

## CRW 1301 — Beginning Poetry Writing Section 16E1, Class 12146, Spring 2023

**Instructor:** Olivia Burnett

**Course meeting times & locations:** Wednesday, Period 9–11 (4:05–7:05 PM), Anderson 0019

**Office location & hours:** Turlington 4317, Monday 2:00–3:00 PM & Tuesday 10:00–11:00 AM

**Course website:** Canvas (<https://elearning.ufl.edu/>)

**Instructor email:** [olivia.burnett@ufl.edu](mailto:olivia.burnett@ufl.edu)

### Course Description:

In this course, we will practice reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing poetry through assigned readings, class discussions, and eventually workshops. This course will ask you to consider your definition of poetry, how to determine the effectiveness of a poem, and your personal writing process. My goal is not to teach you one definitive “right way” to read or write poetry (although we may discover some definitively wrong ways along the way).

You don’t need to have any experience reading or writing poetry to enjoy and succeed in this course. You will not be asked to find the “hidden meaning” in a poem; but you will be asked to thoughtfully consider and interpret the visible elements of a poem. By the end of the semester, I want you to feel that you have all the tools you need to appreciate a given poem for what it is, not what you think it might or should be.

Reading poetry will be a large part of this course; most poets will agree that reading well is essential to writing well. You will also be asked to write critically about poems based on your own close reading. These assignments will emphasize not only the craft of writing about poetry, but also the craft of writing well—correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation are important in any discipline.

Beginning in the middle of the semester, you will be asked to compose original drafts of poems that will be workshopped in class by myself and your fellow writers. Ultimately, a poem should neither be something overly sentimental and spineless, nor something rigidly crafted without feeling. Rather, poems should work *through* craft and technique to provoke a response from the reader. My hope is that you will discover a balance between these extremes that makes sense to you and where you feel comfortable.

This class will be interactive and discussion-based, so come to class prepared and ready to participate. I decided to pursue an MFA based on the wonderful experiences I had in my own undergraduate workshops, so I want this to be an equally enjoyable experience for you, whether or not you plan to pursue writing in the future.

### Required Texts:

- *Writing Poems (Eighth Edition)* by Michelle Boisseau, Hadara Bar-Nadav, and Robert Wallace
  - You may also use the sixth or seventh editions instead.
- *Diving into the Wreck* by Adrienne Rich

- *Short Haul Engine* by Karen Solie

### Course Policies:

1. You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.
2. **Attendance:**
  - **Students will be permitted two absences from class meetings. Each absence beyond these two (excluding excused absences) will result in a 0 on Class Participation for the semester.**
  - **If you are planning to be absent from class, let me know as soon as possible.** This will allow us to plan ahead and will result in greater flexibility in regard to making up work.
  - **Documentation is required to constitute an excused absence (doctor's note, official notice from administration, etc.).**
3. **Tardiness:** Students should be on time for class. 3 tardies = 1 absence. Latecomers must see me after class so I know you attended.
4. **Classroom behavior:**
  - Students should be present, prepared, and ready to participate in class discussions.
  - Students who exhibit disruptive or disrespectful behavior aimed at me or at other students will be asked to leave the classroom and will receive an absence for the day.
  - **Cell phone use is not permitted during class time and may result in an absence for the day.**
  - Laptops may be used to take notes. However, if laptops become a distraction, we will switch over to only hand-written notes for the remainder of the semester.
5. **UF's policy on Sexual Harassment:** The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>
6. **Paper Format & Submission:**
  - **Poems will need to be submitted on paper each week.** Bring enough copies for everyone to class the week the poem is due; we will distribute them then for the following week's workshop. We will all make annotations and comments on the hard-copy poems and return them to the poet after the workshop.
    - Note: workshop procedures are subject to change. I will be sure to let you know in advance what you'll need to do in preparation. Syllabus & Canvas will be updated accordingly.
  - All other assignments will be due on Canvas, unless otherwise noted.
7. **Late Papers/Assignments:**
  - **Late work will not be accepted more than 3 (calendar) days after the due date, and will receive a 10% deduction for each day up until then.** (Note that late work will not be accepted in some cases, which I will specify beforehand—for example, toward the end of the semester when grades are due.)
    - **Poem drafts will not be accepted late, as the workshop schedule depends upon drafts being turned in on time.**

- **If there is a legitimate reason you feel you will need more time for an assignment, see me *before* the assignment is due. (Lack of time management is not a legitimate reason.)**

