

AML 6027: Ecopoetry & Eco-poetics

Professor Terry Harpold

Spring 2025, Section 1TH2, Class # 24939

Class meetings: M, pers. 6–8 (12:50–3:50 PM), Turlington 4112

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

email: tharpold@ufl.edu

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

e-Learning (Canvas) site for AML 6027 (*registered students only*): <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>

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

Course description



“All goes onward and outward,
nothing collapses / And to die is
different from what any one
supposed, and luckier.”

– Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself”
(1867/1891–2)

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 (e.g., Walt Whitman). More recent poets whose work we’ll read will include, among others, John Ashbery, Nikki Giovanni, C.S. Giscombe, Allison Adelle Hedge Coke, Langston Hughes, Robinson Jeffers, Ada Limón, W.S. Merwin, dg nanouk okpik, Sun Ra, Muriel Rukeyser, John Shoptaw, Gary Snyder, and

C.K. Williams. We’ll also read selected critical texts on the history, poetics, and practice of this vital, diverse literary genre.

Graded course requirements include leading seminar discussions of two poems selected by the student from US Poet Laureate Ada Limón’s recent anthology *Poetry in the Natural World* (2024), and a final long writing project. The project may take the form of a research paper or a creative work.

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.

Print and in several cases digital copies of these texts have been placed on the UF Libraries' course reserves. These texts are 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.

Giscombe, C.S. *Negro Mountain*. University of Chicago Press, 2023. ISBN 9780226829715. 85 pp. (print). *Also available in Apple Books and Kindle editions.*

Hedge Coke, Allison Adelle. *Look at This Blue*. Coffee House Press, 2022. ISBN 9781566896207. 146 pp. (print). *Also available in Apple Books and Kindle editions.*

Hedge Coke, Allison Adelle and Dustin Illetewahke Mater. *Burn*. Madhat, 2017. ISBN 9781941196458. 62 pp. (print). *I recommend purchasing this text directly from the publisher, as other sources claim it is out of print: <https://madhat-press.com/products/burn-by-allison-adelle-hedge-coke> .*

Limón, Ada, editor. *You Are Here: Poetry in the Natural World*. Milkweed Editions / The United States Library of Congress, 2024. ISBN 9781571315694. 151 pp. (print). *Also available in Apple Books and Kindle editions.*

okpik, dg nanouk. *Blood snow*. Wave Books, 2022. ISBN 9781950268634. 79 pp. (print).

Rukeyser, Muriel. *The Book of the Dead*. West Virginia University Press, 2018. ISBN 9781946684219. 125 pp. (print).

Shoptaw, John. *Near-Earth Object*. Unbound Edition Press, 2024. ISBN 9798989233311. 89 pp. (print).

Snyder, Gary. *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. Counterpoint, 1996. ISBN 9781582434070. 166 pp. *Also available in Apple Books and Kindle editions.*

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.

Ashbery, John. "Into the Dusk-Charged Air." *The Mooring of Starting Out: The First Five Books of Poetry*, Ecco Press, 1997, pp. 173–77.

Eihei Dōgen. "Mountains and Waters Sūtra." *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dōgen's Shobo Genzo*, edited by Kazuaka Tanahashi, Shambhala, 2010, pp. 154–64.

Giovanni, Nikki. "Winter Poem." *The Collected Poetry of Nikki Giovanni, 1968–1998*, HarperCollins, 2003, pp. 148.

Hughes, Langston. "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (1926).
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69395/the-negro-artist-and-the-racial-mountain> .

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

Leopold, Aldo. "Thinking Like a Mountain." *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*, Oxford University Press, 1949, pp. 129–33.

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

———. "In Praise of Mystery: A Poem for Europa" (2023).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgWbeDNPD6o> .

———. "The End of Poetry." *The Hurting Kind*, Milkweed Editions, 2022, pp. 95.

Merwin, W.S. "The Wonder of the Imperfect." *The Moon Before Morning*, Copper Canyon Press, 2014, pp. 92.

Sun Ra. "Of Kindred Folk." *The Immeasurable Equation: The Collected Poetry and Prose*, edited by James L. Wold and Harmut Geerken, Waitawhile, 2005.

Whitman, Walt. "Song of Myself." *The Portable Walt Whitman*, edited by Michael Warner, Penguin Books, 2004, pp. 3–67.

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

Williams, C.K. "Canal." *Repair*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999.

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.

“I’m almost certain, though I am certain of nothing”

M, Jan 13 *Course introduction*
Giovanni, “Winter Poem”
Jeffers, “Vulture”
Limón, “Drowning Creek”
Limón, “In Praise of Mystery: A Poem for Europa”
Sun Ra, “Of Kindred Folks”
Whitman, “This Compost”

M, Jan 20 *No class meeting – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

“I stop somewhere waiting for you”

M, Jan 27 Whitman, “Song of Myself”

“Everything we muster moves us along”

M, Feb. 3 Hedge Coke, *Look at This Blue*

M Feb 10 Hedge Coke, *Burn*

“The wolf is the thought”

M, Feb 17 Giscombe, *Negro Mountain*
Hughes, “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain”
Leopold, “Thinking Like a Mountain”

“We wash our bowls in this water”

M, Feb 24 Snyder, *Mountains and Rivers Without End*
Eihei Dōgen, “*Mountains and Waters Sūtra*”

*** F, Feb 28** *Students’ poem selections for moderated discussions from Limón, You Are Here due to TH by 5 PM*

“Usually it’s hard to see the climate for the days”

M, Mar 3 Shoptaw, *Near-Earth Object*

“These roads will take you into your own country”

M, Mar 10 Rukeyser, *The Book of the Dead*
Additional readings on The Hawks Nest Tunnel Disaster TBA

M, Mar 17 *No class meeting – Spring Break*

“Here wake up there not here”

M, Mar 24 okpik, *Blood snow*

You are here

M, Mar 31 *Student-led discussions of poems from Limón, You Are Here*

M, April 7 *Student-led discussions of poems from Limón, You Are Here*

M, April 14 *Student-led discussions of poems from Limón, You Are Here*

M, April 21 Ashbery, “*Into the Dusk-Charged Air*”
Limón, “*The End of Poetry*”
Merwin, “*The Wonder of the Imperfect*”
Williams, “*Canal*”
Course debriefing

*** M, April 28** *Long-form writing project due by 5 PM*

Evaluation of Performance, Attendance Requirements & Other Course Policies

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

Moderated discussions of poems: 2 × 20% = 40% of final grade

Long-form writing project: 1 × 60% = 60% of final grade

Moderated discussions. Among the aims of this course is for you to develop a method for teaching ecopoetry and ecopoetics. To that end, you will select *four* poems from Ada Limón’s edited collection *You Are Here: Poetry in the Natural World* (2024) of which you would like to lead class discussion. I will collate students’ selections so as to eliminate duplicates, resulting in two poems assigned to you whose discussions you will lead in the final seminar meetings of the semester.

Long-form writing project. This is a scholarly-critical project of 12–18 pp. in length – essentially, a short journal essay – informed by the subjects and methods of the course. It need not take as its principal topic texts or authors we have discussed, but it should in some important regard take into account the wider domain of ecopoetry and ecopoetics. It can also – it should – reflect your research interests, the periods, disciplines, and literary genres in which you primarily work, viewed from or engaging with this poetic genre. I recommend that you arrange to meet with me no later than the week after Spring Break to discuss possible topics of your writing project so that I may give you direction and guidance. Creative final projects in lieu of a seminar paper are permissible with my approval.

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		
B+	84–86	B	80–83	B–	77–79

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 three 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 20 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 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://folaclid.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.