

Tell it *Slant*: Emily Dickinson & Walt Whitman

ENGL 4450.1/301, MW 9:30 – 10:50 AM

Location: Curry 211

Professor: Dr. Stephanie Hawkins

Office Hours: Language 409H; MW 1:30 – 3:00 PM and by appointment

e-mail: shawkins@unt.edu

Books:

Hass, Robert. Ed. *Song of Myself and Other Poems by Walt Whitman*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2010.

The Poems of Emily Dickinson. Ed. R.W. Franklin. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1999.

Open Me Carefully: Emily Dickinson's Intimate Letters to Susan Huntington Dickinson. Ed. Ellen Louise Hart, and Martha Smith. Middletown, CT: Paris Press, 1998.

What you will learn in this course:

- How to read, analyze, and interpret poetry.
- How to develop an argument about a poem.
- How to incorporate other primary and secondary sources into an essay about a poem.
- How to read poetry aloud to others.
- How to discuss the varieties of meanings available within a given poem.
- How to present your ideas publicly and respond to audience questions.
- How to understand the contradictions inherent to democratic self-governance and the relation of Whitman and Dickinson's poetry to the history and culture of the nineteenth century.
- How to read poetry in its historical and cultural contexts.

What I expect from you:

- Professionalism, accountability, and intellectual curiosity.
- Keep up with the reading and annotate, (take notes on) the assigned poems.
- Regular attendance.
- Good classroom citizenship: demonstrate respect toward the professor and other students; be willing to examine your beliefs critically and consider unexpected points of view. Hold space for others to speak. No one student should dominate discussion or always be the first to speak.
- Expect and embrace discovery and intellectual risk.
- Seek help from the instructor or other UNT resources before problems arise.
- I expect you to discuss your paper topics with me in advance, and to meet with me during office hours at least once during the semester.
- If you have any concerns regarding your ability to complete the assigned reading or otherwise succeed in the course, please make an appointment to meet with me.

Important Dates:

March 10-16, Spring Break

April 11 Last day to drop class with a W

April 30 Last Class
May 2 Reading Day / No Class
May 7, 7:30 - 9:30 AM (Final Exam)
May 12 Grades Due to Registrar

Assignments*

**Vary by course section: Students enrolled in ENGL 4450.301 will need to complete an Honors Contract by Jan. 29.*

Reassembling a Poem: 15% Due: 2/26 & 4/8

- Reassemblies of two poems. Canvas submission.

Midterm Essay: 20% Due: 3/ 10

- Close reading of one poem. The poem and topics must be approved in advance by the instructor.
- Three to four pages, double-spaced, 1-in margins, Times New Roman. Canvas submission.

Final Essay: 25% Due: 5/1

- The poem(s) and topics must be approved in advance by the instructor.
- Five to six pages, double-spaced, 1-in margins, Times New Roman.
- Students enrolled for Honors credit will write research essay with approved secondary sources. (See *Honors Contract*)

Final Exam (in class) 25% Wednesday, 5/7, 7:30 AM to 9:30 AM

- Comprehensive exam includes definition of terms; poem identification; forms of versification; and a written essay, based on prompts and poems provided in the exam. You will need to bring two bluebooks. The final may be held in class on the day/time assigned by the registrar. <https://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/springLinks to an external site.>

Participation & Attendance 15%

- Participation is earned based upon activities (informal in-class or on-Canvas assignments, assigned individually or to groups), which may include quizzes or practice assignments. I evaluate your participation based not just on your physical presence in class but on the quality of your engagement with with your peers, the course materials, and discussions. Chronic texting in class or doing work for another course will result in a failing participation grade.

Class Schedule

*Subject to change/modification, so please consult Canvas announcements regularly. Email the instructor if you note discrepancies or have questions. Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class [Campus Closures PolicyLinks to an external site.](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006Links to an external site.) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006Links to an external site.>).

