

CRW 1301: Beginning Poetry Writing

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Office Hours: M 1pm – 4pm, TUR 4407; and also by appt.

Course Info: Time: W 9-11 (4:05pm – 7:05pm), Bldg./Room: MAT 0011

Introduction

“I had to create an equivalent for what I felt about what I was looking at—not copy it.”

—Georgia O’Keeffe

Often, we come to poetry with very set ideas of what it is or should be, whether that be something more modern and contemporary or something very archaic and shrouded in mystery. I want us to encounter some poems you may be familiar with, whether you’ve seen them “in the wild” or read them in previous classes, and revisit them, trying to untangle them and see them from a new light. We also want to look at work taking place in contemporary spaces. We are, after all, here to craft work of our own, so it’s important that we not only learn from those come before us, but have an eye toward the now, a finger on the pulse, so to speak. We’ll have discussions about the craft and form of poetry as well as about why we write in the first place. My hope is that we can start to critique poetry in a way that allows the poem to speak to us, lets it tell us what it wants to be, not superimposing our own desires for what it could be if it were written or framed differently.

We will begin the course by reading poems together, dissecting them, writing analyses of them, then, after some exercises, we will launch into the second part of the semester where we will embark upon the poetry workshop. We’ll share poems, written by you, among the class and will have structured conversations around what you’re doing in your own work, how it learns from the work we’ve digested together, and how you’re trying to break new ground, avoiding cliches as best we can and using language in surprising, controlled ways. Thus, your original poems should strive to be reflections of yourself as you wrestle to match the craft techniques of poetry with content brought in by yourself or by assigned prompts. For this reason, we hope to hear every voice in the room to be better readers, and advocates, of poetry and the craft of writing.

Required Texts

The Poet’s Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry, Kim Addonizio and Dorianne Laux
(Recommended) *The Norton Anthology of Poetry: Sixth Edition*.

Weekly PDFs of poems/essays/handouts will be made available by instructor

Overview of Assignments

Close Readings: For each close reading, you must select and explore one poem discussed up to that point in class. You will discuss stylistic choices, craft techniques, and other elements you believe to be significant. These close readings will focus on literary analysis. Each initial post must be at least 350 words. You will also respond to a peer's post in at least 150 words. These will be due on Canvas on Tuesdays at 11:59pm.

Critical Analysis Essays: Part of being a poet is being a critic. For these assignments, you will select a poem to thoroughly analyze. The essay will respond to issues of poetic devices, contexts, and forms, and make an assertion about the effectiveness of those elements. These papers will allow you to consider personal taste and explore a poem in more depth than the weekly close readings. You will write two analyses, each 750 words in length.

Original Poems: Over the course of the semester, I will assign a series of writing prompts for which you will produce original poems. These will be evaluated on adherence to the prompt, evidence of effort, and cleanliness (absence of typos/observance of assigned format). All prompts will have specific guidelines listed on the assignment page. These will be submitted on Canvas and on paper during class.

Portfolio: Your final project will have three parts. First, you will revise five poems, taking into consideration workshop comments and instructor feedback. (Note that you will submit the original versions of the poems alongside the revisions, so don't lose those copies.) You will also include a 300-word artist's statement explaining your poetic philosophy, visions, and intuitions. (Maybe even hallucinations?) Lastly, you will write a 200-word letter to your past writer self (the one who showed up on the first day of class) and contemplate the changes you've undergone. This portfolio should be formatted as a chapbook (with a title, table of contents, and third-person author bio). Be encouraged to use (or create) a cover image for your chapbook, and you may include a picture of yourself next to your bio.

Assignment	Word Count	Points
Close Readings (x8)	500 each	20 each
Critical Analysis Essays (x2)	750 each	100 each
Original Poems (x9)	-	10 each

Workshop Sessions (x2)	-	100 per workshop session
Workshop Annotations	-	100 base (2 points will be deducted for each missing set of annotations)
Final Portfolio	500	200
General Class Participation	-	150 base
	= 6000 total	= 1000 total

Workshop

In our class, workshop space is an intentional space, and it is my goal to foster a community in which to share our work. You will be introduced to the workshop in more detail during class, but here is an overview: students will be broken up into workshop groups of 3-6 (depending on class size). When your piece isn't being workshopped, you will need to prepare commentary for the students that *are* being workshopped. For full credit, all workshop poems must follow these guidelines:

1. Times New Roman or Garamond, 12- or 14-point font, single spaced.
2. Title (you may not title a poem "Untitled").
3. Your name must be on the paper.
4. Avoid the use of profanity for shock value.
5. Avoid clichés and empty abstractions.
6. Poems must obey the rules of grammar—no fragments, use proper punctuation, etc.

Participation: Workshop relies on discussion; come to class prepared. Unpreparedness will result in a deduction from the general class participation points.

Workshop Sessions: Workshop will commence in week 7. As in the first six weeks, you will continue to bring paper copies of your weekly poetry prompt to class. One group will be slated for workshop each class, and the group members will know their workshop date ahead of time. Over the course of the semester, each poet will be workshopped roughly 2-3 times, depending on class size.

Classmate Annotations: For each poem being workshopped, you will be expected to annotate the poem and come to class prepared for discussion. You will receive a paper copy of each poem being

workshopped and mark it up. I will check these for completion before each workshop. Each missing set of annotations will result in a deduction of two points.

Course-Specific Policies

1. *Since creative writing is art*, your poetry will be graded holistically. I will evaluate for effort, timeliness, contemplation, and evidence of revision. I will provide feedback aimed at helping you grow as a poet.
2. *Participation* is integral to this class. You must engage in lectures and complete all readings, exercises, and assignments to receive credit. I will holistically evaluate your participation based on your efforts in class and on Canvas. You will automatically start off with 100 participation points. To keep these points, you must complete assignments, arrive to class prepared, participate in workshops/class discussions, and generally contribute to our writerly community. Non-participation will result in a deduction from your 100 points. The more you participate, the more you will learn. (Note: general participation points are graded separately from workshop annotations.)
3. *Late work* will not be accepted for any assignments. However, for the Close Readings, you have a 24-hour grace period. If you submit within the grace period, no points will be deducted. Any work submitted after the grace period will result in a deduction of one full letter grade after your initial grade. (So, if the assignment is originally of B+ merit, but it was submitted after the grace period, it will be graded as a C+.)
4. *Absences* are not encouraged. Since we meet only once a week, attendance is imperative for you to fully engage with the material. You are allotted ONE unexcused absence. More than one unexcused absence will result in your grade being affected. On par with the University of Florida's attendance policy, a student who misses more than 6 class periods automatically fails a course. Each of our meetings is equal to THREE class periods. Therefore, if you miss more than two class meetings, you will automatically fail. This policy is for unexcused absences and does not apply excused absences. Absences are only excused with a doctor's note. Please communicate with me if you have questions or concerns about attendance.
5. *Tardiness* can result in deduction from your participation points. 2 tardy arrivals = 1 absence. A tardy arrival is defined as being 5 minutes late for class without notice.
6. *Classroom etiquette* involves paying attention, doing the work, and treating others with respect. Please keep electronics away.
7. *Plagiarism and the use of AI programs* is expressly forbidden in this course. Your poems must be your original work. Poems may not be inspired by, assisted by, or have words lifted from any AI program or previously published work. I reserve the right to report any incident of academic dishonesty.

8. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities:* You must keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over. The portfolio assignment will require you submit the original versions of your revised poems. Develop a system to organize your work to avoid problems later in the semester.

Grading Scale

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
E	0-59

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

General Education Objectives

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C) and 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-Specific Policies

1. *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 all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>
2. *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.'" The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies several behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

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.
- b. 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.
- c. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.

3. *Accommodations:* 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.
4. *Crisis:* Students who are in distress or who need counseling or urgent help: please contact 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/>
5. *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 Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

6. *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.bluer.com/ufl/>

Schedule (*subject to change*)

Date	In Class	Homework
Week 1 AUG 27 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction: “Poetry in the Wild” (Collins, Oliver) • “Good” vs. “Bad” Poetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read PC 19-28
Week 2 SEPT 3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary, Conventions, Clichés • How to Approach and Read Poetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 1 • Close Reading 1 • Read PC 85-103
Week 3 SEPT 10 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetry’s Architecture • Discuss Class Readings <p>-Submit Poem 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 2 • Close Reading 2 • Read PC 104-112
Week 4 SEPT 17 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simile, Metaphor, Imagery • Discuss Class Readings <p>- Workshop Poem 1, Submit Poem 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 3 • Close Reading 3 • Read Weekly PDF
Week 5 SEPT 24 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meter, Rhyme, Sound • Discuss Class Readings <p>- Workshop Poem 2, Submit Poem 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 4 • Close Reading 4 • Read Weekly PDF
Week 6 OCT 1 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play, Associative/Lateral Logic • Discuss Class Readings <p>- Workshop Poem 3, Submit Poem 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 5 • Close Reading 5 • Read Weekly PDF
Week 7 OCT 8 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Class Readings <p>- Workshop Poem 4, Submit Poem 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 6 • Read Weekly PDF • Critical Essay 1 Due
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Class Readings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 7

