

English 247, 248, 249 – Writing Poetry I/II/III

Welcome to Writing Poetry

Winter Quarter 2015

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I am so pleased that you have enrolled in Writing Poetry. I am a poet; I love poetry, and I love teaching this course.

If you would like to learn more about me, please read my Bio, which is in Course Materials on your homepage.

I am excited about our course. The curriculum is new, most of it accessible on the Internet. The weekly assignment pages will include the URL's necessary to access the readings.

Our course is focused on two activities: (1) reading/hearing the work of established poets, including our text, and (2) using what we have learned to write our own poems.

Reading and hearing the work of established poets is the best way to learn the craft of writing poetry. I have chosen 'accessible', popular, contemporary poets, who I hope you will enjoy reading/hearing. You will not like all poets equally although you will learn something from each one you read/hear. You will learn best from the poets that you like, the ones that 'speak to you.'

I hope you enjoy our course. I hope that it will spark your creative fires and keep them burning long after the quarter is over.

Our Syllabus

Please print a copy of the Syllabus and keep it in your notebook

After you have read your Syllabus, please email me on our course site with the following information: *I have read and accept all the responsibilities detailed in the Course Syllabus.*

Our Syllabus is our contract for the course. It is long, and it is a lot to take in at one sitting. It may also feel formal and off-putting due to the language and content. I recommend that you read it like this:

1. Read it through once.
2. Then read it through again, marking questions.
3. Read it through a third time.

After you have read and digested our Syllabus, please write me on our course email to tell me that you have read and understand the Syllabus and that you accept your responsibility as a learner in our course.

Course Goals

Learning about the craft of poetry, generating and writing poems, and on specific poetry writing skills: rhythm and voice, sensory and concrete details, strong nouns and verbs, showing rather than telling, clear, tight diction, open and closed forms.

How to Communicate with Me

This course is taught entirely on line. I am not available on campus. If you wish to speak with me personally, send me your phone number and I am happy to call you.

Our course email is the best way to reach me. I check it numerous times every day. I will always try to get back to you within twenty-four hours.

If CANVAS goes down, you can always reach me at my campus email address.

My workweek runs from Monday through Friday evening. If you email me late on Friday, it may take until Monday for me to get back to you.

What you will Need for Our Course

1. Ted Kooser: **The Poetry Repair Manual: Advice for Beginning Poets** (good for mature ones as well).

You will need Kooser week 1.

You will also need

1. A reliable computer with a high speed internet connection.
2. **Microsoft WORD.** Please do not use *Works*, *Word Perfect* or *.ink*. If you do not have *WORD*, you can save your work in *Rich Text Format: RTF*. You will find *RTF* in the drop down save menu.
3. A reliable back-up computer in case your primary computer fails
4. A thumb drive to back up your writing.
5. A notebook in which to keep printed off course materials

6. A 'writer's notebook' which you can easily carry with you and a pen with which you like to write.
7. A journal in which you can write responses and draft poems.

Assignments

Assignments are listed on your Summary **Course Calendar**. Please print it off and keep it in a visible place. Refer to it often.

Details of the Weekly Assignments are in each week's Module

Each week we will

1. Read Kooser
2. Listen to/read poems. URL's are supplied in the Weekly Assignment pages.
3. Write a response to the weekly prompt, which you will find in the Quiz Module.
4. Write and post a response to what we have read/heard
5. Participate in conversations about what we have heard and read.
6. Write and post our poems
7. Discuss our poems with each other, following the Critique Guidelines.

*I will provide study questions or writing prompts

Guidelines for Discussion/Conversations

Please print off the handout on Discussions included in **Course Materials**.

Responding to Poems

Please print out the handout on Peer Review Guidelines which are included in Course Materials

Grades

You can earn up to 10 credits each week: 5/discussion; 5/poem

In order to earn full points you will need to

1. Meet the **assignment expectations**;
2. Participate in **at least two threaded discussions** in addition to the one generated by your own, and
3. Critique/respond to at least two poems submitted by members of your group.

Grading Particulars

1. I will assign points to all of your work: 1-5.
2. Your points will be based on
 - The quality of your own work: Is it a mature attempt to meet the assignment?
 - The substance of your response to members of your writing group.
3. Your accumulated points will be translated into a letter grade at the end of the quarter.
4. Complete assignments in sequence. Week 1, 2, 3, etc.
5. Unexcused late work will not earn credit.

***Stuff happens!** If you are having problems or experience an emergency, let me know right away – or ask someone to contact me as soon as possible. Please do not show up in the middle of the quarter and ask to be allowed to catch up.

Grades will be given based on these percentages:

		B+	=	88-90	C+	=	77-80	D+	=	62-65	
A	=	94-100	B	=	84-87	C	=	70-76	D	=	56-61
A-	=	91-93	B-	=	81-83	C-	=	66-69	F	=	0-55

On-Line Expectations, Policy, and Etiquette

Because some of these are legal requirements, they are, by necessity, strict and formal.

Although you can work on your own time and schedule, plan your time so that you can turn in your assignments when they are due. Like an on-campus class, expect to spend two hours for each class credit/week. A five-credit class expects you to do roughly 10-hours/week homework.

Check into our site regularly.

Conduct your discussions, responses, and email conversations in a mature, thoughtful and respectful manner. Students who are rude or abusive to others or to me will be asked to leave the course.

You are responsible for having the texts, course materials, correct software, equipment and sufficient computer knowledge to complete the course.

If you are new to Canvas, Distance Ed has a video and I have included instructions on our Homepage to help you manage the site.

5 Syllabus for Writing Poetry

If you have questions or problems, contact me right away.

I look forward to meeting you on our course site.

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