**CRW 3311.004: Form and Technique of Poetry**

Spring 2014 ● Section 004 ● Tuesday & Thursday 2-3:15 ● CPR 350

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**Course Description:** This class will focus on reading, writing, and discussing poetry. It is an introduction to poetic forms, terms, and techniques. We will read a wide range of poets and cover topics including poetic movements, narrative and lyric modes, voice, personas, line breaks, metaphor, meter, fixed forms, and open forms. This class is a prerequisite for Poetry 1.

Students will be expected to present copies of their poems to their classmates for class discussion; respond orally and in writing, in a compassionate and helpful manner, to the poems their classmates write; and give an oral presentation on a contemporary poet. There will be writing prompts to include in your writer’s notebook and a final portfolio of poems, which will include at least 10-12 original poems and 4-5 revisions.

**Required Texts:** *Writing Poems* (8th Edition), by Michelle Boisseau, Hadara Bar-Nadav, and Robert Wallace. ISBN: 978-0205176052 (can be purchased at campus bookstore or online).

**Required Materials:** Writer’s notebook & a good dictionary

**Grading:**

20% Participation (Oral & Written)

15% Written Responses & Notebook

15% Homework & Various Assignments

15% Oral presentation

35% Portfolio

**A note on grading:** I do not grade individual poems. The portfolio will be graded based on an understanding of poetic forms and techniques as evidenced by the poems and revision statements required with each revision. Your effort, discussion, written response, oral presentation and portfolio will receive a letter grade.

Final grades will be assigned using USF’s standard grading system:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+ (97–100) 4.00  A (94–96.9) 4.00  A– (90–93.9) 3.67 | B+ (87–89.9) 3.33  B (84–86.9) 3.00  B– (80–83.9) 2.67 | C+ (77–79.9) 2.33  C (74–76.9) 2.00  C– (70–73.9) 1.67 | D+ (67–69.9) 1.33  D (64–66.9) 1.00  D– (60–63.9) 0.67 |

**Grades are non-negotiable.** If there is a discrepancy between a grade given on paper and a grade posted on Canvas, you will be required to present the paper and the grade given by the instructor before the grade will be changed on Canvas. If you feel as though you did not deserve the grade you received or the instructor overlooked a part of the assignment, you **must** come speak to the instructor during office hours or set up an appointment.

There is a statute of limitations on grades. If you wish to discuss a grade that was given that was not a clerical error, you must do so within **10 days** of the grade being posted on Canvas. Any time after that, I will tell you that it is too late to discuss that particular grade and point you to this portion of the syllabus.

**I will not discuss grades via email.**

**Extra Credit:** Throughout the semester, USF will host plenty of poetry/fiction/nonfiction readings that you should attend. (Especially during National Poetry Month in April!) If you wish to receive extra credit for these events, you will need to turn in a 2-3 page (double-spaced) paper that includes the following: names and some information about the readers, a summary of the event, your personal response to the author’s creative work and your response to the author’s views regarding creative writing (if such matters arise during the Q&A). I will award 3 additional points if you speak to the poet and tell me about that interaction in your paper. (If you need help with shyness or how to talk to poets, please don’t hesitate to ask.)

**Incomplete Grade Policy**

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) will be given for only very compelling reasons. For more information, refer to the USF Undergraduate Catalog’s “I” Grade Policy.

**Grade Grievance Policy**

The English Department, like other departments at USF, follows USF’s Grievance Procedures. Please note that USF only changes grades when the review process determines that an *incorrect grade* has been assigned: The term “incorrect” means the assigned grade was based on something other than performance in the course or that the assignment of the grade was not consistent with the criteria for awarding of grades as described in the course syllabus or other materials distributed to the student. In the case of all other academic grievances, the University reserves the right to determine the final outcome. In other words, you may disagree with an instructor’s grade on an assignment, yet this disagreement does not constitute sufficient evidence to warrant a change of grade. However, if an instructor made a mathematical error or based your grade on something other than his/her assessment of your performance in a course, then a grade change could be warranted.

