

## AML 4170: Ecopoetry & Eco-poetics

**Professor Terry Harpold**

**Spring 2025, Section 1TH1, Class # 20510**

**Class meetings: MWF, per. 4 (10:40–11:30 AM), Matherly 0115**

office hours: Turlington 4105, W, 1–3 PM, and by appt.

email: [tharpold@ufl.edu](mailto:tharpold@ufl.edu)

home page for Terry Harpold: <https://people.clas.ufl.edu/tharpold/>

e-Learning (Canvas) site for AML 4170 (*registered students only*): <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Imagining Climate Change: <https://imagining-climate.clas.ufl.edu/>

Field & Fork Farm & Gardens: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu>

### Course description



*Brassica rapa* in the Field & Fork Farm & Gardens, University of Florida (Fall 2024).

An introduction to and eclectic survey of modern poetry addressing human relations with the more than human world in an age of planetary transformation.

We'll read mostly poetry by American writers of the 20th and early 21st centuries, though we'll turn further back in time for a few important historical precursors. Most of the assigned readings will be from Ann Fisher-Wirth and Laura-Gray Street's monumental, doorstop of an anthology, *The Ecopoetry Anthology* (rev. ed., 2020). Individual graded

course requirements include three short critical readings of poems chosen by the student from among those discussed in class.

The principal collaborative effort of the course is a semester-long project inspired by US Poet Laureate Ada Limón's 2024 "Poetry in Parks" initiative (<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/literature/poetryinparks.htm>), which sited poems on signage in seven US National Parks. In collaboration with the staff of UF's Field and Fork Farm (<https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu>) student teams will select appropriate poems from Fisher-Wirth and Street to be sited on signage in and around the Field and Fork Farm. Our "poetry in the garden" will be revealed to the public in a Farm open house near the end of the semester.

Extra-credit service learning activities in the course include opportunities to take part in supervised volunteer tree plantings in and around the city of Gainesville.

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### **Required texts to purchase**

*Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor. The instructor is only responsible for these instructional materials.*

This text is available at the UF Bookstore and from online vendors. I encourage you whenever possible to buy your texts from independent booksellers. If you choose to buy your texts online, I recommend sources such as [Abebooks.com](https://abebooks.com) and [Alibris.com](https://alibris.com) that serve independent booksellers.

Fisher-Wirth, Ann and Laura-Gray Street, editors. *The Ecopoetry Anthology*. Rev. ed., Trinity University Press, 2020. ISBN 9781595349293. 628 pp. (print).

### **Other required and recommended texts**

These texts are available at no cost via the course's electronic reserves (*Ares*, <https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu>). All are PDF files with searchable text layers or in comparable digital formats capable of being parsed by screen readers.

Beasley, Sandra. "Unit of Measure." *Poetry*, vol. 194, no. 4, 2009, pp. 276–77. (*Also in Fisher-Wirth & Street, pp. 164–65.*)

Jeffers, Robinson. "Carmel Point." *The Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, edited by Tim Hunt, Stanford University Press, 2001, pp. 676. (*Also in Fisher-Wirth & Street, pp. 45.*)

———. "Vulture." *The Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, edited by Tim Hunt, Stanford University Press, 2001, pp. 697.

Limón, Ada. "Drowning Creek." *The Hurting Kind*, Milkweed Editions, 2022, pp. 4.

Villon, François. "Ballade [des dames du temps jadis]." Translated by Barbara N. Sargent-Baur. *Complete Poems*, edited by Barbara N. Sargent-Baur, University of Toronto Press, 1994, pp. 74–77.

Whitman, Walt. "Song of Myself, sec. 6: A child said *What is the grass?*" *The Portable Walt Whitman*, edited by Michael Warner, Penguin Books, 2004, pp. 8–9. (*Also in Fisher-Wirth & Street, pp. 3–4.*)

———. "This Compost." *The Portable Walt Whitman*, edited by Michael Warner, Penguin Books, 2004, pp. 129–31.