Unit I: The "Nature" of the Poet's Vocation

Week 1:

1/13 M **Introduction:** Whitman & Dickinson in Context

1/15 W Q: What is poetry? [The Poet.pdf Download The Poet.pdf#466](#) "I dwell in Possibility[Links to an external site.](#)" #117 "'Arcturus' is his other name-[Links to an external site.](#)"; "A Noiseless, Patient Spider[Links to an external site.](#)" (Hass 256). "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer[Links to an external site.](#)"

Week 2: *Leaves of Grass* (1855)

1/20 M MLK Day – No Class

1/22 W "[PrefaceLinks to an external site.](#) to 1855 *Leaves of Grass*;" "Song of Myself" (*SoS*) (Hass, 3-28);

Week 3: Whitman's Cosmic Selfhood

1/27 M "Song of Myself" (*SoS*) (Hass, 28-53);

1/29 W "Song of Myself" (*SoS*) (Hass, 53-70); *Honors Contract Due*.

Week 4: Sublime Nature - Human and Otherwise

2/3 M #23 "In the name of the Bee -" #165 "I have never seen 'Volcanoes'-" #319 "Of Bronze - and Blace -" #224 "An awful Tempest mashed the air –"; #721 "Nature is what We see -"; #655 "He parts Himself - like Leaves-"; #1489 "A route of evanescence";

2/5 W #207 "I taste a liquor never brewed"; #517 "A still – Volcano – Life –"; #627 "I think I was enchanted"; #633 "I saw no Way - The Heavens were stitched"; #341 "'Tis so appalling - it exhilarates -"; #373 "This World is not conclusion."; #508 "A Pit - but Heaven over it -"

Week 5:

2/10 M #423 "The first Day's Night had come –"; #340 "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,,"; #243 "That after Horror – that 'twas *us* –" #407 "One need not be a Chamber - to be Haunted"; #425 "'Twas like a Maelstrom, with a notch,,"; #867 "I felt a Cleaving in my Mind"

2/12 W #276 "Civilization - spurns - the Leopard!"; #473 "I was the slightest in the house"; #656 "I started early - took my dog"; #740 "On a Columnar Self -"; #1742 "In Winter in my Room"

II. Great Expectations: Love, Sex, and Victorian Conventions

Week 6: Whitman's *Calamus*

2/17 M

"Once I Passed Through a Populous City" (both versions) (Hass 221)

Calamus <https://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1891/poems/45>[Links to an external site.](#)

"[In Paths UntroddenLinks to an external site.](#)," "[Scented Herbage of My BreastLinks to an external site.](#)," "[Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in HandLinks to an external site.](#)," "[For You O DemocracyLinks to an external site.](#)" "[Not Heaving from My Ribb'd Breast OnlyLinks to an external site.](#)"

2/19 W

"[Are You the New Person Drawn Toward Me?Links to an external site.](#)," "[Not Heat Flames Up and ConsumesLinks to an external site.](#)," "[I Saw in Louisiana A Live-Oak GrowingLinks to an external site.](#)," "[A GlimpseLinks to an external site.](#)," "[What Think You I Take My Pen in Hand?Links to an external site.](#)," "[Full of Life NowLinks to an external site.](#)"

Poetry Reassembly Due: Friday, 2/21

Week 7: Emily and Sue

2/24 M Hart and Smith, xi-xxxiv; "Section One," 3-37. #5 "One Sister have I in our house"; #121 "Her breast is fit for pearls"; #205 "Come slowly – Eden!"; #218 "You love me - you are sure -" ; # 452 "Love - thou art high -"; #611 "Her sweet Weight on my Heart a Night"; #1436 "To own a Susan of my own"

2/26 W #675 "What Soft - Cherubic Creatures -"; #430 "A Charm invests a face"; #330 "He put the Belt around my life –"; #238 "How many times these low feet staggered –"; #194 "Title divine – is mine!" #615 "God is a distant – stately Lover –"; #596 "Ourselves were wed one summer - dear -"

Week 8:

3/3 M Hart and Smith, "Section Two" (63-143); # 518 "When I was small, a woman died"; #392 "We talked as Girls do"; #439 "I had been hungry, all the Years –"; #531 "We learned the Whole of Love -" #451 "The Malay - took the Pearl -"