**Attendance & Tardies**

**I take attendance every day. Attendance is mandatory.** This is not a lecture class. Class meetings will be spent engaged in activities that will directly and immediately address your needs as a writer. Because this class is predicated on workshop, which means participation is of vital importance, there will be a strict attendance policy. You get TWO absences before your grade suffers. At your third absence, you will automatically lose ½ a letter grade (some instructors even take away course credit just after 3 absences). At your fifth absence, you will automatically lose a full letter grade. At your sixth absence, you will fail the class. I do not distinguish between unexcused and excused absences except in extreme circumstances. If you miss a day your poem is supposed to be workshopped, you will automatically **lose 5 points off your final grade** (that’s just plain mean to your peers if they provided you feedback), unless discussed with me beforehand, regardless if you turned it in or not. **Students with perfect attendance will receive extra credit at the end of the semester.** Three tardies will be counted as one absence. Come to class prepared and on time.

**I do not accept emails asking what was missed in class. If you miss a class, it’s your responsibility to make up what you missed. E-mail or call a classmate to get a copy of a handout or notes and make sure you are prepared for the following writing assignment.**

**Policy on Religious Observances & Athletics**

Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the **fourth class** meeting.

**USF Athletics’ Participation:** Note: Any student who intends to miss class because he or she is participating in a schedule USF athletics’ event is expected to present a schedule of such participating events to his or her instructor by the **third week** of the semester if he or she intends to be absent for a class or an announced examination.

**Policy On Late Work**

It is your responsibility to turn in work on time and professionally clean, which means all assignments should be typed and in the appropriate format (see pgs. 8 & 9). Each day an assignment is late, I will take a grade off that assignment. Example: If the assignment is due on Monday and you turn it in on Tuesday, the highest grade you can get is a B. **No handwritten poem will be workshopped.**

**The late work policy *does not* include the poems for workshop.**

**If you are being workshopped, you must bring in your poem and copies for the entire class the day the poem is due, plan accordingly.**

**Discussion/Participation**

Participation is graded at my discretion. Understand that cellphones, iPads, iPods, tablets, etc. out and in use during class will negatively affect your participation grade, and could even count you as absent for that class period. Because this is a discussion based class, I expect students to speak during class but to also remain respectful of their peers’ ideas and work.\* If you are shy or not willing to speak in class, I understand, but you should try to say something at least once a week.

**Quizzes**

If I begin to suspect that students aren’t doing reading assignments, I will hand out quizzes and/or assign page-length “responses.” (Awe-man—trust me when I say I don’t want to do this, so please read! It’s good stuff.) How can you demonstrate that you’ve read the homework and are prepared to discuss it? It’s easy: answer questions, ask questions, point out passages that relate to or underscore what we’ve discussed, compare/contrast present readings with past assignments, etc. In other words, contribute to class discussions whenever you can.

**Poems**

Poetry writing assignments will be given almost every week. You must turn in at least **10 poems** over the course of the semester. Please do try to complete all work. If you are being workshopped, you must bring in your poem and copies for the class, plan accordingly. Please format the poem according to guidelines (yes, this is repetitive but please).

**Writer’s Notebook**

You will keep a writer’s notebook which will contain all of your in and out of class writing exercises. You will hand in your writer’s notebook with your portfolio at the end of the semester. Although I will not collect the writer’s notebook until the end, we will go over the exercises in class.

**Workshop Responses/Feedback**

Please be mindful and thoughtful when responding to the work of your peers. When you receive copies of classmates’ poems, write comments on them (or on a separate piece of paper if you wish to keep the poem) and be prepared to discuss the poems the following class period. I will randomly collect your written comments and grade them, which means you must put your name on them. If you know that you will miss workshop, turn in your comments to me prior to that workshop if you wish to receive credit. Please be mindful and thoughtful when responding to the work of your peers. Justify your notes through explanation and examples from the text. Read each poem with the care you would like to be given to your own writing. Discussion is a part of your participation grade.

**Reader’s Responses**

You will turn in three (3) reader responses at the end of the semester in your final portfolio. Your reader’s response is designed to help you identify elements of style and techniques in poems that appeal to you. Your goal is to evaluate the poet’s craft choices and determine if any of his/her tools might be useful to you as a developing poet. You will be given a handout with these instructions.

**Readings**

Read the poems and chapters assigned for each week and be prepared to discuss them on the day they appear on the schedule. Bring your book to every class.

