



CRW 2300 (Honors)



(class 26491, sect. 9002)

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Monday 9-11 (4:05-7:05 pm)
CBD 212

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4211-H Turlington (Monday, 2-3:45 pm)

Poetry requires the manipulation of words—it’s the words, even more than the feelings within them, that make poetry memorable. Yet to treat poetry as merely a collection of words is too austere; it would be like treating a dog as just a bundle of DNA (not that some dogs shouldn’t be so treated). We’ll look closely at words and the way that altering even a single one may change the effect of a poem, without ever forgetting that a poem must proceed simultaneously through what those words evoke.

Eliot said of Milton that a “man may be a great artist, and yet have a bad influence.” We will be looking at poets who are by and large good artists and trying to see what might make them good influences as well.

⇒ *Logistics*

At the end of each class I’ll give you a writing assignment. Assignments vary from the straightforward to the perverse. I’ll ask you to write a poem to a form of my devising, with three or four additional requirements meant to obstruct your conscious mind and give access to your imagination. I hope to entangle your censoring conscious so completely that you’ll concentrate on fulfilling the form and not worry overmuch about what is being said. The poem is due the following week at the end of class (bring copies for all). Poems must be printed in black ink on regular white paper. I’m immune to excuses for late assignments, however ingenious. You may obtain grace until noon the next day (no longer) by bringing lashings of cookies to class the following week. Late assignments will otherwise be marked down severely, one half of a letter grade per day. These penalties are cumulative and cannot be remitted.

From the poems submitted, I’ll choose five as the worksheet for our discussion (emailing you the names of the lucky poets), to which the first half of class will be devoted. Over the course of the semester, each poet’s work will be workshopped about the same number of times. *Late assignments should be sent to me as attachments in .pdf (preferred) or .docx.* This also applies to assignments where you didn’t print out enough copies. Do not leave assignments in my English Department mailbox. *All assignments must have with your name, number of the assignment, class, and my name in the upper righthand corner. Don’t make me your secretary.*

In the second half of each class, we’ll discuss assigned readings. This term we’ll read Derek Walcott, *Collected Poems 1948-1984*; Geoffrey Hill, *Canaan*; Sylvia Plath, *Poems*; Michael Hofmann, *Selected Poems*; and *Norton Anthology of Poetry: Shorter* ed.

Ferguson. It's a prerequisite of the course that you buy the books. Failure to complete the readings or engage in discussion is a sign of lack of interest in a decent grade. You can buy the books at the campus book-store or on the web. (Used books from Amazon or ABE are much cheaper than new.) If you don't have a particular book one evening, it's a cookie penalty; if you don't have it a second evening, it's two points off your grade. Ebooks are not permitted, because you can't scribble on them.

I won't set the direction of our discussions, but I like to look intensely at the collusive uses of language and the habits and craft of revision. My complaint about many contemporary poets is that they have no concern for the richness of words, the complication of expression, and rarely use what might be called the subsidies of sense (as opposed to plain bread-and-butter prose meaning). These subsidies include ambiguity, nuance, the right wrong word, music of various sorts (alliterative, consonantal), patterns of adherence (meter, set form), thematic tangles, sensitivity to verb tense, timing, and delay—in short, the ways that poets have traditionally put English on English.

⇒ *Discussions*

You're responsible for reading the worksheet each week *in advance of class*, making notes upon it, and bringing it with you. Copious notes. The quick wit, intelligence, and charm of your analysis will be appreciated by all. Use of laptops or cell phones during class is forbidden. If your cell phone rings, you owe everyone cookies.

⇒ *Portfolios*

The week after I receive your assignment, I'll hand it back with suggestions. Keep these copies! These annotated assignments should be collected in a file folder, due December 2 (the Thursday before the final week of class), accompanied by new revisions of all poems. Put the folder in my mailbox in Turlington 4301 or on my porch. There's no midterm, no final, just the hard work of poems. I may on occasion ask to see your notes, which will be marked from 0-5 and count in your final grade.

⇒ *Papers*

You will also be responsible for four 1500-word papers on topics I shall set (6000 words total). These papers must be literate and fascinating. Papers will be marked on a 1-10 scale and do not need to be revised; though, as with the poems, you must write a paragraph explaining the telling point of grammar or usage when you make a error.

⇒ *Grades*

I'll give you ten poetry assignments, the last due November 22. After reading your brilliantly revised portfolios (due the Friday before the last class), I'll give each poem a mark of 1 to 10 (these are chili-pepper grades, from ultra mild to red hot). The mark will reflect the courage and imagination shown in the assignment, as well as the technical dexterity or ingenuity, and, in addition, the quality of the revision. Class

participation will be awarded 0 to 10 additional points. I'm not able to reward mere chatter, but I'm sure that you'll always respond to the poems and the opinions of others in a deft, polite, and witty manner.

⇒ *Absences*

You may have two absences for any reason, especially whimsical; but you must notify me *in advance*. Email me to do so. Each unnotified absence and each absence beyond those permitted will result in loss of half a letter grade for the term. Lateness over ten minutes is equivalent to half an absence. *If you miss a class, your assignment is due by email, sent to me by noon the following day (.doc or .docx format, please). Otherwise it will be treated as late. Poems late because of absence do not have to be rescued by sweets.* When you're absent, you may pick up your packet from my mailbox in 4301 Turlington (across from the double elevators). I'm available for conferences Monday afternoons, 2-3:45 pm—or by appointment if the normal time is impossible due to a scheduled class (not a job or a hot hook-up). Take advantage of office hours—the jokes may be funnier then.

Rules of presentation

- 1) Title your poems.
- 2) Single space with at least a 12-point font (13 if Times Roman) and don't use a clever font.
- 3) Don't center justify. (It makes the poor poems look like embroidery.)
- 4) Put your name, class, my name, and the assignment number in the upper-left corner of the page.
- 5) You must use correct grammar and punctuation.

Rules of composition

- 1) Stay away from abstraction until you can handle detail.
- 2) Stay away from passive voice and sentence fragments until you can handle sentences.
- 3) Stay away from dialogue until you can handle exposition.
- 4) Learn the rules of punctuation. Learn verb tenses. Learn how to use a participle.
- 5) Learn the difference between "like" and "as."
- 6) Write only in complete sentences, on pain of defenestration and rustication. No sentence fragments.

From Trollope's Journal

[Winter, 1861]

As far as statues go, so far there's not
 much choice: they're either Washingtons
 or Indians, a whitewashed, stubby lot,
 His country's Father or His foster sons.
 The White House in a sad, unhealthy spot
 just higher than Potomac's swampy brim,
 —they say the present President has got
 ague or fever in each backwoods limb.

On Sunday afternoons I wandered—rather
 I floundered—out alone. The air was raw
 and dark; the marsh half-ice, half-mud. This weather
 is normal now: a frost, and then a thaw,
 and then a frost. A hunting man, I found
 the Pennsylvania Avenue heavy ground . . .
 There all around me in the ugly mud
 —hoof-pocked, uncultivated—herds of cattle,
 numberless, wond’ring steers and oxen, stood:
 beef for the Army, after the next battle.
 Their legs were caked the color of dried blood;
 their horns were wreathed with fog. Poor, starving, dumb
 or lowing creatures, never to chew the cud
 or fill their maws again! Th’effluvium
 made that damned anthrax on my forehead throb.
 I called a surgeon in, a young man, but,
 with a sore throat himself, he did his job.
 We talked about the War, and as he cut
 away, he croaked out, “Sir, I do declare
 everyone’s sick! The soldiers poison the air.”
 —Elizabeth Bishop

I Remember, I Remember

Coming up England by a different line
 For once, early in the cold new year,
 We stopped, and, watching men with number-plates
 Sprint down the platform to familiar gates,
 “Why, Coventry!” I exclaimed. “I was born here.”

I leant far out, and squinnied for a sign
 That this was still the town that had been “mine”
 So long, but found I wasn’t even clear
 Which side was which. From where those cycle-crates
 Were standing, had we annually departed

For all those family hols? . . . A whistle went:
 Things moved. I sat back, staring at my boots.
 “Was that,” my friend smiled, “where you ‘have your roots?’”
 No, only where my childhood was unspent,
 I wanted to retort, just where I started:

By now I've got the whole place clearly charted.
Our garden, first: where I did not invent
Blinding theologies of flowers and fruits,
And wasn't spoken to by an old hat.
And here we have that splendid family

I never ran to when I got depressed,
The boys all biceps and the girls all chest,
Their comic Ford, their farm where I could be
"Really myself." I'll show you, come to that,
The bracken where I never trembling sat,

Determined to go through with it; where she
Lay back, and "all became a burning mist."
And, in those offices, my doggerel
Was not set up in blunt ten-point, nor read
By a distinguished cousin of the mayor,

Who didn't call and tell my father *There*
Before us, had we the gift to see ahead—
"You look as though you wished the place in Hell,"
My friend said, "judging from your face." "Oh well,
I suppose it's not the place's fault," I said.