OCT 15 th	- Workshop Poem 5, Submit Poem 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close Reading 6 • Read Weekly PDF
Week 9 OCT 22 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Class Readings - Workshop Poem 6, Submit Poem 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 8 • Close Reading 7 • Read Weekly PDF
Week 10 OCT 29 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Class Readings - Workshop Poem 7, Submit Poem 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem 9 • Close Reading 8 • Read Weekly PDF
Week 11 NOV 5 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Class Readings - Workshop Poem 8, Submit Poem 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Weekly PDF
Week 12 NOV 12 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Class Readings - Workshop Poem 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Weekly PDF • Critical Essay 2 Due
Week 13 NOV 19 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Class Readings & Revision Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read PC 186-192
T-GIVING NOV 26 th	NO CLASS THIS WEDNESDAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat
Week 14 DEC 3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing Poetry Q&A • Final Notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Portfolio Due</u> <u>(@11:59pm 5th)</u>

Student Academic and Crisis Resources

University Writing Studio

The [UF Writing Studio](#) offers tutoring appointments for UF undergraduate and graduate students. Students bring writing drafts to their appointments and receive constructive feedback and tutoring from trained studio tutors, usually other undergraduate students. Students may make up to two appointments per week.

Disability Accommodations

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the [Disability Resources Center](#) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

I strive to create an equitable, welcoming class environment. While I must receive documented DRC accommodations to make major changes to the class, I encourage students to come talk to me about *any* access needs, even ones without associated diagnoses. I will do what I can to best ensure all students have the resources necessary to thrive in my class.

Hitchcock Field & Fork Food Pantry

[The Hitchcock Field & Fork Pantry](#) offers free grocery staples and fresh produce to all UF students, faculty, and staff experiencing food insecurity. Field & Fork defines food insecurity as “A person experiences food insecurity when they can't access food in either the *amount* or *nutritional quality* that meets their needs.” No proof of insecurity is required to receive resources, no questions are asked, but **GatorONE ID cards are needed.**

Counseling and Wellness Center

[The Counseling and Wellness Center](#) offers mental health support and resources to students, including support with college-related struggles and general mental health services. More info at (352)392-1575.

Aid-A-Gator Financial Assistance

"Funds from [Aid-a-Gator](#) are intended to be a grant, not a loan, to help our students in need to cover costs related to unanticipated travel, additional technology requirements, or other needs related to an emergency situation. To apply for emergency funding, undergraduate students, graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows should complete [this form](#). Maximum Aid-a-Gator grants will be \$500."

Student Health Care Center

"All registered UF students paying the tuition-included student health fee are eligible for [Student Health Care Center \(SHCC\)](#) services. The SHCC provides care at many levels, and charges vary depending on the services provided. Insurance is not required to access SHCC services; however, coverage is mandated by UF. "

[Office of Victim Services](#)

Students who have experienced a crime, assault, or harassment are invited to contact the [UFPD Office of Victim Services](#), a free and confidential service that provides victim-survivors with emotional support, counselling referrals, victim advocacy, accompaniment to criminal justice processes, and more. Victim-survivors are not required to make a police report or press charges to access OVS resources.

[Alachua County Crisis Center](#)

[The Alachua County Crisis Center](#) is a non-UF-associated, non-GDP-associated help center for Alachua County residents experiencing traumatic events or crisis. ACCC services include: 24/7 crisis phone line at (352) 264-6789; appointment, walk-in, and group crisis counselling; on-demand crisis intervention; national suicide hotlines; local disaster information; community education; and more.

[Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network](#)

[Peaceful Paths](#) is a domestic violence center that serves survivors in Alachua and nearby counties. Services include “emergency shelter, 24-hour helpline, victim advocacy, children’s programming, economic empowerment education and support, crisis counseling and support groups, community awareness and intervention, and violence prevention programs.”