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## Course Calendar

*Course deadlines and events outside of normal class meeting times are indicated with an asterisk (\*). Assigned readings should be completed by the start of the class meeting in which they are to be discussed. Readings marked with "FW&S" plus page number(s) are from Fisher-Wirth and Street. Others are available in the course reserves.*

M, Jan 13	<i>Course introduction</i>
W, Jan 15	Ada Limón, "Drowning Creek"
F, Jan 17	Sandra Beasley, "Unit of Measure"
M, Jan 20	<i>No class meeting – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</i>
W, Jan 22	Walt Whitman, "A child said, <i>What is the grass?</i> " <i>(Highly!)</i> recommended viewing: Brian Prectel's 2019 setting of the text to music for violin, cello, piano, percussion, and voice, <a href="https://youtu.be/2-9yGBup19I">https://youtu.be/2-9yGBup19I</a>
F, Jan 24	Robinson Jeffers, "Vulture" Robinson Jeffers, "Carmel Point"
M, Jan 27	Marianne Moore, "The Paper Nautilus" – FW&S 50–51
W, Jan 29	<i>Class will not meet in Matherly 0115</i> <i>Guided tour of Field &amp; Fork Farm &amp; Gardens with Kelli Brew</i>
F, Jan 31	Ellen Bass, "The Big Picture" – FW&S 159–60
M, Feb 3	Louise Glück, "Witchgrass" – FW&S 279–80 William Stafford, "At the Bomb Testing Site" – FW&S 117–18

- W, Feb 5 Joy Harjo, "My House Is the Red Earth" – FW&S 297  
Anthony Seidman, "A Dog's Poetry" – FW&S 467–68
- F, Feb 7 *Class will not meet in Matherly 0115*  
*Guided tour of Field & Fork Farm & Gardens with Kelli Brew*
- \*F, Feb 7 *Siting groups must notify TH of their selected poems by 5 PM*
- M, Feb 10 Allison Hedge Coke, "Dust: Dad's Days" – FW&S 315–17
- \* Tu, Feb 11 *Allison Hedge Coke, "We Were in This World" (ICC-sponsored poetry reading at The Lynx Books – see <https://imagining-climate.clas.ufl.edu/news/2025/we-were-in-this-world/> for details)*
- W, Feb 12 *Open class discussion*
- \* Th, Feb 13 *First short critical reading due by 5 PM*
- F, Feb 14 Brigit Pegeen Kelly, "The Leaving" – FW&S 353
- M, Feb 17 Yusef Komunyakaa, "Blackberries" – FW&S 365
- W, Feb 19 Lucille Clifton, "the earth is a living thing" – FW&S 210  
Lucille Clifton, "the beginning of the end of the world" – FW&S 210–11
- F, Feb 21 Naomi Shihab Nye, "Negotiations with a Volcano" – FW&S 412
- M, Feb 24 Carolyn Forché, "The Museum of Stones" – FW&S 261–62
- W, Feb 26 John Ashbery, "Into the Dusk-Charged Air" – FW&S, 148–51
- F, Feb 28 Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" – FW&S 72
- \* F, Feb 28 *Materials for first week of in-class presentations posted to Canvas by 5 PM*
- M, March 3 *In-class presentations of selected poems for "Poetry in the Gardens"*

W, March 5 *In-class presentations of selected poems for "Poetry in the Gardens"*

F, March 7 *In-class presentations of selected poems for "Poetry in the Gardens"*

\* F, March 7 *Materials for second week of in-class presentations posted to Canvas by 5 PM*

M, March 10 *In-class presentations of selected poems for "Poetry in the Gardens"*

W, March 12 *In-class presentations of selected poems for "Poetry in the Gardens"*

F, March 14 *In-class presentations of selected poems for "Poetry in the Gardens"*

M–F, March 17–21 *No class meetings – Spring Break*

M, March 24 Sharon Dolin, "For I Will Consider the Overlooked Dragonfly" – *FW&S 230–31*

W, March 26 James Dickey, "The Heaven of Animals" – *FW&S 124–25*

\*Th, March 27 *Second critical reading due by 5 PM*

F, March 28 Wendell Berry, "To the Unseeable Animal" – *FW&S 178*

M, March 31 Walt Whitman, "This Compost"

W, April 2 Dorianne Laux, "Life is Beautiful" – *FW&S 375–76*

F, April 4 C.K. Williams, "Canal" – *FW&S 561*

M, April 7 Sandra Meek, "Event One" – *FW&S 399–400*

W, April 9 Ed Roberson, "To See the Earth before the End of the World" – *FW&S 447–48*

F, April 11 Gary Snyder, "Piute Creek" – *FW&S 494*

M, April 14 Susan Stewart, "Four Questions Regarding the Dreams of Animals" – *FW&S 505–6*

W, April 16	W.S. Merwin, "Nocturne" – FW&S 403
April 18	<i>No class meeting</i> <i>Field &amp; Fork Farm &amp; Gardens Open House, 5–7 PM</i>
M, April 21	Kenneth Rexroth, "Lute Music" – FW&S 81–82 François Villon, "Ballade [des dames du temps jadis]"
W, April 23	<i>Course debriefing</i>
* W, April 30	<i>Third critical reading due by 5 PM</i>

### **Evaluation of Performance, Attendance Requirements & Other Course Policies**

Your final grade in this course will be determined by four assignments of two kinds...

