Creative Writing: Poetry

Course prefix: LMC

Course number: 3234

Section: VC

CRN (you may add up to five):
24147

Instructor First Name: Victoria

Instructor Last Name: Chang

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

First and foremost, this course is a course about perception and seeing. Artists perceive ordinary things through ordinary language, and cut, splice, combine, and reimagine the world and words into something new. Today, art, based on passionate and empathetic perception, is more important than ever. Ruth Asawa's daughter said she sketched almost every day to strengthen her ability to see. I believe in the transformative power of art now more than ever, and think it begins with deep perception.

On a practical basis, this course is an introduction to the pleasures and joys of reading and writing of poetry. As part of this course, we will study traditions of poetic practice and theory, in parallel with a weekly workshop session focused on the student's own poems. Each week, students will learn about various elements of poetry such as imagery, the line, rhythm, sound, form, syntax, diction, tone, content, theme, and others. Each week, students will write a poem and together workshop each other's poems. Workshop will focus on the possibilities of a poem, the possibilities of revision, and the various ways we can help a poem expand in possibilities. In addition, we will do a fair amount of reading in this class through course texts below and poetry the professor may bring into class. Students will also attend poetry readings and other possible activities as part of Poetry@Tech programming.

Course learning outcomes:

- Students will learn/review/enhance their understanding of the basic poetry techniques and forms.
- Students will learn how to write poems by drafting and revising original poems over the course of the semester, based on exercises provided in class.

- Students will develop critical prose writing skills by providing their peers with observations and/or suggestions on poems on a weekly basis, writing a critical response/annotation to each poem being workshopped.
- Students will develop critical prose writing skills by writing reading responses to assigned readings for class and be prepared to discuss readings.
- Students will develop oral presentation and communication skills through class and small group participation.
- Students will gain an understanding of contemporary poetry by attending readings by visiting poets through the Poetry@Tech reading series.

Required course materials:

Required Course Texts (through the bookstore or online)

- Gregory Orr, *A Primer for Poets & Readers of Poetry,* W.W. Norton & Company, 2018 (ISBN: 0393253929)
- Layli Long Soldier, *Whereas,* Graywolf Press, 2017
- Michael Joseph Walsh, *A Season,* University of Georgia Press, 2026
- Two additional books of student's choice from this list:
    - [Reina María Rodríguez](#) and Kristin Dykstra, *The Winter Garden Photograph* (ISBN: 1946433225)
    - Wang Yin and Andrea Lingenfelter, *A Summer Day in the Company of Ghosts: Selected Poems* (ISBN: 1681376482)
    - Jakub Kornhauser and Piotr Florczyk, *Hemorrhages & Squirrels* (ISBN: 1956921605)

Grading policy:

The final grade will be based on students' poems, critical writing, class participation, and attendance. Since voices are needed to generate a rich class discussion, class participation is an important component of your grade. If there are extenuating circumstances in any situation, students should contact the professor ahead of time. Grades will be updated each week on the course's Canvas site (each assignment's scale will be out of 100).

A breakdown of the student's grade will be as follows:

Bi-Weekly Poems: 35%

Annotations of Workshop Poems and Reading Responses of Books: 35%

Class Participation: 20%

Final Portfolio of Poems: 10%

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A   90-100%

B   80-89%

C   70-79%

D   60-69%

F   0-59%

Grading Criteria

Poems will be graded based on effort shown toward the writing exercises.

Annotations of peer poems will be graded based on cohesiveness, insight, argument, detail, and effort. Annotations should also reflect student learning of poetry terms and concepts. Students are not allowed to use any form of AI for these annotations. If you use AI for annotations, you will receive a zero on the assignment.

Reading responses and responses to other books will be graded based on cohesiveness, insight, argument, detail, and effort. The response can be how the reading inspired your writing or thinking, what you learned from it, additional questions you might have on the reading, etc. (examples of annotations and reading responses are at the end of the syllabus). Responses to the P@T readings will be described below.

In order to create a vibrant and collaborative community within our class, students will be expected to **attend every class.** For each unexcused class (due to anything other than illness or other serious personal or family issues), students will have their attendance grade for that week reduced to a zero.

If a student misses more than two unexcused classes, students risk failing the course. Students who need to miss class for any reason must contact the professor via email before class. Students must also attend all the Poetry@Tech readings and student readings (unless you have a class, job, or other obligation you have cleared ahead of time with the professor). Even if you have excused absences due to illnesses or other extenuating circumstances, you still need to complete the assignments for each week. If you miss three or more classes (excused or unexcused), you risk failing the class.

Class participation includes oral discussion of peers' poems, thoughts on what is discussed in class on craft and form, and discussion of assigned readings. Students should try to participate at least once (if not much more) per class. The instructor may ask students to participate based on their annotations and reading responses.

Students will be expected **to turn in all poems, annotations, and reading responses on time** as stated in the syllabus. For each late poem, annotation, or reading response, students will see a grade reduction of 20 points (out of 100 for the assignment) **for every day** the assignment is late.

Therefore, it is advised that students upload their assignments onto Canvas **EARLY** to avoid grade reductions, and to regularly check the syllabus. If students do not turn in a workshop poem according to the schedule below, students will receive a zero for the assignment (out of 100).

Attendance policy:

In order to create a vibrant and collaborative community within our class, students will be expected to **attend every class.** For each unexcused class (due to anything other than illness or other serious personal or family issues), students will have their attendance grade for that week reduced to a zero.

If a student misses more than two unexcused classes, students risk failing the course. Students who need to miss class for any reason must contact the professor via email before class. Students must also attend all the Poetry@Tech readings and student readings (unless you have a class, job, or other obligation you have cleared ahead of time with the professor). Even if you have excused absences due to illnesses or other extenuating circumstances, you still need to complete the assignments for each week. If you miss three or more classes (excused or unexcused), you risk failing the class.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence