

## CRW 2300: Poetry Writing

Instructor: Chloe Cook

Email: Chloecook@ufl.edu

Office Hours: W 2:30pm – 3:30pm, TUR 4317

Course Info: W 9-11 (4:05pm – 7:05pm), MAT 0108

### **Introduction**

As Pound put it, “Artists are the antennae of our species.” This semester, we will practice tuning our ears to pick up on the signals buzzing about in the present (and shouting at us from the past). Advancing past the basics of vocabulary and conventions, we will examine how a poet’s formal tools (rhetorical devices, voice, prosody, etc.) can help them construct a poem—and collection—that stands up to scrutiny. Using readings as our guides, we will attempt to utilize such formal tools in our own works in hopes of honing our poetic sensibilities. We will also practice writing about poetry in a critical mode while interrogating the contemporary market.

Our modus operandi will involve reading, writing, discussing, and more reading. Come prepared to participate and play. Let us obey Sexton’s maxim: “Whatever you do, don’t be boring.”

### **Required Texts**

*Meadowlands*, Louise Glück

*For Lizzy and Harriet*, Robert Lowell

*Rain*, Don Paterson

*Say Something Back*, Denise Riley

Hard copies only, please. All other readings will be provided on Canvas.

### **Overview of Assignments**

Close Readings: We will read four books of poetry throughout the semester. For each close reading, you must select and explore one poem from the book currently being discussed in class. You will examine stylistic choices, craft techniques, and other elements you believe to be significant. These close readings will focus on analysis. Each initial post must be at least 300 words. You will also respond to a peer’s post in at least 100 words. These will be due on Canvas on Tuesdays at 11:59pm.

Critical Review: Part of being a poet is being a critic. For these assignments, you will select a book that we’ve read in class to analyze and critique. The essay will seek to identify thematic throughlines, universal motifs, and voice. You will also address issues of poetic devices, prosody, and forms, and make an assertion about the effectiveness of those elements. These papers will allow you to consider personal taste and explore poetry in a broader context than the weekly close readings. You will write two reviews, each a minimum of 1000 words in length.

Original Poems: Over the course of the semester, I will assign a series of writing prompts for which you will produce eight original poems. These will be evaluated on adherence to prompt, evidence of

effort, and cleanliness (i.e., absence of typos and observance of assigned format). All prompts will have specific guidelines listed on the assignment page. These will be submitted both *on Canvas and on paper*.

Discussion Leading: Once during the semester, you will be responsible for leading a class discussion on one of the poems from the book currently being read in class. Come prepared with a brief overview of what the poem is working toward (formally and thematically), and questions aimed at sparking conversation.

Recitation: One way to get a feel for the music of poetry is memorization. You will select one metrical poem (a minimum of 14 lines long) to recite from memory for the class. Recitations will occur on the last day, and they will be evaluated on fluency of delivery and embodiment of content.

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 500-word artist's statement explaining your poetic philosophy, visions, and intuitions. (Maybe even hallucinations?) Lastly, you will write a 300-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, should you opt to.

Workshop: In our class, workshop space is an intentional space. It is my goal to foster a productive community for which to share our work. You will be introduced to the workshop in more detail during class, but here is an overview: workshop will commence in week 6. One group will be slated for workshop each class, and the group members will know their date ahead of time. Over the course of the semester, each poet will be workshopped twice. When your piece isn't being workshopped, you will need to prepare commentary for the students who *are* being workshopped. For full credit, all 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.

\*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. You will begin with 100 points, and each missing set of annotations will result in a deduction of two points.

Assignment Breakdown:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Word Count</b>	<b>Points</b>
Close Readings (x8)	400 each	25 each
Critical Review (x2)	1000 each	100 each
Discussion Leading	-	50
Recitation	-	50
Original Poems (x8)	-	10 each
Workshop Sessions (x2)	-	100 per workshop session
Workshop Annotations	-	100 base
Final Portfolio	800	100
General Class Participation	-	100 base
	= 6000 total	= 1080 total

**Course-Specific Policies**

*Note:* It is my goal within each creative writing class to develop a trusted writerly community. Poems are graded on effort—not perfection—in an effort to relieve grade anxiety and offer students room to pursue sincere creative risks. Additionally, I do not wish to produce clones of myself; I aim to expose students to a wide range of poetic voices and technical possibilities, guide them toward the strongest potential versions of their poet-selves, and mentor the production and reception of artistic criticism. It is my hope that, by the end of the semester, students will have taken significant creative leaps and gained confidence in their ability to effectively participate in various poetry discourses.

1. *Since poetry is art*, your poems will be graded holistically. I will evaluate for effort, timeliness, 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 full 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.
3. *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 absence without explanation or cause. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in your grade being affected. If you have more than 2 unexcused absences, you cannot pass the course. Excused absences (such as athletic events, theater commitments, illnesses, family emergencies, etc.) require appropriate documentation AND advance notice given to me. You are responsible for turning in any assignments regardless of whether you are in class or not. You must complete all assignments to receive full credit for this course. For UF's official attendance policy, you can visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>
4. *Late work* will be accepted or denied at my discretion, depending upon the circumstances. As with absences, advance notice is key.
5. *Tardiness* can result in deduction from your participation points and overall grade. 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. You must also keep up with your UF email and Canvas announcements, as this is how I will communicate with you outside of class.
7. *Plagiarism and the use of AI programs* is **expressly forbidden** in this course. Your poems, discussion posts, and essays must be your original work. Poems may not be inspired by, assisted by, or have any words lifted from an AI program or previously published work. **You may not use ChatGPT or any other AI program for any work in this course;** the use of such programs will result in a zero on the assignment and an overall grade cap of a C. I reserve the right to report any incident of academic dishonesty to the Student Conduct Committee.
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.
9. *Essays* should be double spaced and typed in English. Use a readable 12 pt. font and standard 1-inch margins.

## Grading Scale

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
93-100	90-93	87-89	84-86	80-83	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	0 - 59
4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0.00

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/#gradestext>

## 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](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/>

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](mailto: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.bluera.com/ufl/>

Schedule (subject to change)

Date	In Class	Homework
Week 1 Aug. 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read “Feeling into Words”</li> </ul>
Week 2 Sept. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to Read as Writers</li> <li>• Discuss “Feeling into Words”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read “The Surveyors” and “Affections of the Ear”</li> </ul>
Week 3 Sept. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Poetry is Working Toward</li> <li>• Sentimentality, Abstraction, Cliché</li> <li>• Discuss “They Surveyors” and “Affections of the Ear”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close Reading 1</li> <li>• Read <i>Meadowlands</i> pp. 3 - 32 and “The Sea is History”</li> </ul>
Week 4 Sept. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allusion and Myth</li> <li>• Discuss <i>Meadowlands</i> and “The Sea is History”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close Reading 2</li> <li>• Poem 1</li> <li>• Read <i>Meadowlands</i> pp. 33 – 60</li> </ul>
Week 5 Sept. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tone and Voice</li> <li>• Discuss <i>Meadowlands</i></li> </ul> <p>*Submit Poem 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem 2</li> <li>• Close Reading 3</li> <li>• Read <i>Rain</i> pp. 3 – 32</li> </ul>
Week 6 Oct. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhetorical Devices I</li> <li>• Discuss <i>Rain</i></li> <li>• Workshop (Group A)</li> </ul> <p>*Receive Poem 1, Submit Poem 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem 3</li> <li>• Close Reading 4</li> <li>• Read <i>Rain</i> pp. 33 – 61</li> </ul>
Week 7 Oct. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhetorical Devices II</li> <li>• Discuss <i>Rain</i></li> <li>• Workshop (Group B)</li> </ul> <p>*Receive Poem 2, Submit Poem 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem 4</li> <li>• Critical Review 1 due</li> <li>• Read “Standing Up to Scrutiny”</li> </ul>
Week 8 Oct. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criticism</li> <li>• Discuss “Standing Up to Scrutiny”</li> <li>• Workshop (Group C)</li> </ul> <p>*Receive Poem 3, Submit Poem 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem 5</li> <li>• Close Reading 5</li> <li>• Read <i>For Lizzie and Harriet</i> pp. 13 - 29</li> </ul>

<p>Week 9 Oct. 23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lateral Thinking</li> <li>• Discuss <i>For Lizzie and Harriet</i></li> <li>• Workshop (Group D)</li> </ul> <p>*Receive Poem 4, Submit Poem 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem 6</li> <li>• Close Reading 6</li> <li>• Read <i>For Lizzie and Harriett</i> pp. 30 - 48</li> </ul>
<p>Week 10 Oct. 30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From Personal History to Poem</li> <li>• Discuss <i>For Lizzie and Harriet</i></li> <li>• Workshop (Group A)</li> </ul> <p>* Receive Poem 5, Submit Poem 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem 7</li> <li>• Close Reading 7</li> <li>• Read <i>Say Something Back</i> pp. 5 - 36</li> </ul>
<p>Week 11 Nov. 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measuring Emotion</li> <li>• Discuss <i>Say Something Back</i></li> <li>• Workshop (Group B)</li> </ul> <p>* Receive Poem 6, Submit Poem 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poem 8</li> <li>• Close Reading 8</li> <li>• Read <i>Say Something Back</i> pp. 37 - 67</li> </ul>
<p>Week 12 Nov. 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Poem vs. Collection</li> <li>• Discuss <i>Say Something Back</i></li> <li>• Workshop (Group C)</li> </ul> <p>*Receive Poem 7, Submit Poem 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read “The Warmth of a Messy Page”</li> </ul>
<p>Week 13 Nov. 20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision</li> <li>• Discuss “The Warmth of a Messy Page”</li> <li>• Workshop (Group D)</li> </ul> <p>*Receive Poem 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical Review 2 due</li> </ul>
<p>Week 14 Nov. 27</p>	<p>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK</p>	
<p>Week 15 Dec. 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recitations</li> <li>• Publishing World, MFAs, Grants, Cool Writing Opportunities, etc.</li> <li>• Final Remarks!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio due</li> </ul>