, you should speak up **at least once** during each discussion. Students are responsible for completing all assigned readings each week. If I feel that students are not consistently prepared for class, I will give unannounced reading quizzes. Quizzes and graded in-class activities **cannot** be made up in the case of absence.

Workshops:

To receive full participation points, you should be a vocal, but respectful, participant in workshops. Students are responsible for reading the poems to be workshopped and for writing comments on them. Be specific with your comments, written and verbal, since greater detail will help the poet in revision.

Extra Credit

Students may earn extra credit by attending the MFA@FLA reading series—readings of original poetry and fiction by students in UF's Masters in Fine Arts in creative writing program. These readings take place certain Thursdays at 8 p.m. at Volta Coffee downtown and last approximately 1 hour. See the schedule for dates. Each reading attended (with a short paragraph about the experience) is worth 5 points of extra credit.

Grading

Poems: 100 points (10 poems, 10 each)
Final Revisions: 100 pts
Recitation: 50 pts
Memorization: 50 pts
Participation: 100 pts

Close Readings: 250 pts (5 papers, 50 each)
The Paris Review Paper: 50 pts
Book Review: 150 pts
Final Portfolio Introduction: 150 pts
= total of 1,000 pts

Rubric

“A” –A paper at this grade was done at an extraordinarily high-quality level. The work demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the concepts covered, and shows a thoughtful amount of creativity. This paper shows all the qualities listed below for a “B”, but goes beyond what was asked in terms of developing content and analysis. Papers at this level are usually free of all grammatical errors (papers with more than two errors cannot receive an “A”).

“B” –A paper at this grade has done what was asked of the assignment at a high-quality level. The work is complete and may need further revision, but works at an elementary level. The style is straightforward and the organization is logical. It may contain grammatical errors, but it is otherwise readable.

“C” –A paper at this grade has done what was asked of the assignment. The work may need significant revision, but is complete in content and has logical organization. This paper may contain more grammatical errors that render it unreadable at times.

“D” –A paper at this grade has completed the assignment at level of poor quality. The work needs significant revision. It is usually incomplete and the organization doesn’t make sense. Attention to style is nonexistent.

“E” –A paper that does not address the needs of the assignment or shows little effort will result in a failing grade.

I allow one revision from one of the response papers. Late papers will not be accepted. If you are expecting to be absent, be sure to email me your work the day of class AND bring a hardcopy to class the following week. I allow one extension IF you come to me much in advance.

Grading Scale

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

Class Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

You are allowed two unexcused absences. A third absence will result in the drop of a full letter grade. If you accumulate four unexcused absences, you will fail the course.

An absence will count as excused only if the student is participating in a university-sponsored event (athletics, theater, music, field trip, religious holidays) and provides documentation from an appropriate authority. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with me PRIOR to the date that will be missed.

Please come prepared. Forgetting your materials, using a computer or phone, or disrupting your peers will count as a tardiness and will have you dismissed from the class.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are absent it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates and to submit the next week's assignments on time. You are also responsible for getting in touch with a classmate to find out what you missed in class. Save your absences for when you're really ill. It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences.

UF Statement on Attendance and Make-up Work:

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

Classroom Etiquette

Cell phones and laptops are prohibited during class—no chatting or surfing! If I notice you breaking these rules, I will mark you absent for the day without a warning.

Submission Requirements

I do not accept late work. Failure of technology is not an excuse. Students are expected to factor in time for proofreading, revising, and printing/electronic submission. Assignments must be submitted by the correct time on the day assigned and in the specified format.

Mode of Submission: All papers and poems will either be submitted as MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents to the instructor's email or physical copy. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers and poems must be in 12-point Times New Roman font. Poems should be single-spaced and include your name, the date, and the assignment number. Essays must be double-spaced with 1-inch margins. Please use correct MLA formatting and citation style for critical writing.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material. I recommend keeping a binder or expanding folder to organize handouts and workshop poems.

Conferences

It is encouraged that you make an appointment with me—either during office hour or another,

mutually convenient time—if you have questions or concerns about the work or your progress in the course. Conferences on assignments can improve the quality of your final draft.

Additional Resources for Students

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, (352-846-1138) <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

The Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road (352-392-1575) <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/ewe/>

Grade Appeals

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. Grade appeals may result in a lower, higher, or unchanged grade.

Statement of Composition

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

Statement of Writing requirement (WR)

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing-and-math-requirement.aspx>

Student Disability Accommodations

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

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

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: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8 July 2011)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code. The University Writing Program takes plagiarism very seriously, and treats instances of plagiarism as dishonesty and as a failure to comply with the scholarly requirements of this course. You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own.

Important tip: There should never be a time when you copy and paste something from the Internet and don't provide the exact location and citation information for the source.

If a student plagiarizes all or any part of any assignment, he or she will be awarded a failing grade on the assignment. Additionally, University policy suggests that, as a MINIMUM, instructors should impose a course grade penalty and report any incident of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Each student's work may be tested for its originality against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites may constitute PROOF of plagiarism. Other forms of academic dishonesty will also result in a failing grade on the assignment as a minimum penalty. Examples include cheating on a quiz or citing phony sources or quotations to include in your assignments.

Schedule

In addition to what's listed below, we'll be reading a number of poems from our anthology and online. If online, I will either bring copies or email the URL where they can be found and printed.

This schedule is subject to change. Unless otherwise indicated, assignments and readings are **DUE THE DAY THEY ARE LISTED** on the syllabus, not the following week.

- Week 1: 1/6** Introduction
In Class: TT "Writing Off the Subject"
- Week 2: 1/13** How to Approach a Poem
K&G 1 & 18, TT "The Triggering Town"
Close Reading #1 Due
Poem 1 Due to Instructor
- Week 3: 1/20** Words
K&G 3 & 4, TT "Assumptions"
Poem 2 Due to Instructor
- Week 4: 1/27** Images
K&G 5
Poem 3 Due to Instructor
Close Reading #2 Due
- Week 5: 2/3** Figures of Speech
K&G 6
Bring in list of similes
Poem 4 Due—Bring copies for class from now on.
- Week 6: 2/10** Songs and Sounds
K&G 7 & 8
Bring in your favorite song lyrics
Recitations
Poem 5
- Week 7: 2/17** Rhythm & Form
K&G 9 & 10
Close Reading #3 Due
Poem 6
- Week 8: 2/24** Symbols / Nuts & Bolts
K&G 12, TT "Nuts & Bolts"
Poem 7

SPRING BREAK

- Week 9: 3/10** Writing About Poetry / Reviews
K&G 22 & 23
Poem 8
Close Reading #4 Due
- Week 10: 3/17** Narrative & Identity
K&G 13 & 14
Poem 9
Close Reading #5 Due
- Week 11: 3/24** Recognizing Excellence
K&G 17, TT “Statements of Faith”
Poem 10
- Week 12: 3/31** Open Forms
K&G 11
Book Review Due
- Week 13: 4/7** Revisions (*The Energy of Revision*)
Reread Triggering Town
Memorizations
Bring in at least one revision
- Week 14: 4/14** CONFERENCES
- Week 15: 4/21** Conclusion
Portfolios Due in Class