**Critical readings: 3 × 25% = 75% of final grade**

**Garden site analysis + selected "poem in the garden" 1 × 25% of final grade**

**Critical readings.** You will be required to write three short (3 pp. each) critical readings (essays) in response to a poem of your choosing from among those discussed in class during that portion of the semester, about every 4–6 weeks. Your critical reading may be submitted at any time up to and including the deadlines stipulated in the syllabus (Feb. 13, March 27, April 30). Early in the semester I will distribute guidelines for completing this assignment.

**Garden site analysis + selected "poem in the garden". This is a group project.** In the first weeks of the semester you will be randomly assigned to a "siting" group of 2–4 students. Each siting group will be randomly assigned one of 10–12 preselected sites in the Field & Fork Farm and Gardens. (We will have two class opportunities early in the semester to tour the Farm and Gardens with Field & Fork staff so that you may become familiar with your group's site. You may of course visit the Farm and Gardens at any time during daylight hours.) Your group will be tasked with documenting and analyzing its assigned site with a short photo-essay detailing the site's ecological and poetic attributes and, with my approval, selecting a poem (or a portion of a poem) from Fisher-Wirth and Street that the group proposes as a good fit with the site. (Note that each group will initially choose two such poems. I will collate the groups' choices so as to eliminate conflicts and settle on one poem for each group.)

During the two weeks prior to Spring Break, each site group will present its poem and its reasons for having chosen it to the class. I will then make arrangements with the Field & Fork staff to have the signs manufactured and prepared for installation. On April 18, during the Field & Fork Open House, the signs will be revealed to the public. Early in the semester I will distribute guidelines for completing this assignment.

**Extra-credit options.** This course includes extra-credit options that may be used to raise your final grade. Extra credit may be earned for your participation in two types of events closely associated with themes and methods of the course: 1) the Trees! volunteer tree planting initiative; 2) guest lectures and symposia sponsored by Imagining Climate Change. Three to four events of each type are scheduled for this semester. You may earn extra credit for attending up to three of these events. Extra credit is earned simply for participating in a Trees! volunteer planting (your attendance will be automatically noted). To earn extra credit for attending an ICC event, you must submit a 300 word essay on the event, in the form of a summary of the guest speaker's presentation, or a summary of one or more of the guest speakers' presentations in the case of a multi-speaker event. This essay must be sent to me by email no later than three days following the last day of the ICC event. This essay option must meet minimal requirements for accuracy and completeness, which I will explain in class.

For each extra-credit event, you will earn 1 point applied after the calculation of your final grade. You may earn this credit for *up to three* extra-credit events. Thus, a student with a final average of 87 (an A-) who took part in two tree plantings and attended one ICC event (for which she wrote a report) would have her reported final grade raised to 90 (an A). Note, however, an important restriction on the extra credit that you may earn. If you seek credit for participating in more than one event, they must include events of both kinds. You can earn extra credit for one planting plus one ICC event, but not for only two plantings or only two ICC events. If you seek extra credit for three events, at least one of them must be of a different type than the others.

**Trees! (extra-credit option).** A growing body of scientific evidence shows that encouraging the regeneration of natural forests and planting new trees on treeless lands are among the most economical and effective climate change mitigation solutions available to us.<sup>1</sup> You may receive extra course credit by taking part in a local effort to increase our forest canopy.

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<sup>1</sup> Bastin, Jean-François, *et al.*, "The Global Tree Restoration Potential." *Science* 365, 76–79 (2019) <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/365/6448/76>; Lewis, S.L., "Regenerate Natural Forests to Store Carbon," *Nature* 568: 25-28 (2019) <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-01026-8> .

