ENGL 3150—Beginning Poetry Writing
Class: TTH 9:30-10:50 AM
Auditorium Building 201

Dr. Kimberly Grey
Kimberly.grey@unt.edu
Student Office Hours: TTH 11:00-12:15 (or by appointment)
Office: AUDB 206C

"It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there."
—William Carlos Williams

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Emily Dickinson said, "If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry." In this course we will explore these central questions: What is a poem? How is it made? Why does it move us? How do we talk about a poem? Is poetry still a relevant art form? Through critical analysis of assigned texts, writing exercises, workshops and research we will learn how to read as writers and write as readers, all while cultivating an appreciation for poetic intent. Students will read work by Joy Harjo, Gwendolyn Brooks, Carl Phillips, Sharon Olds, Naomi Shihab Nye, Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, and other modern and contemporary poets. Together, we will explore fundamental aspects of craft—stanza, line, rhythm, image, diction, voice and each student will have the opportunity to receive thoughtful, critical feedback from their instructor and peers. Upon the completion of this course, we will learn to recognize the main motives of the social, cultural, and historical contexts out of which poetry is produced. Mostly, we will create an engaging and encouraging community of writers of which everyone is a welcome, integral member. [ART] (ARTS) (WCOM)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will be able to think and write critically about modern and contemporary poetry.
2. Students will be able to recognize various forms and innovations of language through our close-reading and analysis of the texts at hand.
3. Students will develop their ethical and empathetic value systems as they are exposed to a diverse set of experiences through poetry.
4. Students will be able to answer what it means to "get the news from a poem" and why poetry is a relevant art form in today's society.
5. Students will practice writing in different forms and experiment with language in ways that help them develop their own unique style and writing process.

6. Students will be able to articulate what they expect a poem to do (as both a reader and writer).

PRIMARY TEXTS
A *Poetry Handbook* by Mary Oliver
Links and Handouts posted to Canvas

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation (30%)

A seminar classroom is a place where many different people and ideologies converge into meaningful, illuminative discussion. In order for us to truly benefit from each other, everyone must be present with all assignments and readings completed. Every person's voice is necessary here and I expect a high level of curiosity and investment by all. I'd love to hear everyone's voice every class period. To earn all participation points, I should hear you speak at least once a class.

Weekly Reading Responses (20%)

Each week you will be responsible for responding to the assigned reading in a Canvas post of at least 250 words. You should respond to the given prompt with thoughtful and specific references to the text and to our class discussion.

Six Poems and Three Workshops (20%)
Students will be given six weekly prompts to write to and they will post completed poems to their portfolios in the discussions thread. Later in the semester, you will get to choose three of these poems to workshop with the entire class. Half of the 20% counts for your six completed poems and half for your participation in workshops (both your own and comments on others).

Discussion Leading (10%)

Each student will be responsible for choosing one poem to lead a class discussion on for 15 minutes in which they discuss the piece(s) and prompt the class with thoughtful questions regarding form, genre, and content. You will provide a handout as a guideline for the class to follow.

Writing Constellation (20%)

Students will create writing constellations as their final projects for the course. These projects take the form of a PowerPoint, PDF, Prezi or other platform where each student compiles an artist statement (300 words total), an inspiration board, a list of literary ancestors and their influence, two revised pieces with a revision statement, and a creative interpretation of a published

poem. During their presentation, students will read from the work they produced over the semester.

GRADING
Class Participation: 30%
Weekly Reading Responses: 20%
Writing Constellation: 20%
Six Completed Poems & Three Workshops: 20%
Discussion Leading: 10%

A (90%–100%)
B (80%–89%)
C (70%-79%)
D (60%-69%)
F (59% and below)

Procedures

STUDENT OFFICE HOURS AND E-MAIL

Feel free to stop by my student hours if you'd like to discuss any lessons or readings in further detail or need clarification about anything I assign. This time is specifically carved out for you. If my student hours don't fit your schedule, please email me to set up an appointment. I'm happy to meet via Zoom. I check my e-mail once a day and will respond within 24 hours.