**Oral Presentation**

Your presentation is worth 15% of your grade. You will present on a contemporary poet for 10 minutes. Visual and audio components are required. Find quotes from your author on their writing process. What books have they written? Will you share a favorite poem? Do they offer writing workshops? What is their background? Do they teach? Your objective in this presentation is to present interesting information in a lively and effective manner and to make us want to go out and purchase the book and read it. (At the end of class, everyone will write down which poet they most want to read.) In addition, include a 500-word response of your overall takeaways from the poet. How has the poet helped you specifically improve your own craft? You will turn in this written component on the day of your presentation.

**Final Portfolio**

Your final portfolio is worth 35% of your grade. Students will submit a final portfolio at the end of the class. It will contain all of your original poems composed for class. The goal of the portfolio is to provide you with a tool for tracking your progress in the class—a way to see how your ability to read and write poetry evolves over the length of the course. You will be given a handout later in the semester with explicit instructions.

**Revision** will be emphasized throughout the semester through workshops and class discussions. It will also play an important role in the assemblage of your final portfolio. When revising your own work or critiquing the work of others, please consider the following elements:

* What’s at stake in the poem? Is there a compelling story or situation at the heart of it or are we left asking, “So what?” after reading the work.
* Does the writer effectively use images and figurative language in the poem?  Are the images fresh or does it seem like we’d heard them before? Do they surprise us? Are they precise or vague?  Does the poem appeal to our senses? Are the similes and metaphors interesting and unusual? Does the comparison create something new?
* What is the speaker’s attitude toward the subject matter? Are we able to infer his/her feelings when we read the poem? Is there more than one tone present in the piece?
* Does the poem take place somewhere? Setting can anchor a poem, make it feel more real—do we see an actual-seeming place in the lines?
* Is the diction fresh or boring? Is it concrete or filled with abstractions? Is it colloquial or academic? Is it filled with multi-syllabic words? Are the words consistent with the poem’s tone and purpose?
* When you read the poem aloud, is it pleasing to you? Does it not only sound good to your ear but also to your mind/heart as well? Does the poet use assonance, consonance or any other of the techniques we’ve discussed in class?
* Are the lines end-stopped or enjambed? Is there any variation? (Keep in mind that if the poem reads the same whether broken into lines or typed as a prose paragraph, then it fails because there is no music, an essential quality to any poem.)
* Does the poet break the poem into stanzas when the meaning shifts?
* Overall, does something happen during the course of the poem? Is there a “turn” in the poem that surprises and delights us? Are we as readers, affected and/or changed by it?
* Is the poem unified? Are all the elements of the poem: diction, tone, setting, imagery, sound, and line breaks working together?

**Matters of Courtesy**

If you whisper to other people in class while someone’s talking, go off on distracted tangents during discussion, show up unprepared, text during class, show up late or don’t show up at all, this creates the impression that you are careless. To be successful in this course, please pay attention to students who are speaking. Make thoughtful contributions to discussions. Do your work. Come on time. Be respectful. Take pride in the work you are creating.

**Common Courtesies:**

• Please silence your phone before class begins.

• No laptops in use during class.

• Show respect to everyone in the class, from discussions to written responses.

• Don’t sleep during class. Sleep is an activity best performed in bed—at home.

• Edit online communications carefully for tone as well as grammar, style and spelling. Always check your work for typos. This includes emails. “Yo teacher” isn’t acceptable.

# \*Writing provides intimate views into our lives and the lives of others. All materials submitted in this class should be treated respectfully by all members of this writing community.

# Additionally, those sharing real-life episodes must be willing to accept respectful and appropriate critiques of their work and should not consider such critiques as personal attacks. Use your time and effort in this class as positively and productively as possible. All of us, including me, are here to learn from one another. All members of the class are entitled to their own opinions; however, we need to respect individual perspectives and communicate our points of view effectively while being considerate of all members of the class. Those unwilling to respect our community, or unable to follow these modest, but important guidelines may be asked to leave the class.

**Workshop Etiquette:**The goal of the workshop is to help each writer improve his/her own work through constructive criticism. Criticism does not mean tearing apart or speaking negatively about another’s work. Real criticism is positive: It seeks to help the writer by offering advice on how to revise the poem so that it rises to the level of art. In order to become a thoughtful critic, you must read the assigned material and participate in class discussions.  You’ll discover that helpful criticism goes far beyond, “I like it,” or “What a great poem” or “I like how this flows,” and actually offers constructive measures about how the poem might be improved. And again, this type of criticism only comes after you’ve learned the elements of craft.

**Plagiarism:** This is a creative writing course in which you are expected to create original work. Don’t plagiarize. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a loss of credit. USF’s Policy on Plagiarism can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog.

