

Introduction to Poetry

WRTG-206, BSR, Spring 2024, 3 credits

Instructor Julie Hensley

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**Course Meeting
Days and Time** M/W 2:30--3:45

Office Hours T 2:30-4:30

Catalog Description:

Students will explore contemporary poetry, experimenting with traditional forms and free verse. Through close reading of contemporary poems and generative exercises, students will examine poetic structures including delineation, rhythm, figurative language, and voltas. The course will culminate in round table workshop. Prerequisite: Writing 205 or permission of instructor.

Credit Hour Policy Statement:

Standard lecture:

"This class meets the federal credit hour policy of 1 hour of class with an expected 2 hours of additional student work outside of class each week for approximately 15 weeks for each hour of credit, or a total of 45-75 total hours for each credit." (Def 1)

Course Learning Objectives:

- To develop personal aesthetic using the model of contemporary poetry.
- To improve skills through invention exercises drawing on varied poetic forms and approaches.
- To master important terminology for use in creation and editing processes.
- To craft at least 10 original poems.
- To utilize round table workshop as an approach to revision.
- To submit a revised packet of poems to appropriate journals for publication.

Methods of Instructions:

Lecture, discussion, generative exercises, small group workshops

Textbooks and Required Reading:

-- *The Poetry Home Repair Manual*, Ted Kooser (ISBN 978-0803259782)

--various texts linked online

Course Schedule:

M Jan 15: Introductions, review syllabus, Billy Collin's "Introduction to Poetry"

W Jan 17: Chapter 1 ("A Poet's Job Description"), Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill's "The Language Issue," Rita Dove's "Ars Poetica," and Ocean Vuong's "Ars Poetica"

M Jan 22: **Exercise #1: Ars Poetica**, Chapter 2 ("Writing for Others"), Sylvia Plath's "Mirror" and Margaret Atwood's "Pig Song"

W Jan 24: **Exercise #2: Persona Poem**, Chapter 3 ("First Impressions"), Eduardo C. Corral's "In Colorado My Father Scoured and Stacked Dishes"

M Jan 29: **Exercise #3: Title Track**, Chapter 4 ("Don't Worry about the Rules"), Elaine Sexton's "Lower Manhattan Pantoum" and Seamus Heaney's "When all the Others Were Away at Mass"

W Jan 31: **Exercise #4: Formalist [Invention]**, Chapter 5 ("Rhyming, Ham Cubes, Prose Poems"), Beth Ann Fennelly's "What I Think about When Someone Uses 'Pussy' as a Synonym for 'Weak'" and Amy Lowell's "Bath"

M Feb 5: **Exercise #5: Prose Poem**, Chapter 6 ("Writing about Feelings"), Claudia Emerson's "Frame, an Epistle" and Natalie Diaz' "From the Desire Field"

W Feb 7: **Exercise #6: Epistle**, Chapter 7 ("Can You Read Your Poem through Your Poem?"), George Starbuck's "Sonnet in the Shape of a Potted Christmas Tree," Gloria Vando's "new shoes and an old flame"

M Feb 12: **Exercise #7: Concrete Poem**, Chapter 8 (Writing from Memory") Naomi Shihab Nye's "The Yellow Glove," Carolyn Forché's "The Colonel"

W Feb 14: **Exercise #8: Anecdote**, Chapter 9 ("Working from Detail"), Anne Sexton's "The Starry Night," Sharon Olds' "I Go back to May 1937"

M Feb 19: **Exercise #9: Ekphrasis**, Chapter 10 ("Controlling Effects"), James Wright's "Blessing," Jericho Brown's "Say Thank You, Say I'm Sorry"

W Feb 21: **Exercise #10: Forbidden Word**, Chapter 11 ("Fine Tuning Metaphors and Similes"), Marge Piercy's "A Work of Artifice," Langston Hughes' "Mother to Son"

M Feb 26: **Exercise #11: Extended Metaphor**, Chapter 12 ("Relax and Wait"), bring hard copies of all your exercises