Since early 2019, UF’s Imagining Climate Change initiative has worked closely with the Alachua County Department of Land Conservation and Management (opens in new tab) to coordinate volunteer tree plantings in and around the city of Gainesville. The plantings emphasize high-value tree species appropriate for site conditions on County owned right of ways, developed County properties, and properties directly influencing the public sphere. Of priority are trees that provide shade for bicycling and human pedestrians, provide erosion control, extend forest canopy, and support wildlife biodiversity and carbon sequestration. The most recent census (2021) showed that 98% of trees planted in this initiative remain in excellent health.

Tree plantings are fun, low-effort undertakings to beautify our community and to help foster a sustainable local ecosystem for decades to come.<sup>2</sup> Pretty much, you help to dig a hole a few feet deep, drop in a juvenile tree, refill, brace, bank the tree with mulch, water, and repeat. No prior tree planting experience is necessary. Needed tools, reflective safety vests, and vegan snacks are provided. A filled personal water bottle is strongly recommended, as access to potable water on site may be limited. You should wear lightweight but sturdy outdoor clothing and closed-toed shoes. Gloves suitable for garden work, a hat, protective eyewear (eyeglasses or sunglasses), sunscreen, and insect repellent are recommended. Typically, a planting takes 3–4 hours, usually beginning around 9 AM. You must complete a volunteer release form, provided on site, before the planting begins. See <http://imagining-climate.clas.ufl.edu/trees> for planting dates and locations and for a photographic gallery of previous plantings. *The Alachua County Department of Land Conservation and Management is unaffiliated with the University of Florida.*

**Imagining Climate Change events (extra-credit option).** Several UF events this semester sponsored by the Imagining Climate Change initiative (<https://imagining-climate.clas.ufl.edu>) are of direct relevance to this course. I encourage you to review the ICC schedule of events and plan on attending as many events as possible.

**Grading scheme and graded assignments.** The evaluation method in this course is consistent with UF’s policies on grading (<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>). Grades are calculated on a numeric scale, as below:

A	90–100	A–	87–89
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<sup>2</sup> Andreu, M.G. et al., Urban Forest Ecological Analysis. Report to the City of Gainesville, March 2017. City of Gainesville, Florida, 2017 <http://sfrc.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/GNV-ECO-Report-2016.pdf>. Gainesville has been an Arbor Day Foundation “Tree City USA” since 1983. it was named a “Tree City of the World” by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2020.



B+	84–86	B	80–83	B–	77–79
C+	74–76	C	70–73	C–	67–69
D+	64–66	D	60–63	D–	57–59

A grade of 56 or below is a failing grade (E). A minimum final grade of C is required for General Education Credit.

If you do not complete an assignment, you will receive a grade of 0. If you feel that you've been unfairly graded on an assignment, you may make a case in writing for a better grade. I will consider no grade changes without this written rationale.

You may make up a missed assignment only if you have a written medical excuse from a doctor, a signed letter from a judge or law enforcement officer (if you are called for jury duty or to testify in court, for example), or if a death or serious illness or injury occurs in your family. You should contact me as soon as possible when you anticipate a delay in submission of graded work.

**Attendance & lateness.** The text, and concepts we will review are complex and challenging. You cannot reasonably expect to master them if you do not keep up with required reading assignments and come to class prepared and on time. Class discussions will often include review of materials not among the assigned texts. For these reasons, your presence in class is essential and is required. **After four absences, I reserve the right to lower your final course grade by five points (approx. half a letter grade) for each additional class that you miss.** I treat excused and unexcused absences alike in this regard. It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences and to make sure that you complete all required work. If you must miss class, make sure that you turn in any assignments due for that day, and that you are ready if another assignment is due on the day you return to class. In the event of a prolonged illness or other emergency you should notify me as soon as possible so that we may make provisions to insure that you do not fall behind.

Lateness is disruptive to others in the classroom, and is strongly discouraged. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, this will be considered an absence.

If you have special requirements because of disability, do not hesitate to bring those to my attention so that I may make appropriate accommodations. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the UF Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) by providing appropriate documentation.

If you are unable to attend any part of a class meeting or work on a course assignment because these coincide with the timing of religious observances, you must notify me of

this conflict well in advance, so that we may make appropriate adjustments to relevant assignment deadlines.

***Use of computers and other electronic devices in class.*** The use of personal computers and other electronic devices in class is acceptable for purposes related to class discussion and collaboration. Casual WWW browsing, emailing, chatting, texting, etc., unrelated to class activities will not be tolerated. Apart from those times when I have approved their use in advance, cell phones, pagers, and similar communication devices may not be used during class meetings, and must be set to silent ring at the start of class.