3/5 W #426 "I gave myself to Him" ; #393 "Empty my Heart, of Thee"; #511 "He found my Being – set it up"; #705 "I am ashamed - I hide"; #857 "She rose to His requirement"; #706 "I cannot live with You –"; #708 "They put Us far apart –"; #1274 "Now I knew I lost her –"
March 10 – 16 Spring Break

III. The Poet as Witness: Civil War, Death, and (Dis)Union

Week 9: Whitman's War

3/17 M Walt Whitman's *Specimen Days and Collect*[Links to an external site.](#) (1882) specifically "[A Night Battle Over a Week Since](#)[Links to an external site.](#)," "[Unnamed Remains the Bravest Soldier](#)[Links to an external site.](#)," "[A Glimpse of War's Hell Scenes](#)[Links to an external site.](#)," "[Two Brothers, One South, One North](#)[Links to an external site.](#)," "[Three Years Summed Up](#)[Links to an external site.](#)," [The Million Dead too, Summed Up](#)[Links to an external site.](#)" [The Real War Will Never Get in the Books](#)[Links to an external site.](#)" : "[Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night](#)[Links to an external site.](#)"[Links to an external site.](#) "[Come Up from the Fields Father](#)[Links to an external site.](#)" ;

3/19 W "Bivouac on a Mountain Side" (Hass 240); "The Wound Dresser" (Hass 241-243);

Week 10: Wars - Earthly and Existential - in Dickinson

3/24 M #591 "I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –"; #550 "I measure every Grief I meet"; #524 "It feels a shame to be Alive –"; #373 "This World is not conclusion." ; #760 "Pain – has an Element of Blank –"; #836 "Color – Caste - Denomination";

3/26 W #480 "He fought like those Who've nought to lose"; #704 "My Portion is Defeat – today –"; #616 "If any sink, assure that this, now standing"; #545 "They dropped like Flakes"; #605 "I am alive – I guess –"; #468 "Whole Gulfs – of Red, and Fleets – of Red –"; #1581 "Those – dying then,"

Week 11:

3/31 M "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," (244-252)

4/2 W “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d,” (244-252); “Reconciliation” (253);

IV. Art as Spiritual Transcendence

Week 12:

4/7 M #348 “I would not paint – a picture – ”; #519 “This is my letter to the World”; #764 “My Life had stood - a loaded Gun-”;

4/9 W #1263 “Tell all the Truth but tell it slant –”, #533 “I reckon - When I count at all -”, #446 “This was a Poet -”

Week 13:

4/14 M “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” (210-216);

4/16 W “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” (210-216);

Week 14:

4/21 M “To You” (207-209); Whitman, “As I Ebb’d with the Ocean of Life” (Hass, 233-236); “The Runner” (254); “Sparkles from the Wheel” (255); “The Dalliance of the Eagles” (258); “After Supper and Talk” (260).

4/23 W #1347 “Wonder - is not precisely knowing”; #519 “This is my letter to the World”; #1715 “A word made Flesh is seldom”; #905 “Split the lark and you’ll find the music”

Week 15:

4/28 M Final Exam Review

4/30 W Final Exam Review and Last Class

5/1 Thursday Midnight Final Essay Due

Course Policies

Absences: They happen for all kinds of expected and unexpected reasons. It is your responsibility to get notes or materials from the class you missed. Exchange numbers with a classmate for this purpose. If you find that you’re going to need to be absent more than is typically accepted (i.e. COVID or a documented illness—do not come to class if you have a fever), then please, by all means, do get in touch with me as soon as possible so that we can make a suitable arrangement for you to stay on top of the course requirements. Otherwise: excessive absences will lower your overall course grade: 5-6 absences, lowers your grade by one letter grade; 7-8 lowers your grade by two letter grades; absences of 9-10, earns you a D; absences of 11 or more, lead to failure of the course.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for [Academic Integrity](#)[Links to an external site.](#). Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty, including plagiarism (see below) and/or the use of AI software or other AI writing tools (see below), will be handled in accordance with University policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from an F on the assignment, verbal or written admonition, to a grade of “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations.

