

Beginning Poetry Writing

CRW 2300 Section 1658 T 9-11 (405-705pm) WEIM 1092

Department of English, University of Florida

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Course description and goals

It's a walking before running kind of thing: we must become good readers before we can be good writers. In support of this, our course emphasizes **reading, analyzing, and writing poetry**. Classes will focus on in-depth analyses of poetry on its different levels as well as techniques and ideas for integrating it into our own writing. Our goals are to become close-readers and skilled communicators in the world and medium of poetry.

Assignments will complement our reading and writing goals for the course and discussions should be considered opportunity to practice the skills introduced throughout the semester. We will form a writing community in which greater and richer participation will yield greater benefits for all involved. Respect and care will be paid equally to class assigned readings, peers' writing, discussions, and workshops. Finally, we should approach each aspect of the class simultaneously as a reader and writer of poetry.

Books

An Introduction to Poetry
X. J. Kennedy & Dana Gioia
13th edition

Best American Poetry 2012
Mark Doty, Editor

*You are required to obtain your textbooks before the 2nd week of classes to complete assigned reading. See the Reitz Union Bookstore, Amazon, etc. for purchasing.

Assignments and Grading

11 POEMS on assignment 10 points each, lowest dropped	100 points
3 650-WORD ESSAYS, 45 points each	135 points
1 (650-Word) ESSAY <u>REWRITE</u>	45 points
3 650-WORD POEM DEFENSES, 40 points each	120
PARTICIPATION	150 points
1 POEM Memorization and Recitation	50 points
PORTFOLIO	<u>400 points</u>
	1,000 points

Essays

Essays should be on topic, well-organized logically, edited thoroughly for any errors, and interesting.

Remember that this is a composition course in addition to a creative-writing course. The specific assignment

for these essays will be provided 2 weeks before the due date along with a grading rubric. I do expect quality writing, meaning at the least that you compose a concise and informative introduction ending with a powerful thesis, body paragraphs that support your thesis, and a conclusion a strong non-repetitive conclusion. Failure on any of these counts or to write to the assignment may result in a zero on the paper. If you would like assistance in your writing, you are encouraged to make an appointment at the Reading and Writing center, or see me for office hours.

Defenses

Write a quick defense of a selected poem, convincing us of its qualities and merits... in 5 minutes! Present your case to the class, and respond to the classes cases against the poem. Prepare a document with either an outline or a transcript of your 5 minute defense, and evidence of your preparation for our rebuttal points (e.g. If they say that the rhyme between line 4 and 6 is weak, I will point to the rhyme in 8 and 10 and 13 and 14, etc.). To do this, you will need to think very critically about the poem you choose so you can be ready regardless of what point we make against your poem.

Conferences

You will be meeting with me on at least 2 occasions outside of class to discuss your poems and thoughts on our readings or other poetry-related subjects. Conferences will not begin until after the second class period, leaving you time to prepare writing, revisions, and other things you would like to discuss. Credit for these meetings will be determined by your level of preparation for the conference (e.g. writing samples, specific questions, revisions, comments on a specific poem or point of craft, etc.).

Participation

Each student adopting an active role in all aspects of the class will significantly enhance the success of the course. You are expected to come to class prepared and to engage in all discussions by offering thoughtful and respectful ideas, suggestions, and critiques.

Your role is particularly important once we enter the workshop portion of class. Prepare yourself for these sessions by writing specific comments on the poems and endnote addressed to the writer. This will help the writer identify strengths and weaknesses in writing, and it was also help you to become a better critic of poetry, directly feeding into your skills as a writer. Your peers will also provide a holistic evaluation of the comments you provide on their poems.

Portfolio

You will compose 11 poems this semester according to assignment and revise each. As we progress in the course, you will be developing techniques of expression and form; the portfolio is your opportunity to demonstrate what you have gained as a writer during our time. **Your portfolio will also include a 1,500 word reflection paper in which you provide a 150 word analysis of 10 revisions, and a 300 word general reflection on the class and your development as writer/reader/poet; consider this writing further opportunity to demonstrate knowledge gained and skill honed.**

Additionally, you will receive feedback on each poem either from me or from me and your peers; revisions should take this feedback into account. Your goal is to present a small collection of polished poems. A lack of effort will be obvious, so you may want to consider revising throughout the semester.

Your portfolio should consist of all assignments completed for the semester, the original copy of each poem with my comments, **and your reflection paper.**

Notes on composition and formatting:

Here are a few things you must take into account in the composition and physical presentation of your poems.

1. The rules of grammar must be observed in poetry.
2. Do not end-rhyme your poems unless instructed to do so.
3. Do not center your poems on the page.
4. Single space your poems.
5. Include a title for your poems (and essays); "Untitled" is not an appropriate title
6. You must respond to the poetry assignment.

*Failure on any of these points will result in no credit for your first draft. You will need to rewrite the assignment to avoid losing credit on your final portfolio.