FORMAT

All written work should be typed, double-spaced, in black ink, and 12 pt. Times New Roman font. Weekly reading responses will be turned in via Canvas. All outside sources should be documented and cited properly per MLA guidelines and papers must be edited for grammar and spelling. Note:I cannot read work you've produced outside of class. My time is dedicated to the work produced within my current semester courses and prevents me from reading beyond that.

LATE WORK POLICY

All work is due at the beginning of class on the specified due date. Papers must be printed in hard copy and turned in or submitted electronically, as specified. I do not accept late work except in necessary circumstances. Please communicate with my directly if those circumstances arise so we can create a plan. Your discussion leading must be done on the day you are assigned and cannot be made up. Workshops can also not be made up due to scheduling.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at all classes is expected. You may miss **four** class sessions without penalty, but further absences will lower your grade by three points per absence. Once you accumulate four absences, each subsequent absence will result in a three-point deduction from your final grade. If you exceed six absences total for the semester, you will be in danger of falling the course. Excessive lates to class can be really distracting. Please be on time. Two lates of more than 5 minutes will equal an absence. I will do my best to be flexible as needed regarding the pandemic and illness, but please save your absences for when you really need them.

You are expected to arrive in class on time to be counted present. If you must be absent, always let me know, either by telling me in class, or sending an e-mail beforehand. Only religious holidays, military service, and University-sponsored events qualify as "excused absences." If you must miss class, you are responsible for contacting a classmate to find out what you have missed and for arriving prepared for the next class meeting. Communication is key!

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

WRITING CENTER

Our trained tutors help undergraduate students with structure, grammar, punctuation, citation styles and more. We'll teach you strategies and techniques to improve your writing for the long term. We offer both in-person and online appointments. Call us at 940-565-2563 or email us at WritingCenter@unt.edu to schedule your appointment. Website: https://writingcenter.unt.edu

ADA ACCOMODATIONS

It is my commitment to foster an inclusive learning environment in this class. If you require accommodations, please notify me during the first week of classes, or as soon as possible, by sending an email or presenting a letter from Office of Disability Access. If you need more information about accommodations, please review the UNT Policy 16.001 or contact Office of Disability Access at 940-565-4323 (voice) or [online.](#)

TITLE IX

All members of the UNT community have a responsibility to uphold this mission of the university and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. For more information, see [the policy.](#) Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied

to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, please refer to the appropriate resources.

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of North Texas promotes the integrity of learning and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the University. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the University's actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence. You are responsible for understanding the Code of Student Conduct.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

At UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues. Here is information about how to contact them.
Link: UIT Student Help Desk site https://aits.unt.edu/support
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940-565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130 Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm
For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help https://clear.unt.edu/services/lms-support

MENTAL HEALTH

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:
- Student Health and Wellness Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- UNT Care Team (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- UNT Psychiatric Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES
1. Academic Support Services
   o Academic Resources (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
   o Academic Success Center (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
   o UNT Libraries (https://library.unt.edu/

ADDITIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
- Registrar (https://registrar.unt.edu/registration)
- Financial Aid (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)

- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

*STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS
This classroom is a safe place for creative expression and personal freedom. I promise to do everything in my power to create an environment that is inclusive to everyone's diverse set of needs and backgrounds. Any form of racism, sexism, classism, or ageism is a violation of classroom conduct and will not be tolerated. I promise to treat you all with the respect and humanity you deserve, and I expect that we all will work together to form a welcoming community of belonging and value.

- THE SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME DEPENDING ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE COURSE. CHANGES WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO YOU.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE
Week One: *Introductions & Ars Poetica*

Tuesday August 30: Introductions, Syllabus Overview, Terry Tempest Williams "Why I Write"

   Thursday September 1: Discussion "Getting Ready" (pg. 7) "Reading Poems" (pg. 10) in *A Poetry Handbook.* Discussion on Archibald MacLeish's "Ars Poetica," "Poetry" by Marianne Moore

Essay: "Literalists of the Imaginations" by Matthew Zapruder

Week Two   *Speaker, Tone & Voice*

   Tuesday September 6: "Daddy" by Sylvia Plath, "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden, "As Agony, As Now" by Amiri Baraka "Diction, Tone, Voice" (pg. 76 in Oliver)