W Feb 28: **Exercise #12: Shredder Poem**, Workshop Guidelines/Etiquette

Mar. 1-11: Midterm Break

W Mar 13: Workshop (_____)

M Mar 18: Workshop (_____)

W Mar 20: Workshop (_____)

M Mar 25: Workshop (_____)

W Mar 27: Workshop (_____)

M Apr 1: Workshop (_____)

W Apr 3: Workshop (_____)

M Apr 8: Workshop (_____)

W Apr 10: Workshop (_____)

M Apr 15: Workshop (_____)

W Apr 17: Workshop (_____)

M Apr 22: Workshop (_____)

W Apr 24: Submit Final Revisions

Grading Criteria:

Your final grade will reflect both your abilities as a writer and your commitment to the writing process.

Creative Exercises (20%)

I will provide creative exercises to help you generate new material. Aim to post at least one exercise each week. These assignments, never more than a page long, are meant to clarify technical aspects of craft. They are also meant to combat writer's block, since any exercise could be fodder for your workshop manuscript. This writing may feel raw, unpolished, or incomplete, though students sometimes amaze me with what they are able to create quickly with very little space. These assignments are graded credit/no credit

to encourage you to experiment and take risks. (Note: Exercises can only be submitted the week they are assigned. Feel free to choose the exercises which speak to you, but you must complete ten out of twelve possible exercises to receive full credit in this category, meaning you may choose to skip only two exercises without lowering your grade.

Reading Quizzes (10%)

Ten brief, 3-question reading quizzes will test your comprehension of genre terminology and sample literature. Each quiz contains 3 questions. If you get 2 correct, you earn credit for that quiz.

Workshop Manuscript (30%)

You will submit a packet of three poems for round table workshop. This manuscript may be comprised of poems originally written for exercise prompts, but you may also submit poems you develop on your own. This work will be made available to classmates.

Peer Review Feedback/Discussion (20%)

You will read peers' manuscripts and prepare written feedback, including line edits, marginalia, and final end notes. We will discuss these manuscripts in a modified round table style. You will be assessed on both your written and verbal participation in this process.

Final Revision (10%)

You will revise your manuscript in lieu of an exam.

Discussion/Participation (10%)

Be prepared to talk about the assigned readings and occasionally share your writing exercises.

Withdrawal and Attendance policies:

Harlaxton College expects regular class attendance by all students. Students are considered sufficiently mature to appreciate the necessity of regular and punctual attendance, to accept this personal responsibility and to accept the consequences of failure to attend. When absences occur due to emergency or medical reasons, students are expected to notify their instructors of the absence prior to class or to seek the assistance of the College nurse or a member of the Student Experience Team for help in notifying instructors.

Instructors have the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons upon review of appropriate documentation and professional recommendation supporting such a request. In the event of long-term illness, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow a student to complete a course. In these cases, the Dean will need to approve the long term nature of the accommodation.

The Dean of Harlaxton College has the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons.

Each instructor is expected to maintain an attendance policy in keeping with the nature of the Harlaxton program and may consider it in evaluating performance in their courses.

Policy Governing Unexcused Absences:

Harlaxton College operates an attendance policy that is binding on all faculty and students. The number of unexcused absences that are allowed before incurring a penalty is related to the number of times a class meets each week. For courses which meet three times a week, students are allowed a maximum of three unexcused absences during the semester without attracting penalty points. For courses meeting twice a week two such absences are permitted, and for courses meeting once a week a single absence is allowed. Additional unexcused absences will attract a grade penalty.

Students accruing more than 2 unexcused absences throughout the semester will automatically receive a full-letter grade deduction (i.e. A to B) for their final course grade.

Policy Governing Excused Absences.