**Making up work:** If you miss a class, it’s your responsibility to make up what you missed. E-mail or call a classmate to get a copy of a handout or notes and make sure you are prepared for the following writing assignment.

**Archiving**  
Each student is responsible for ensuring access to all assignments completed for the course, and consequently you should maintain a separate archive of your work on a flash drive, website, or in printed format.

**Because a variety of computers are available across campus, I will not accept “computer excuses.”** Become familiar with campus computer centers. Though there are countless people around campus to help with printing and computer issues**, ultimately, you are the only person responsible for timely submission of your work.** Because computer problems do arise, make sure you keep backups of your work. Do not email me your work because you’re having problems printing it out or turning it in. I cannot be responsible for printing out or submitting the work of 50+ students.

**Disability Accommodations**

Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the office of Students with Disabilities Services to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during the first week of class to discuss accommodations (see Student Responsibilities:<http://www.asasd.usf.edu>) and are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation. As accommodations are NOT retroactive, any grades earned before a student requests accommodations will stand. Each student must bring a current *Memorandum of Accommodations* from the Office of Student Disability Services that is prerequisite for receiving accommodations. Accommodated examinations through the Office of Student Disability Services require two weeks’ notice. All course documents are available in alternate format if requested in the students’ *Memorandum of Accommodations* (see faculty responsibilities:<http://www.asasd.usf.edu/faculty.asp>)

The SDS can be an excellent resource for students with disabilities: <http://www.sds.usf.edu/>

**Writing Center**

USF's Writing Center (http://guides.lib.usf.edu/writing) offers assistance to any student who wants to improve his or her writing skills. Rather than offering editing assistance, during a session in the Writing Center, consultants and students work together to enhance the organization, development, grammar, and style of any type of writing across the disciplines. Students are encouraged to visit the Writing Center at any stage during the writing process, from brainstorming and pre-writing to final polishing. The USF Writing Center is conveniently located in the Library Learning Commons. Walk-ins are welcome dependent on availability, but students are encouraged to make an appointment by visiting the Writing Center during office hours or calling 813-974-8293. Additional feedback is available via SmartThinking, an online tutoring center, which is accessible via Canvas.

\* You can also seek feedback from instructors in the Writing Center (particularly in terms of grammatical or organizational issues) and email me with specific questions regarding your writing or other class assignments**. I am always willing to look at work with you**, answer questions, or explain assignments in further detail during offices hours or during an arranged time. If you are busy during my office hours, feel free to set-up another appointment through email or talk with me after class.

**Emergency Plans**

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to Canvas, Elluminate, Skype, e-mail messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It’s the responsibility of the student to check for communication from their instructor and / or the university.

[**Important**](http://writingwiki.org/default.aspx/1101.Makeup) **Resources for Students**

**Plagiarism Information:**  [**http://fyc.usf.edu/Policies/Plagiarism%20Main.aspx**](http://fyc.usf.edu/Policies/Plagiarism%20Main.aspx)

**Students with Disabilities Responsibilities:** [**http://www.asasd.usf.edu/**](http://www.asasd.usf.edu/)

**USF Counseling Center:**  [**http://usfweb2.usf.edu/counsel/**](http://usfweb2.usf.edu/counsel/)

**USF Advocacy Program:** [**http://www.sa.usf.edu/ADVOCACY/page.asp?id=72**](http://www.sa.usf.edu/ADVOCACY/page.asp?id=72)

**USF Writing Center:** [**http://www.lib.usf.edu/writing/**](http://www.lib.usf.edu/writing/)

**English Department Website:** [www.english.usf.edu](http://www.english.usf.edu)

“There is vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action. And because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique and if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium, and it will be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is, nor how valuable, nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep the channel open. You do not even have to believe in yourself or your work. You have to keep yourself open and aware to the urges that motivate you. Keep the channel open.”

-Martha Graham

**Contact Information of Students in Class**

\*In case you miss a class or have a question. Record contact information of your peers

**Format for Prose**

Joe Dirt

joe.dirt@usf.edu

CRW 004

Spring 2013

Reader Response

January 8, 2013

Title (Not Underlined or Quoted)

Indent the paragraphs, unless it’s a poem, then the lines usually start on the far left side of the page.

Single space poems. Double space prose.