"Nothing, like something, happens anywhere."
—Philip Larkin

TEXTS:

Geoffrey Hill, *Canaan*Michael Hofmann, *Selected Poems*Sylvia Plath, *Poems*Derek Walcott, *Collected Poems 1948-1984**Norton Anthology of Poetry: Shorter* ed. Ferguson

week

1 (August 23)	Introduction and Baptism by Fire	
2 (August 30)	Ballads and Bards from the <i>Shorter Norton</i>	
3 (September 6)	LABOR DAY—NO CLASS	[Paper #1 Due]
4 (September 13)	Derek Walcott, <i>The Castaway</i> and <i>The Gulf</i> Eliot, Milton	
5 (September 20)	Derek Walcott, <i>Sea Grapes</i> and <i>The Star-Apple Kingdom</i> Wordsworth, Shakespeare	
6 (September 27)	Derek Walcott, <i>The Fortunate Traveller</i> and <i>Midsummer</i> Heaney, Dryden	[Paper #2 Due]
7 (October 4)	Sylvia Plath, 1958-1961 Clare, Hopkins, Dickinson	
8 (October 11)	MOVIE NIGHT	
9 (October 18)	Sylvia Plath, 1962-1963 Bishop, Marianne Moore, Clampitt	[Paper #3 Due]
10 (October 25)	NO CLASS—INSTRUCTOR IN IDAHO (Eating potatoes, no doubt)	
11 (November 1)	Geoffrey Hill, <i>Canaan</i> Herbert, Swift	
12 (November 8)	Geoffrey Hill, <i>Canaan</i> Browning, Glück	[Paper #4 due]
13 (November 15)	Michael Hofmann, <i>Nights in the Iron Hotel</i> and <i>Acrimony</i> Keats, Berryman	
14 (November 22)	Michael Hofmann, <i>Corona, Corona</i> Hass, Frost	
15 (November 29)	Michael Hofmann, <i>Approximately Nowhere</i> Frost (part deux)	
16 (December 6)	(PORTFOLIOS DUE: Thursday, December 2) Fireworks and final pronouncements	

It may (but probably will not) be necessary for the instructor to be absent a second evening. Warning shall be given!

All the Other Things

Classroom Behavior:

Every student in this class is expected to participate in a responsible and mature manner that enhances education. Any conduct that disrupts learning may lead to disciplinary action. Because this course requires collaboration and dialogue among students, it's essential that each student create an environment of respect and tolerance. Remember that students come from very different cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of our may treat controversial topics and opinions. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may be foreign to your own. Disrespectful behavior may result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

Important Tip: *Never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location.*

Final Grade Appeals: Students should consult the Associate Chair of the English Department.

Mask Policy: UF expects you to wear masks while in class.

Turn off your cell phone before class.

Grading

A few reminders: (1) This is a studio course, so grading is even more subjective than usual; (2) You're graded on your final assignments and your class participation; (3) There are penalties for late assignments that may affect your final grade; (4) There are penalties for lateness to class, or for missing more than two classes.

A

Assignments almost always show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, as well as a complete understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and might often pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is almost always adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions.

A-

Assignments often show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, as well as an almost complete understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and might reasonably often pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is usually adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions.

B+

Assignments reasonably often show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, as well as an excellent understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and might fairly often pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is frequently adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions.

B

Assignments more often than not show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, as well as a very good understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and might sometimes pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is sometimes adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions.

B-

Assignments sometimes show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, as well as a very good understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and might very occasionally pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is on occasion adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions.

C+

Assignments rarely show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, as well as a fair understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and might once or twice pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is usually not adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions.

C

Assignments almost never show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, have a not so good understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and might once or twice pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is almost never adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions. In addition, there may be frequent problems with grammar and syntax.

C-

Assignments virtually never show remarkable ingenuity or imagination, have a poor understanding of the formal or informal demands of the poem, and would probably never pass for graduate-level work. Class participation is virtually never adept, insightful, and surprising in its perceptions. In addition, there may be very frequent problems with grammar and syntax.

D+

C- work further marred by problems of insight and understanding, as well as persistent difficulties with grammar and syntax.

D

D+ work further marred by very great problems of insight and understanding, as well as extraordinary difficulties with grammar and syntax.

D-

D work further marred by inexplicable and apparently ineradicable problems of insight and understanding, as well as even more extraordinary difficulties with grammar and syntax.

E

D- work further marred by nearly incomprehensible insights and understanding, as well as difficulties with grammar and syntax far beyond the norm for someone who cares about the language.

Remember that these are the rubrics only for the assignments and class participation. Your grade may move down with penalties for late attendance or late assignments.

UF Stuff

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition (not *Humanities*). For more info, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-educationrequirement.aspx>

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

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/>

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more info about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcode.php>

This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see <http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-educationrequirement.aspx#learning>.

Further UF Stuff

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/>.

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 spelled out in the UF Student Honor Code, which is available online at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>. 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 or individuals.
- 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. If you are found to have engaged in misconduct penalties may include a reduced or failing grade for the course 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.

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:

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