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

   Thursday September 8: "The Language of the Brag" by Sharon Olds, "Facing it" by Yusef Komunyakaa, "I forget the Date" by Juan Felipe Herrera

Essay: "The Life of Poetry" by Muriel Rukeyser

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

<u>Week Three</u>   *Image & Figuration*

    Tuesday September 13: "Afterimages" by Audre Lorde, "Mock Orange" by Louise Gluck, "Diving into The Wreck" by Adrienne Rich, "Imagery" (pg. 92 in Oliver)

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

    Thursday September 15: "The Red Wheelbarrow" by William Carlos Williams, "Metaphors" by Sylvia Plath, "Vulnerability Study" by Solmaz Sharif

Essay: "Does Poetry Have a Social Function" by Stephanie Burt

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

 <u>Week Four</u> *Stanza & Line*

    Tuesday September 20: "I Hate" by C.K. Williams, "Blue" by Carl Phillips, "The Gift" by Li-Young Lee "The line" (pg. 35 in Oliver)

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

    Thursday September 22: "Foreign Body" by Kimiko Hahn "Arabic" by Naomi Shihab Nye, "Singing" by Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge

Essay: "Invisible Architecture" by Barbara Guest

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

<u>Week Five</u>   *Sound and Prosody*

    Tuesday September 27: "Feeling Fucked Up" by Etheridge Knight, "Stereo" by Anne Waldman, "My Papa's Waltz" by Theodore Roethke, "Sound" (pg. 19 in Oliver)

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

    Thursday September 29: "Hip Hop Ghazal" by Patricia Smith, "Zoo" by Cathy Park Hong, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost

Essay: "Cracks in the Oracle Bone" by Brenda Hillman

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

<u>Week Six</u>

   Tuesday October 4: WORKSHOP GROUP A

   Thursday October 6: WORKSHOP GROUP B

<u>Week Seven</u>

   Tuesday October 11: WORKSHOP GROUP C

   Thursday October 13: Flex Day

<u>Week Eight</u>   *Fixed Forms: The Sonnet, Villanelle, and Sestina*

   Tuesday October 18: "American Sonnet for My Past and Future Assassin" by Terrance Hayes, "Sonnet by Dan Beachy-Quick, "Sonnet" by Yehuda Amichai, "Some Given Forms" (pg. 58 in Oliver)

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

   Thursday October 20: "One Art" by Elizabeth Bishop, "Obsessional" by Rebecca Lindenberg, "Sestina" by Elizabeth Bishop

   Essay: "Someone is Writing a Poem" by Adrienne Rich

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

<u>Week Nine</u>   *Ekphrasis & Experiments*

   Tuesday October 25: "Why I am Not a Painter" by Frank O'Hara, "Photograph of the Girl" by Sharon Olds, "Nude Ascending a Staircase" by X.J. Kennedy, "Verse that is Free" (pg. 67 in Oliver)

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

Thursday October 27: "Elliptical" by Harryette Mullen, excerpts from *Citizen* by Claudia Rankine, "[pity this busy monster, manunkind]" by e.e. cummings

Essay: "The Poetics of Disobedience" by Alice Notley

DISCUSSION LEADER_____
DISCUSSION LEADER_____

Week Ten

    Tuesday November 1: WORKSHOP GROUP A

    Thursday November 3: WORKSHOP GROUP B

Week Eleven

    Tuesday November 8: WORKSHOP GROUP C

    Thursday November 10: WORKSHOP GROUP A

Week Twelve

    Tuesday November 15: WORKSHOP GROUP B

    Thursday November 17: WORKSHOP GROUP C

Week Thirteen

        Tuesday November 22: Revision Discussion & Practices
Read "Revision" (pg. 109 in Oliver) and
Essay on Revision from The Poet's Companion (handout)

        Thursday November 24: *No Class–Thanksgiving Break!*

        Week Fourteen

        Tuesday November 29: In-Class Lab Day & Mini-Conferences
Thursday December 1: Presentation of Writing Constellations

Week Sixteen

    Tuesday December 6: Presentation of Writing Constellations

Thursday December 8: Presentation of Writing Constellations
Final Day of Class—Class Party!
Read "Conclusion" (pg. 119 in Oliver)