

Tell it slant:
Emily Dickinson
& Walt Whitman

ENGL 4450.001 / Dr. Hawkins
Tu/TH 9:30 AM to 10:50 AM



Foundational American poets of the middle of the nineteenth-century, Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman launched a uniquely American poetic tradition. In addition to reading their poetry in the context of major literary, cultural, and historical influences—including Transcendentalist philosophy, the sentimental poetic tradition, and the Civil War – we will be attempting to answer the following questions: How are Whitman’s and Dickinson’s very different approaches to poetry, publication, and the “public” reflective of pervasive tensions within the nation? How do they each conceptualize the role of the poet in a democratic society? What are the contradictions that arise when a poet attempts to be a representative spokesperson for America?