**Major Assignments:** (Word count for major assignments can be found in the Point Breakdown table below.)

- **8 Poem Drafts:** Throughout the semester, you will submit 8 separate poem drafts responding to a given prompt assigned by me each week. These drafts will serve as your primary practice in writing poetry, as well as the subject of our in-class workshops during the second half of the semester.
  - **Poem drafts will not be accepted late, as the workshop schedule depends upon drafts being turned in on time.**
- **Workshops:** Beginning midway through the semester, students will be expected to produce an original poem each week that will then be workshopped by the instructor and the rest of the class. Students will be expected to read the poems chosen by the instructor to be workshopped that week and make comments and suggestions on hard-copy poems *before class*, so they will be prepared to participate in the in-class workshop.
- **Assigned Readings:** Each week, students will read the assigned texts from the reading list and choose at least one poem to annotate and be ready to discuss in class. (However, I recommend annotating each page as you read.)
- **Vocabulary Quizzes:** You will have two vocabulary quizzes throughout the semester that will consist of terms related to the reading and writing of poetry. Knowledge of these essential terms will ensure that we will all be on the same page while discussing poetry in class and will provide you with the language necessary to engage in valuable workshop conversations.
- **Discussion Board Posts (6):** These discussions will be uploaded to Canvas as a way of facilitating class discussions. Each assigned post will respond to a particular question or issue within the world of poetry. They will give you some practice in thinking critically about poetry and the writing process, and may help us determine the focus of our class discussions early on in the semester.
- **Discussion Board Responses (6):** On the weeks a Discussion Board Post is due, you will also be expected to respond briefly to at least one classmate's discussion post to offer new perspectives, complications, or qualifications regarding the original post.
- **Response Essays (3):** Similarly to the Discussion Board Posts, these short essays will allow you to reflect on specific poetic topics throughout the semester. The Response Essays, however, will focus more on your personal progress and analysis than the more community-oriented Discussion Board Posts.
- **Close Readings (2):** These close readings will give you practice in writing critically about poetry. As a poet, it is important to learn how to *read* poetry and consider why a writer has made certain decisions and how those decisions contribute to the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of the poem. These short essays will focus on a single poem from a collection we have read so far in the semester.
- **Final Portfolio:** Your final portfolio will consist of at least 5 revised poems from the 8 drafts you've submitted throughout the semester, and 200 words of commentary on each of them. It will also include a 500-word artist statement that will allow you to reflect on

your personal writing process, your opinions on the art of poetry, and what you have learned or how you have improved throughout the semester.

- **Class Participation:** This will include attendance, adherence to classroom policies (such as cell phone use, etc.), and participation in class discussions and workshops.

**Syllabus:**

**See Canvas for supplemental weekly readings; syllabus will be updated accordingly.**

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Read for Class</b>	<b>DUE</b>
1	1/10		
2	1/18	<i>WP</i> Ch 1: Starting Out; Poems Packet 1 (on Canvas)	Discussion Board 1
3	1/25	<i>WP</i> Ch 2: Verse	Discussion Board 2; Vocab Quiz 1
4	2/1	<i>WP</i> Ch 3: Making the Line (I) & 4: Making the Line (II); Rich Section I	Discussion Board 3
5	2/8	<i>WP</i> Ch 5: The Sound (and Look) of Sense; Rich Sections II & III	Discussion Board 4; Response Essay 1
6	2/15	<i>WP</i> Ch 6: Subject Matter & 8: Tale, Teller, and Tone; Rich Section IV	Poem Draft 1
7	2/22	<i>WP</i> Ch 7: Metaphor	Poem Draft 2; Vocab Quiz 2
8	3/1	<i>WP</i> Ch 9: The Mysteries of Language	Poem Draft 3; Close Reading 1
9	3/8	<i>WP</i> Ch 10: Finding the Poem	Poem Draft 4; Response Essay 2
10	3/15	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
11	3/22		Poem Draft 5; Discussion Board 5
12	3/29	Solie 13–40	Poem Draft 6; Discussion Board 6
13	4/5	<i>WP</i> Ch 11: Devising and Revising; Solie 43–79	Poem Draft 7
14	4/12		Poem Draft 8
15	4/19		Close Reading 2
16	4/26		Response Essay 3; Final Portfolio

### Point Breakdown:

Assignment	Word Count	Points	Total Points
8 Poem Drafts	N/A	20	160
Discussion Board Posts (6)	200	5	100
Discussion Board Responses (6)	50	5	100
Vocab Quizzes (2)	N/A	20	40
Close Readings (2)	750	100	200
Response Essays (3)	500	50	150
Final Portfolio	1500	200	200
Class Participation	N/A	50	50
<b>Total Words:</b>	<b>6000</b>	<b>Total Points:</b>	<b>1000</b>

### Grading Scale and Rubric:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
98– 100	93– 97	90– 92	87– 89	83– 86	80– 82	77– 79	73– 76	70– 72	67– 69	63– 66	60– 62	0– 59

**A:** An “A” is the result of fulfilling all the assignment’s requirements and doing it well. An “A+” is reserved for those cases in which the assignment offers a little something extra beyond what was required; this could be the depth of information included, particularly eloquent writing, etc.

**B:** A “B” is the result of fulfilling the assignment’s requirements for the most part, but it doesn’t quite meet the level of depth and polish that characterizes the “A.” A “B” is not an “A” with points deducted—it is a solidly executed assignment that *could be improved*.

**C:** A “C” is the result of partially fulfilling the assignment’s requirements, or fulfilling them in a way that is less thoughtful or less polished than the “B.” A “C” might also be attributed to mechanical or stylistic issues.

**D:** A “D” is the result of partially fulfilling the assignment’s requirements (less fully than the “C”), or of major mechanical or stylistic issues.

**E:** An “E” does not fulfill the assignment’s requirements, or partially fulfills them in a way that lacks thoughtfulness, depth, and/or polish.

### **General Education Objectives:**

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C), and also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

### **General Education Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

### **University Policies:**

- **Paper Maintenance Responsibilities:** Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
- **Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism:** UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the

following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’”

- Definition of *plagiarism* according to the current UF Student Honor Code: A Student must not represent as the Student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:
  - Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
  - Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student’s own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student’s own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
  - Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
  - Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.
- Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>), which will provide appropriate documentation to give your instructor early in the semester.
- Students who are in distress or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF’s Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>
- For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
- Grade appeals: In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Please contact Ms. Blount at [cblount@ufl.edu](mailto:cblount@ufl.edu) Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
- Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online: <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>

### **COVID statement:**

- In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.
  - If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.uf](http://one.uf) for screening/testing and vaccination opportunities.
  - **You are welcome to wear a mask in the classroom. Whether or not you choose to wear a mask, you will be expected to respect the choices of those around you.**
  - If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.