- Excused absences are not given to facilitate student travel independent of College-sponsored travel.
- Students may be permitted to miss class because of participation in academic field trips.
- Instructors must co-ordinate and confirm academic fieldtrips with the Dean, prior to the commencement of the Semester to ensure their inclusion in the Semester timetable.
- Where authorization for an academic fieldtrip is requested after the commencement of the semester, the request must be submitted to the Dean.

The following information is required:

- Purpose and brief description of the official Harlaxton event or academic fieldtrip.
- Dates, location, and times (as applicable).
- Alphabetical list of students involved [Last Name/First Name] along with their student identification number.

If approval is granted:

- Instructors affected will be notified at least one week prior to the class period during which absence is anticipated, or as soon as possible.
- Missed class time due to student participation is to be considered an excused absence.
- The grade of a student may not be lowered in any class due to excused absences.
- It is the student's responsibility - to take the initiative by consulting with their instructors before the absence occurs, and - to do what is required by the instructor to make up all missed assignments and/or examinations.
- Instructors are required to assist students in these occasional situations of excused absences.

Honor Code:

All students at the University of Evansville agree to the University honor code: *I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid, nor will I tolerate an environment that condones the use of unauthorized aid.*

Disability Policy:

It is the policy and practice of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Students should contact Disability Services within the Office of Counseling Services by calling 812-488-2663 to seek services or accommodations for disabilities. Written notification to faculty from Disability Services is required for academic accommodations.

The University of Evansville Disability Services office will share the request for academic accommodations with the Academic Support team at Harlaxton College. Staff members at Harlaxton will meet individually with students to discuss needs and provide additional information related to examinations or other assessments.

Students from partner institutions should provide the appropriate letter of accommodation from their institution to the Academic Support team at Harlaxton College.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The University of Evansville expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect and civility. Harassing behaviors directed towards any member of our community will not be tolerated. As part of its commitment to non-discrimination, the University specifically prohibits harassment based on any other characteristics set forth in its nondiscrimination statement as follows: including race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, creed or religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status and all federally protected groups/classes. Any form of harassment undermines the mission of the University and negatively impacts the University community as a whole.

Prohibited Conduct and Confidentiality

The University of Evansville is committed to fostering an atmosphere free from harassment and discrimination. This commitment includes identifying problems that may lead to sexual harassment and misconduct, as well as other forms of harassment and discrimination, by creating an atmosphere in which the entire University community is sensitive to preventing prohibited conduct. Additionally, the University is committed to providing support and resources to individuals who have experienced prohibited conduct. This commitment includes effectively responding when a student, visitor, guest or program participant is the victim of prohibited conduct.

All campus employees, students, and guests are required to abide by the Title IX and Other Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy, the Harassment and Discrimination Policy, and the Consensual Sexual or Romantic Relationships Between Employees and Students Policy. Violation of these policies could result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students and termination for employees.

Faculty members at the University of Evansville are considered "Responsible Employees" under the applicable federal guidelines and the University's policies. This means that I am unable to offer you confidentiality if you report any incidence of prohibited conduct to me as defined by Title IX statute. If I am made aware of a violation, I am required to report any known information to the Office of Institutional Equity.

You may choose to report the violation yourself the following ways:

Email: · Annie Sills, Assistant Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator: cs175@evansville.edu ·

Keith Gehlhausen, Executive Director of HR and Institutional Equity: kg77@evansville.edu ·

Title IX: titleix@evansville.edu

Phone: 812-288-5261

Online: <https://www.evansville.edu/safety/report.cfm>

You may also choose to speak with a Confidential Resource. Confidential Resources are required to maintain confidentiality and cannot report violations to the Office of Institutional Equity:

University of Evansville

- Counseling Services: counselingservices@evansville.edu, 812-488-2633
- Health Center Professionals: healthcenter@evansville.edu, 812-488-2033
- University Chaplain: chaplain@evansville.edu, 812-488-5262

Harlaxton College

- College Nurse: Lesley Selby, RGN, +44 01476 403027, lselect@harlaxton.ac.uk
- Counselling Services: counselling@harlaxton.ac.uk