No fancy hard-to-read fonts. Please always use 12-point font. Please number your pages and please, please, please staple multiple pages.

The work you bring to workshop should be proofread: all pieces should be carefully presented and error-free.

If you have questions at any point, I am happy to answer them. I want you to do well in this course and take pride in your work.

**Format for Poems**

Joe Dirt

joe.dirt@usf.edu

CRW 004

Spring 2013

Pantoum

January 8, 2013

Title of Poem Here (Not in Quotes or Underlined)

Lines are usually left justified (very rarely centered).

Poems are usually single-spaced.

Each word, each letter, each space

matters; pay close attention

to your page. *Make* your poems

control everything.

Poems are usually one page. If your poem goes on

to a second page, type “con’t” at the bottom, and number

the pages. And staple.

**Form and Technique of Poetry: Spring 2014 Tentative Schedule**

*\*All assignments and reading must be completed before the beginning of class on the date they’re listed*

**Week 1: Hello!**

1/7—Meet & Greet/Syllabus

1/9–– Read *WP* Chapter 1 & 8 (1 & 137); Poetry discussion; Narrative poem discussion; Workshop groups assigned; **Due: Self-Assessment #1**

**Week 2: Whooooo are you?**

1/14—Read *WP* Chapter 2 (23); Discussion on terms; Introduction to sonnet; Examples; **Due:** **Poem 1: Narrative**

1/16—Read *WP* Ch. 3 (41); Music of the line; Alternative rhymes

**Week 3: You've got sweet form!**

1/21—Read *WP* Ch. 5 (77); Workshop discussion; How to write about a poem and why; **Due:** **Poem 2: Sonnet**

1/23—Workshop Group 1

**Week 4: You've got sweet form!**

1/28—Read *WP* Ch. 6 (97);Discuss Villanelle, Pantoum & Sestina; Examples

1/30—Workshop Group 2

**Week 5: Déjà vu?**

2/4—Read *WP* Ch. 7 (117); Metaphor; Waking up clichés; Discuss Ghazal & Blues; Examples; **Due: Poem 3: Villanelle, Pantoum or Sestina**

2/6—Workshop Group 3

**Week 6: Bah, Bah, Bah** ♫

2/11—Read *WP* Ch. 4 (59); Free verse discussion; Persona poetry; **Due:** **Poem 4: Ghazal or Blues Poem**

2/13*—*Workshop Group 4

**Week 7: How do you see it?**

2/18—Read *WP* Ch. 9 (158); Sources of poetry; Example chapbooks; Ways to define;

**Due: Poem 5: Free Verse or Persona poem**

2/20—Workshop Group 5

**Week 8: How can you begin to define it?**

2/25— **Due:** **Poem 6: Definition or Prose Poem**

**Week 8: How can you begin to define it?**

2/25— Ode & Elegy poem discussion; **Due:** **Poem 6: Definition Poem**

2/27—Workshop Group 1; **Due: Self-Assessment #2**

**Week 9: Life, Death, and All In-Between**

3/4—Read *WP* Ch. 10 (179); Discuss imitation handout; \*FILELD TRIP **Due: Poem 7: Ode or Elegy poem**

3/6—Workshop Group 2

**Week 10: Take a Break & Imitate**

3/11—SPRING BREAK (Make Safe Choices)

3/13—SPRING BREAK (Watch Out for Pirates)

**Week 11: Sincerest Form of Flattery**

3/18—~~Field Trip\*;~~ **Due:** **Poem 8: Imitation**

3/20*—*Workshop Group 3

**Week 12: What's in your bag of tricks?**

3/25— Read *WP* Ch. 11 (201); A bag of tricks for revision; Sample revision statements; **Due:** **Poem 9: Your choice**

3/27*—*Workshop Group 4

**Week 13: Revise, Revise, Revise**

4/1—Don't put them to sleep: what makes for an effective presentation; What's in the final portfolio; **Due: Poem 10: Revision poem and Revision Statement**

4/3*—*Workshop Group 5

**Week 14: Who made you swoon?**

4/8— Poet Presentations

4/10*—* Workshop (open)

**Week 15: Who made you swoon?**

4/15— Poet Presentations; **Due: Poem 11: Your choice**

4/17— Poet Presentations

**Week 16: It's party time.**

4/22—Poet Presentations

4/24––Poetry Reading & Celebration; **Due: Final Portfolio**