***Recordings of class meetings.*** *University of Florida policy requires me to add the following statement to my syllabus:*

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

See this page for the University's guidelines on recording class lectures:  
<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/code-change-faq/> .

**Course evaluation.** 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/>.

**Title IX and gender equity.** Title IX is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity in federally funded education programs or activities. Title IX addresses sexual harassment, sexual violence, or any gender-based discrimination that may deny a person access to educational benefits and opportunities. Under Title IX, schools must ensure that all students and employees have equal access to education and educational facilities, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The UF Office for Accessibility and Gender Equity (<https://titleix.ufl.edu>) provides support to anyone affected by sexual or gender-based misconduct, harassment, or discrimination. As the instructor of this course I am considered an Official with Authority who is required to report violations of UF's gender equity policy.

**Policy on academic honesty.** The University community's policies and methods regarding academic honesty, your obligations to me and mine to you with regard to academic honesty, are clearly spelled out in the UF Student Honor and Student Conduct Codes ("the Orange Book," which are available online at <https://policy.ufl.edu/regulation/4-040/>.

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated in this course. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or oral information in the preparation of graded assignments submitted for this course.
- Substitution of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another individual, individuals, or entity.
- False claims of performance or work submitted by a student for requirements of this course.

I am obliged to act on any suspected act of academic misconduct. This may include a reduced or failing grade for the course as a whole or other disciplinary proceedings, as per the recommendation of the Dean of Students. If you have any concern that you may not have made appropriate use of the work of others in your research or writing for this course, please confer with me before you submit the assignment. You should retain all graded materials that you receive from me until you receive your final course grade.

***Policy on the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools in writing assignments.*** You are permitted to use GenAI tools (ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, Stable Diffusion, DALL-E, Apple Intelligence, etc.) for assigned writing in this course but *only* under the following conditions and limitations:

- You MAY use these tools for basic research, brainstorming, outlining, and reviewing/correcting the grammar, spelling, and style of your finished writing.
- You MAY NOT use them to impersonate your contributions to threaded course discussions in Canvas.
- You MAY NOT use them to complete your portion of assigned group work without the knowledge and approval of others in the group.
- You MAY NOT use them to produce primary elements (such as bulleted text, citations, graphs and charts) of presentations that will be given in class, whether individually or collectively with other students. You MAY use them to create basic templates or the graphic layout of such presentations.
- You MAY NOT use them to compose full sentences or paragraphs of your individual or group written assignments. You MAY NOT use them to compose the whole of a writing assignment.
- You MUST document your uses of GenAI for textual and visual elements appearing in the final versions of your writing assignments as per MLA's recommended guidelines for including GenAI sources in your list of Works Cited – <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>. I consider failures to document uses of these tools to be a violation of the course's policy on academic honesty.

I *very strongly* recommend that you verify all citations of scholarly sources produced by GenAI and insure that the citation is accurate and complete, the source is relevant to the topic of your writing, and any quotations from the source are accurate and complete.

***Emergency services. U Matter, We Care*** serves as the umbrella program for UF's caring culture and provides students in distress with support and coordination of a wide variety of appropriate resources. Contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) seven days a week for assistance if you are in distress. Call 352-392-1575 for a crisis counselor overnight and during weekends. Note also these support services:

- The University Counseling Center – 301 Peabody Hall, 352-392-1575; <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>
- Student Health Care Center – 352-392-1171
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union – 352-392-1601
- Center for Sexual Assault/Abuse Recovery and Education (CARE), Student Health Care Center – 352-392-1161
- University Police Department – 352-392-1111 (non-emergency); *call 9-1-1 for emergencies*

***Policy on environmentally unsustainable activity in the classroom.*** When possible I will distribute all course materials via paper-sparing digital media. I encourage you to purchase e-book editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts, and to return those to circulation if you choose not to keep them at the end of the course. (Donating your unwanted books to the Alachua County Friends of the Library annual book sale (<http://folaclld.org>) is a good way to get them into other readers' hands and to help raise a bit of cash for our county's excellent but criminally underfunded public libraries.) If you do elect to keep your books, share them with others after the course is over. And a final appeal to your common sense: bring food and/or beverages to the classroom only in reusable containers. Please, no food or beverages in single-use containers and no single-use, unrecyclable cutlery or straws.