Artificial Intelligence & Writing: The use of generative AI writing tools (such as ChatGPT, GrammarlyGO, GPT-3, GPT-4, BERT, or others) is prohibited in this class. Assignments for the course have been designed to help you develop as a writer without the use of these technologies.

You will generate ideas, read, revise, and write on your own and/or in consultation with peers, me, or Writing Center tutors, and you will not use AI at any stage of your writing process. You are the author of your work for the course and authorship means you take responsibility for your words and claims. Any use of AI technologies in your work will be considered an [violation of UNT's academic integrity policy](#)[Links to an external site.](#) and addressed accordingly. *Statement composed by Annette Vee, under CC-BY-NC (Creative Commons By-Noncommercial license)

Communication with the Instructor: Connect with me through email and/or by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

You will typically receive a faster response if you email me during regular business hours (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) at stephanie.hawkins@unt.edu rather than through Canvas. Since calling your professors by their hard-earned title communicates your respect for their expertise, please refer to me as “Dr. Hawkins” or “Professor Hawkins” in both your written and spoken communications. I teach multiple courses, so to avoid confusion include your full name and the course number in your email. For clarity’s sake, your e-mail should indicate the course and section. If you require particular accommodations per Students with Disabilities (see below), please communicate them to me as soon as possible, and please provide the appropriate documentation. If you have any other concerns or special circumstances that I should be aware of please don’t hesitate to speak to me confidentially.

Distraction-Free Classroom: My role is to hold space for learning and discovery. Therefore, I strive to maintain a distraction-free classroom. Speaking while others are talking, texting, engaging with social media, or doing work for another course, are prohibited distractions during class time and will result in an absence. Unless you have an urgent need or a documented (ODA) medical reason for leaving class, you are expected to keep your attention focused on the course and its objectives for the full 80-minutes allocated.

Electronic Devices: I have a zero-tolerance policy for texting during class. If you text during class, you will be counted absent for the duration of the class. Cell phones should be stowed and turned off for the duration of class. Students wishing to take notes on a laptop must seek the instructor’s approval. When you are not taking notes, laptops should be closed. Those violating this policy shall be counted absent for the class.

Group Me & other Social Media Apps: Group Me is appropriate for communicating to classmates about important deadlines. It can also be abused. Please do not use Group Me in ways that violate the [Code of Student Conduct](#)[Links to an external site.](#). For all questions concerning your grade, or questions regarding instructor expectations for assignments or any other course-related issues, please communicate directly with me. Communications with the instructor are held in strictest confidence.

Late papers & Incompletes: Late assignments drop by *one letter grade* for each day they are past due and do not receive written comments. Incompletes are only granted in emergency situations, and to students who have maintained good attendance and who have successfully completed a majority of the requirements.

Plagiarism is the unattributed use of another’s words and ideas, regardless of the source (your own work in another course, work by another student, others’ scholarly work or internet resources). Repurposing your own work from another course constitutes cheating and is grounds for failing the assignment. See Library Guide to Types of

Plagiarism: <https://guides.library.unt.edu/plagiarism/types>[Links to an external site.](#)

Students with Disabilities: The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access)). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Tardiness: Please arrive before class begins to find a seat, prepare your materials, and connect with your peers. A late arrival to class is sometimes inevitable, and if you have concerns or particular needs concerning lateness, take them up with me during my office hours. I want to support your success in the course. If you arrive late, know that you are welcome to join the class, but please do so without distracting others. More than two instances of tardiness (10-15 minutes late) will result in an absence from class.

Academic Support & Student Services:

Student Support Services

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)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/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)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Additional Student Support Services

- Registrar (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/)[Links to an external site.](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)[Links to an external site.](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)Links to an external site. (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)Links to an external site. (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc)Links to an external site. (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/)Links to an external site. (https://library.unt.edu/)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)Links to an external site. (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/Links to an external site.)