

## CRW 2300: Poetry Writing

Spring 2016

**Instructor:** Ashley Keyser

**Section:** 5311, Matherly 102, Wednesday periods 9-11 (4:05-7:05 pm)

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### Required Texts

*An Introduction to Poetry*, X.J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia

*The Dream Songs*, John Berryman

*Autobiography of Red*, Anne Carson

*Song & Error*, Averill Curdy

*Collected Earlier Poems*, Anthony Hecht

*Omeros*, Derek Walcott

### Course Description and Objectives

In this class, you will write the poem you read. You will read as much as you write, much more so, but not necessarily as an English major would read poetry. That is to say, you will read a poem like a poet, assessing the writer's choices, imitating her style so as to learn (and steal) from her. CRW 2300 operates under the assumption that learning to read poetry and learning to write it are interdependent skills: To write poetry well, you must read a lot of it; to read it well, you must write poems, imitate and inhabit poems, and dare to fail spectacularly.

This class will place particular emphasis on narrative poetry. The collections we'll read, in addition to supplemental poems here and there, will offer varied possibilities for telling stories through verse, developing characters, toying with voices and form. In our readings and discussions, we'll consider these questions: How is narrative poetry different from fiction? Can, as the subtitle to *Autobiography of Red* suggests ("A Novel in Verse"), poems create a novel, and what are the possibilities for telling stories in poetic form?

Although you will study various forms and styles through writing original work, you will also be expected to critically analyze what you read. Assignments will include short papers throughout the course, as well as your own review of a contemporary poetry book.

This course fulfills the University's 6000 word requirement in addition to the poems you'll write throughout the semester.

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

### **List of Assignments**

Response Papers: 3 at 1500 words each (4500 words total). 100 points each (300 total).

Poem drafts (10): 10 points each, 100 points total.

Final portfolio: 500 word introduction with revised poems. 400 points.

Memorized poem: 50 points

Book review: 1000 words. 50 points.

Attendance & participation: 100 points

*Total word count (minimum): 6000*

*Total points: 1000*

### **Assignment Guidelines**

#### *Response Papers:*

Each paper will critically engage with a poem or set of poems by a particular author, proposing a thesis on a specific stylistic device in the poem (e.g. use of diction, image, symbol, etc). You'll need to argue that this device is important for an understanding of the poem(s), that it reveals something surprising about the text. This assignment is designed as an exercise in both developing your argumentation skills as a critic and exploring your own poetic interests and curiosities. You may work with a poet of your choice from the assigned collections. If you wish to go outside the course reading, please clear it with me first.

You'll also need a dictionary. I recommend The Oxford English Dictionary, available here (but make sure you're logged on to the university's system to access UF's subscription!): <http://www.oed.com/>

#### *Poems*

1. To receive credit, poems must:
  - a. be single spaced with 1" margins

- b. be left-justified (not center- or right-, although indentation and other variations in form are allowed)
  - c. be written in Times New Roman font, size 12
  - d. have a title, written in bold
  - e. have your name and the assignment number at the top of the page
2. Poems must respond to the assignment given.
  3. Poems must be written in complete sentences (if you eliminated the line breaks, the text would read coherently and be grammatically correct).

#### *Workshop Procedure*

Email me your poem as a.doc or .docx attachment before class on the date that it is due. I will read every poem and select a portion of them to be workshopped the following week. Each student will have his/her poems workshopped throughout the semester. Please print out all poems to be workshopped, read each carefully (at least two times), and mark up the copies with feedback. Prepare at least two positive and two critical comments for each poem, and be prepared to share them during workshop. Comments must be specific (so, not merely “It was good”). Bring the copies to class on the day of workshop. At the end of class, you will return the poems to the poets who wrote them.

#### *Memorized Poem*

You will commit a poem of at least 14 lines to memory, then recite it at the end of the semester. Please send me your chosen poem in advance for my approval.

#### *Book Review*

For this assignment, you will select a collection of poetry published by 2010 or after, written by a poet outside our reading list. In your review, you’ll both evaluate the volume based on criteria we’ve discussed in class, and also compare the text to one of the poets we’ve studied.

#### *Portfolio*

You will choose six poems from your work during the semester and revise them based on my and your peers’ comments. In a 500-word introduction to these poems, you will explain your thought process during revision, why you made the choices you did. One individual conference is required before the due date.

#### *Participation*

Although participation is not graded, there may be quizzes and graded in-class activities, which cannot be made up in the case of absence. I may also ask individual students to lead discussions on certain days. In general, in order to get the most out of this course, you must speak up in discussions and workshops. I recognize that active listening is also a participation skill and will not punish you for shyness, but I will speak to you individually if I feel that you are not engaging with the material and with your peers.

Cell phone and laptop use are prohibited.

## Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100%	C	2.0	73-76%
A-	3.67	90-92%	C-	1.67	70-72%
B+	3.33	87-89%	D+	1.33	67-69%
B	3.0	83-86%	D	1.0	63-66%
B-	2.67	80-82%	D-	0.67	60-62%
C+	2.33	77-79%	E	0.00	0-59%

Grade	Reading Responses	Poems
A	An “A” paper responds to the assignment prompt in full. It presents an original, specific, and clearly worded argument supported by sufficient evidence. Writing style is engaging, clear, and concise, and the paper employs a logical organization. It is free from mechanical or formatting errors and cites sources using the proper citation format.	An “A” poem responds to the assignment prompt in full. It uses vivid and carefully considered language and follows an original and cohesive vision. It employs poetic techniques discussed in class to a constructive purpose. Its sentences make complete grammatical sense and it is free from mechanical or formatting errors.
B	A “B” paper responds to the assignment prompt. It presents an original argument, but ideas may need further development or clearer articulation. The argument is supported by evidence. Writing style is generally clear and organization is logical, but there is room for improvement. There are very few mechanical errors and sources are cited properly.	A “B” poem responds to the assignment prompt. It presents a unique vision, but ideas may need further development. It uses poetic techniques but could be doing more to bring craft and drama to the poem. Language used is effective but may need some refining. There are very few mechanical errors.
C	A “C” paper may not fully respond to the prompt. Argument is overly broad or in need of clarification and development. Some evidence is used to	A “C” poem may not fully respond to the prompt. Vision is disjointed or overly clichéd. Poetic techniques are not used to their fullest potential. Language seems hastily

	support the argument, but claims are not sufficiently defended. Writing style lacks clarity and organization is problematic. Several mechanical errors or incorrect citations.	chosen or unoriginal. There are several mechanical errors.
D	A “D” paper does not fully respond to the assignment prompt. Argument is underdeveloped or nonexistent. Little or no evidence is used to support claims. Writing style and organization are unclear. Many mechanical errors or incorrect citations.	A “D” poem does not fully respond to the assignment prompt. Poem seems hastily written with little overall vision to hold it together, unoriginal word choices, and many mechanical errors. Poetic techniques are missing or misused.
E	An “E” paper fails to respond to the assignment prompt ( <u>including papers that do not meet the minimum word requirement</u> ). Papers that are late or plagiarized will also receive an “E.”	An “E” poem fails to respond to the assignment prompt. Poems that are late or plagiarized will also receive an “E.”

## Course Policies and Procedures

### *Attendance and Tardiness*

You are allowed two unexcused absences. A third absence will lower your grade by an entire letter. If you accumulate four unexcused absences, you will fail the course.

An absence will count as excused only if a) the student is ill and can provide a doctor’s note, or b) the student is participating in a university-sponsored event (athletics, theater, music, field trip, religious holidays) and provides documentation from an appropriate authority (i.e. faculty member). Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with me PRIOR to the date that will be missed.

Lateness and leaving class early also require a legitimate excuse; otherwise, they will negatively impact your grade.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are absent it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates and to submit the next week’s assignments on time.

### *Statement on Attendance and Make-up Work:*

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

### *Submission Requirements*

I do not accept late work. Failure of technology is not an excuse. Students are expected to factor in time for proofreading, revising, and printing/electronic submission. Assignments must be submitted by the correct time on the day assigned and in the specified format.

*Mode of Submission:* All papers and poems will be submitted as MS Word (.doc or .docx) documents to E-learning and a physical copy. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers and poems must be in 12-point Times New Roman font. Poems should be single-spaced and include your name, the date, and the assignment number. Essays must be double-spaced with 1-inch margins. Please use correct MLA formatting and citation style for critical writing.

### *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*

Please do not throw away your assignments. You are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is your responsibility to have and to make available this material. I recommend keeping a three-ring binder or expanding folder to organize handouts and workshop poems.

### *Conferences*

I encourage that you make an appointment with me if you have questions or concerns about the work or your progress in the course. Conferences on assignments can improve the quality of your final draft.

### *Extra Help: Writing Studio*

Please take advantage of tutoring at Tigert. These tutors are teachers themselves, some of whom teach creative writing, all of whom have helpful things to say. Make appointments *well in advance* of due dates here: <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/schedule-an-appointment/>

### *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. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

### *Statement of Composition*

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

### *Statement of Writing requirement (WR)*

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing-and-math-requirement.aspx>

*Student Disability Accommodations*

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

*Harassment*

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/>

*Academic Honesty*

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. If you plagiarize work, you'll fail the assignment and/or the course. This policy includes plagiarism in part or in whole—that is, anything from ripping off a section of a paper to an entire paper. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

*Schedule*

For weekly schedule, please refer to home page of Canvas. Schedule is subject to change, although I will always notify you in advance of these changes.