F inal Grade Scale

100-93, A (4.00)	76-73, C (2.00)
92-90, A- (3.67)	72-70, C- (1.67)
89-87, B+ (3.33)	69-67, D+ (1.33)
86-83, B (3.00)	66-63, D (1.00)
82-80, B- (2.67)	62-60, D- (.67)
79-77, C+ (2.33)	59 & below, E (.00)

Grading Guidelines

A: You completed what the assignment asked at a high quality level. The work must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the texts you are analyzing and the concepts covered in class, and originality and creativity.

Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a B in addition to extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of grammatical or mechanical errors.

B: You completed what the assignment asked at a high quality level. Work in this range needs further revision; however, it is complete in content, well-organized, and shows special attention to style.

C: You completed what the assignment asked. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.

D: You completed what the assignment asked at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is difficult to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.

E: If your work shows little effort and understanding of the needs of the assignment, you will receive a failing grade.

After the conclusion of the semester, I do not make grade changes except in cases of mathematical error. In the event that you decide to challenge your grade (in spite of the above), forms are available from Carla Blount, program assistant.

***Late assignments will not be accepted for credit.

Course Policies

Assignments

All assignments should be computer generated and professional in appearance. Submit all assignments electronically to the course website and as hard copies at the beginning of class on the due date (late submissions in either medium will result in no credit for the assignment). In the case of absence, do not email

me your work. Instead, you should arrange to submit the assignment to the course website before the class period in which it is due. In the case of a poem during the workshop period of the semester, you must submit the poem electronically 24 hours in advance so I can print extra copies for the class.

Attendance

You are allowed two absences. A third absence will cost you a full letter grade (an A- becomes a B-, for example). Four or more absences and you will fail the course. If you come in to minutes after the start of class, you are tardy. Two tardies = one absence. Using a phone, computer, or engaging in disrespectful behavior towards your instructor or peers will result in your dismissal from class, counting as an absence regardless of the time of your dismissal.

If you do miss a class, you are still responsible for completing the assigned work, getting copies of all of the poems we will workshop in the next week's class, as well as distributing your poem to your classmates.

Note: The UF Catalog indicates that student athletes must be excused for athletic events, but they must make up the work. The department extends the same courtesy to those in the band or theater who need to travel for a university-sponsored event. Students who fail to consult an instructor about an absence and/or how to make up the work should be reported to their respective departments (Athletic, Music, or Theater).

Email

You are required to maintain a UFL webmail account for this course. I will often send out announcements and assignments to your UFL webmail via the class listserv. You should check your email at least once a day.

Schedule

*readings will be discussed on the day they are listed

Week 1 (8/27)	Introduction
Week 2 (9/3)	Chapter 1-3 & 18, Reading a Poem, Voice, Words, What is a Poem—Poetry Poem 1 Due
Week 3 (9/10)	Chapter 4&5, Saying and Suggesting, Imagery—Poetry Poem 2 Due
Week 4 (9/17)	Chapter 6&12, Figure of Speech and Symbol—Poetry Poem 3 Due; Defenses Start
Week 5 (9/24)	Chapter 7&8, Song, Sound—Poetry Essay 1, Poem 4 Due
Week 6 (10/1)	Chapter 9&10, Closed Form and Rhythm—P W orkshop Poem 5 Due
Week 7 (10/8)	Chapter 17, Recognizing Excellence—P W orkshop Essay 2, Poem 6 Due
Week 8 (10/13)	Chapter 11, Open Form—P W orkshop Poem 7 Due
Week 9 (10/22)	TBD
Week 10 (10/29)	Chapter 13&14, Myth and Narrative, Identity—P W orkshop Essay 3, Poem 8 Due
Week 11 (11/5)	Chapter 19, Dickinson and Hughes—P W orkshop Poem 9 Due
Week 12 (11/12)	Readings TBD W orkshop Poem 10 Due
Week 13 (11/19)	Readings TBD; W orkshop Poem 11 Due
Week 14 (11/26)	No class
Week 13 (12/3)	W orkshop Conferences

***Portfolio Due 12/3 3pm via email**

University Policies

Statement of Composition Credit

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html>

Statement of Writing (formerly Gordon Rule) Requirement

This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html>.

Students with Physical Disabilities:

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

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: <http://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 sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>.

Academic Honesty:

As a University of Florida student, your performance is governed by the UF Student Honor Code, (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>). The Honor Code requires Florida students to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in completing all assignments. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, bribery, and misrepresentation, all defined in detail at the above site.

Plagiarism:

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

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):

- a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b. 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, 15 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

You commit plagiarism if you use (without crediting the source):

- Any part of another person’s essay, speech, or ideas (when paraphrasing—i.e. recapitulating “another source’s statement or idea in one’s own words,” according to Georgetown University’s plagiarism website—you must be careful both to cite the source of your ideas and to thoroughly and actively rewrite the passage in your own words)
- Any part of an article in a magazine, journal, newspaper; any part of a book, encyclopedia, CD-ROM, online WWW page, etc.
- Any idea from another person or writer, even if you express that idea in your own words.

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, I will award them a failing grade on the assignment and report the incident of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Additionally, University policy suggests that, as a MINIMUM, instructors should impose a course grade penalty. You should know that your work will be tested for its “originality” against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism guardian 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.

Statement on academic honesty

All students are required to 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>

Statement on grade point equivalencies.

UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies. For more information, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>