CRW 1301 — Beginning Poetry Writing

Section: 7622, Fall 2016
Meeting Time/Location: Thursdays, periods 9-11/BEN 0328
Instructor: Paul Roberts
Instructor email: pdrob3@ufl.edu
Office: Turlington Hall, Room TBD
Office Hours: Fridays 1-3PM, and by appointment

This course emphasizes the critical capacity to read and write poetry, in the hopes of expanding 1) students' appreciation of the classic canon, and 2) students' concept of not just what poetry *is*, but what poetry *can be*. We will begin by establishing an historical context for how poems have been defined, and along the way we will read a mixture of old favorites and new experiments—some of which you may not even agree are poetry. This course will challenge you to integrate poetry into your day-to-day life.

Poetry is a medium which requires close attention. As such, we will spend the first half of the semester acquiring a vocabulary and understanding of key terms and features, from alliteration to metaphor to visual aspects such as line and layout. Once we have established ourselves as attentive readers of poetry, we will begin writing our own poems for in-class discussion and workshopping in the second half of the semester. And, of course, we will continue to read and discuss established poets' work, including A. Van Jordan's collection *Macnolia*, and selected readings on the internet (still to come).

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/liberalarts/alc/english.aspx

Required Books

An Introduction to Poetry, X.J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia: 13th edition, ISBN: 978-0205686124

Macnolia: Poems, A. Van Jordan, ISBN: 978-0393327649

Famous Americans, Loren Goodman, ISBN: 978-0300100037

Recommended, but not required:

The Elements of Style: Updated and Annotated for Present-Day Use, William Strunk, Jr. and
    Stanford Pritchard, 2nd edition, ISBN: 978-1469955902

There will also be supplemental readings and handouts throughout the course at the discretion of the instructor. Start a folder the first week of class and ***keep everything.*** You are responsible for having all class materials when needed and for monitoring your grades.

Assignments

7 first drafts of poems	350 points (50/poem)
5 revised poems	75 points (15/revision)
40 lines of poetry recited	50 points (all or nothing!)
4 500-word essays on "What makes this a poem?" or "*Is* this a poem?"	160 points (40 each)
3 1,000-word close reading essays/annotations	240 points (80 each)
Final Portfolio Introduction (1,000 words)	75 points
Participation	50 points
Total (6,000 words)	**1,000 points**

Assignment Descriptions

Poems (50 points each, 350 points total)

You will write seven (7) poems over the semester. Poems will be written to prompts from the instructor.

The first two poems will not be workshopped, but will be treated as "warm-up" poems. That means that only you and I will see them, and I can give you feedback before you have to start presenting work to the rest of the class.

Requirements:

1. To receive credit, poems must:
   a. be single-spaced with 1" margins. PLEASE CHECK BEFORE YOU SUBMIT YOUR WORK. Microsoft Word and Google Docs, for example, space at 1.15 by default.
   b. be left-justified (not center- or right-justified, although indentation and other variations in form are allowed)
   c. be written in Times New Roman font, size 12
   d. have a title, written in bold
   e. have your name and the assignment number at the top right corner 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 (that is, if the line breaks were eliminated, the text would read coherently and be grammatically correct).

Workshop Procedure:

Submit your poem on Canvas as a.doc, .rtf, or .pdf attachment by **8:00 AM Monday** the week of workshop. I will read every poem and select a number of them to be workshopped. Each student's work will be workshopped roughly an equal number of times throughout the semester.

Please PRINT OUT all poems to be workshopped, read each carefully (at least two times), and mark up the copies with feedback. Prepare at least TWO POSITIVE and TWO CRITICAL comments for each poem, and be prepared to share them during workshop. Bring the copies to class on the day of workshop. At the end of class, you will return the poems to the poets who wrote them.

Poetry Recitation, 40 lines (50 points, all or nothing!)

Part of becoming a reader (and eventually writer) of poetry is ingraining sound and rhythm into your mind. It's also a really good way of learning about an author's work. Over the course of the semester, you will memorize and recite **AT LEAST** 40 lines of poetry. This does not have to be one poem, nor does it have to be all at once!

At the beginning of the semester, you will sign up for as many class periods as you like. When your selected days come around, you will recite a poem from memory. You may choose any poem from the required textbooks, or, if you prefer, another poem you like, so long as you ask for my permission in advance—I'd like to have a way to prompt you if you need help!

The rules are thus: Each poem must be at least eight (8) lines long, and must be a complete poem or section of a poem. Additionally, please be prepared to discuss briefly why you chose a particular poem—what about it appealed to you? Why does this poem deserve space in your brain?

We'll do a few recitations at the beginning of every class as a way to get us into the groove before we dive into discussion or workshop.

Four 500-word Essays (40 points each, 160 points total)

Over the semester you will write four short papers answering the question "What makes this poem a poem?" The first two essays will be written on assigned poems from the textbook, while the last two will be about a poem of your choice from each of Jordan's *Macnolia* and Goodman's *Famous Americans.* Please note you are allowed to take the opposite stance and argue that a certain text is *not* a poem.

If you believe your chosen text is a poem, you will analyze the text for poetic elements we have learned about in class or in the textbook, and explain how they qualify the text as a poem. If you intend to argue that a text is *not* a poem, be aware that you will have to provide a clear defense of

your position — e.g. don't just say "this text isn't a poem because it doesn't have line breaks," but *say WHY line breaks are necessary for a text to be a poem.*

Three 1,000-word Close Readings/Annotations (80 points each, 240 points total)

Close Readings are an exploration of how poems function. Each paper will critically engage with a poem, proposing a thesis on one or two specific elements in the poem (e.g. use of diction, image, symbol, etc). How do these elements interact with what the poem is saying? Do they support the literal text of the poem? Does they contradict the text? What effect do these elements have on your interpretation of the poem?

While each paper must contain a thesis, the papers do not need to follow an argumentative research paper structure. That said, they do require supporting examples from the text. Additionally, essays must be written in MLA format with correct spelling, grammar, etc.

There will be a more detailed handout on close reading and my expectations for these assignments to follow.

Final Portfolio (Revisions: 75 points; Introduction: 75 points; Total: 150 points)

> **Revisions** (5 poems, 15 points each): By the end of the semester, you will revise *at least five* of your previously submitted poems, reflecting feedback received from your peers in workshop, from your instructor, and from your own reflection on the work. Revisions will be graded on their impact, not the number of changes—that is, if you change one word and it vastly improves the poem, that is sufficient. *(Please note that this probably will not be the case!)* What I'm looking for is the thought you've put into your revisions.

> **Introduction to Final Portfolio** (1000 words; 75 points): For this assignment, you will reflect on your writing processes for the poems you've written throughout the term, you will discuss your revision tactics, and you will examine your own growth as a poet. You will also look at your poems as a collected body of work and examine any themes or questions that arise from them being collected together. Sequencing is important!

Participation (50 points):

Because this is a discussion- and workshop-based class, you are expected to be an active participant. This does NOT mean interrupting or being otherwise disrespectful to your peers.
> **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.

> Quizzes on reading and/or lectures may be given, announced or unannounced, each of which will be worth 5 points of the participation grade. Quizzes and any 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. Please see "Workshop Procedure" above for further detail.

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 The Bull 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 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 = 0.0 = 0-59%

Grade	Essays	Poems
A	An "A" paper responds to the assignment prompt in full. It presents an original, specific, and clearly worded argument supported by sufficient evidence from authoritative sources. Writing style is engaging, clear, and concise, and the paper employs a logical organization. It is free from mechanical or formatting errors and cites sources using the proper citation format.	An "A" poem responds to the assignment prompt in full. It uses vivid and carefully considered language and follows an original and cohesive vision. It employs poetic techniques discussed in class to a constructive purpose. Its sentences make complete grammatical sense and it is free from mechanical or formatting errors.
B	A "B" paper responds to the assignment prompt. It presents an original argument,	A "B" poem responds to the assignment prompt. It presents a

	but ideas may need further development or clearer articulation. The argument is supported by evidence. Writing style is generally clear and organization is logical, but there is room for improvement. There are very few mechanical errors and sources are cited properly.	unique vision, but ideas may need further development. It uses poetic techniques but could be doing more to bring craft and drama to the poem. Language used is effective but may need some refining. There are very few mechanical errors.
C	A "C" paper may not fully respond to the prompt. Argument is overly broad or in need of clarification and development. Some evidence is used to support the argument, but claims are not sufficiently defended. Writing style lacks clarity and organization is problematic. Several mechanical errors or incorrect citations.	A "C" poem may not fully respond to the prompt. Vision is disjointed or overly clichéd. Poetic techniques are not used to their fullest potential. Language seems hastily chosen or unoriginal. There are several mechanical errors.
D	A "D" paper does not fully respond to the assignment prompt. Argument is underdeveloped or nonexistent. Little or no evidence is used to support claims. Writing style and organization are unclear. Many mechanical errors or incorrect citations.	A "D" poem does not fully respond to the assignment prompt. Poem seems hastily written with little overall vision to hold it together, unoriginal word choices, and many mechanical errors. Poetic techniques are missing or misused.
E	An "E" paper fails to respond to the assignment prompt (including papers that do not meet the minimum word requirement). Papers that are late or plagiarized will also receive an "E."	An "E" poem fails to respond to the assignment prompt. Poems that are late or plagiarized will also receive an "E." Man, what happened?

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: <u>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.</u> 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

<u>I will accept late work up to 24 hours past the deadline.</u> Between the deadline and 24 hours after, work will be awarded half credit. Past 24 hours, work will be awarded no credit.

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.

Each student will be allotted **one** "bye" week on creative work. ***Email me at least 24 hours before*** asking to use your "bye" week, and you will have an additional week to complete your assignment, ***plus the assignment for the following week.***

Mode of Submission: All papers and poems will either be submitted as MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents on Canvas or as a 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: 8/25
Introduction, Syllabus
In Class Exercise: "Which of these are poems?"

Week 2: 9/1
How to Approach a Poem
An Introduction to Poetry (IP) Ch. 1 "Reading A Poem" & Ch. 2 "Listening To A Voice"
"What Makes This a Poem?" #1 due

Week 3: 9/8
Words
IP Ch. 3 "Words" & Ch. 4 "Saying and Suggesting"
In Class Exercise: Close Reading

Week 4: 9/15
Images
IP Ch. 5 "Imagery"
Close Reading #1 Due

Week 5: 9/22
Figures of Speech
IP Ch. 6 "Figures of Speech"
Bring in list of similes

Week 6: 9/29
Songs and Sounds
IP Ch. 7 "The Sound of Poems" & Ch. 8 "Meter and Rhyme"
Bring in your favorite song lyrics
"What Makes This a Poem?" #2 Due
Poem #1 Due (no workshop)

Week 7: 10/6
Rhythm & Form
IP Ch. 9 "Forms and Types of Poetry" & Ch. 10 "Versions of the Same"
Close Reading #2 Due
Poem #2 Due (no workshop)

Week 8: 10/13
Symbols; First Workshop
IP Ch. 12
Poem #3

Week 9: 10/20
Narrative & Identity
IP Ch. 13 & Ch. 14
Macnolia ("Z", pgs. 1-71)
Poem #4

Week 10: 10/27
Experiments in Form
Macnolia ("A", pgs. 73-131)
"What Makes This a Poem?" #3 Due
Poem #5

Week 11: 11/3
Recognizing Excellence
Famous Americans
Close Reading #3 Due
Poem #6

Week 12: 11/10
Open Forms
IP Ch. 11
Continue *Famous Americans*
"What Makes This a Poem?" #4 Due
Poem #7

Week 13: 11/17
Revisions (The Energy of Revision)
Bring in at least one revision
Discuss Portfolio Introductions

Week 14: 11/24
NO CLASS — THANKSGIVING

Week 15: 12/1
Conclusion
Final Portfolios Due in Class