3356 Poetry and Poetry Writing (3-0). A study of the theory and accepted practices of poetry and poetry writing. Writing assignments may include both critical essays and original poetry.

In this version of English 3356, students will write response papers to assigned readings on metaphor and the craft of poetry, drafts of poems based upon specific exercises, two literary analysis essays, two reflection essays, and give presentations on poems.

Learning Goals
Upon completing this course, students should be able to

1. Read and write poems with attention, joy, and confidence
2. Reflect on the craft of writing poetry
3. Read and present analyses of poems
4. Analyze poetry effectively

Texts
Best Words, Best Order, Stephen Dobyns, 2nd Edition, 978-1403961471

Supplies
- Portfolio notebook with dividers for storing and organizing course work
- Notebook paper for taking notes and in-class writing
- Computer paper for written responses and essays

Contract Grading
List of Required Assignments
1. 20 Written Reading Responses
2. 12 Poem Drafts
3. 4 Final Poems (2 at midterm and 2 at end of course)
4. 2 Poetry Readings and Analyses
5. Midterm Literary Analysis Essay
6. Midterm Reflection
7. Final Literary Analysis Essay
8. Final Reflection

A. To receive an A in this class, you will have submitted all 8 items as they are due, fulfilled the minimum requirements of each, received an A on all of your essays and presentations, read at least 3 times from poetry practices, and have no more than four absences.

B. To receive a B in this class, you will have submitted all 8 items as they are due, fulfilled the minimum requirements of each, received a B on 4 or more of your essays and presentations, read at least 3 times from poetry practices, and have no more than four absences.

C. To receive a C in this class, you will have submitted all 8 items as they are due, fulfilled the minimum requirements of each, received a C on 4 or more of your essays, read at least 3 times from poetry practices, and have no more than four absences.

D. To receive a D in this class, you may have failed to submit a significant number of the 8 items as they are due, fulfilled the minimum requirements of each, and received a D on 4 or more of your essays, or have no more than six absences.
F. To receive an F in this class, you will have failed to submit a significant number of the 8 items as they are due, failed to fulfill minimum requirements of each, and have more than six absences.

SOME OTHER ISSUES

Absences – If you must miss a class, contact a classmate to get the homework assignment for you or to turn in your work. Late work will not be accepted under any circumstances. I do not accept work via email. All assignments must be submitted to receive a passing grade. No incompletes will be given.

Personal Emergencies – Given my experience, I know that sometimes things fall apart. If you encounter a personal tragedy or some emotional distress that causes you to miss classes, get in touch with me as soon as you can. I don’t need all of the details, but at least I’ll know you haven’t dropped the class or been eaten by a bear.

Academic Honesty - All work composed for this class must be written exclusively for this class and be your original work. You may of course receive assistance on your writing, but submitting someone else’s work as your own or failing to acknowledge sources appropriately will be grounds for plagiarism. Violations of academic honesty and plagiarism will result in immediate failure of this class. You are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is available on the web at http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/Honor_Code.pdf.

Special Requirements: Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, in order to request such accommodations prior to any being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made. For more information, see http://www.angelo.edu/services/student_life/disability.html.

Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Days
If you intend to be absent from class to observe a religious holy day, you should make that intention known in writing to me prior to the absence.

Minimum Requirements for Poem Drafts

- Creative response to the assignment
- Good use of setting, imagery, and rhythm to convey emotion
- Structure or shape supports expression in interesting ways (line length/break, stanza form/break, rhythm, rhyme, word choice, figurative language, punctuation)
- Good use of poetic analogy (such as simile, personification, and metaphor)
- No usage or spelling errors

Five Basic Formal Elements of Poetic Craft

1. Shape—the effect of the shape of the poem on the page
2. Length—the effect of the length of the line or sentence
3. Repetition—the effect of all that repeats in the poem, such as rhythm, sound, letters, words, phrases, ideas, and images
4. Voice—the informality or formality of the speaker’s approach to the topic
5. Analogy—the similarities accentuated in the poem often evident in analogies such as metaphor, simile, and personification
### Grade Equivalencies for Poems

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| A     | an excellent poem | - Very creative response to the assignment  
- Excellent use of setting, imagery, and rhythm to convey emotion  
- Structure or shape contributes to expression in creative ways (line length/break, stanza form/break, rhythm, rhyme, word choice, figurative language, punctuation)  
- Excellent use of poetic analogy (such as simile, metaphor, and personification)  
- No usage or spelling errors |
| B     | a good poem | - Creative response to the assignment  
- Good use of setting, imagery, and rhythm to convey emotion  
- Structure or shape supports expression in interesting ways (line length/break, stanza form/break, rhythm, rhyme, word choice, figurative language, punctuation)  
- Good use of poetic analogy (such as simile, metaphor, and personification)  
- No usage or spelling errors |
| C     | an acceptable poem | - Responds to the assignment with interest  
- Evidence of setting, imagery, and rhythm to convey emotion, but tends toward abstraction rather than portraying experience  
- Structure or shape may support expression in some way (line length/break, stanza form/break, rhythm, rhyme, word choice, figurative language, punctuation)  
- Rhyme may seem forced or limit expression and word choice  
- Poetic analogy (such as simile, metaphor, and personification) may be present, but tends toward cliché  
- One usage or spelling error |
| D     | a poor poem | - Indifferent or perfunctory response to the assignment  
- Little evidence of setting, imagery, and rhythm to indicate emotion  
- Structure fails to support expression (line length/break, stanza form/break, rhythm, rhyme, word choice, figurative language, punctuation)  
- Rhyme and rhythm produces unnecessary "nursery rhyme" effect  
- Analogy is absent or clichéd  
- More than one usage or spelling error |
| F     | an unacceptable poem | - Indifferent or perfunctory response to the assignment  
- No evidence of setting, imagery, and rhythm to indicate emotion  
- No evidence of poetic structure (line length/break, stanza form/break, rhythm, rhyme, word choice, figurative language, punctuation)  
- Analogy is absent or clichéd  
- More than one usage or spelling error  
- Poem is not typed |
Requirements for Poetry Presentation

This class will provide the opportunity for you to lead a discussion of a selected poem from the course anthology by focusing on the formal aspects of the poem, including the poet’s use of shape, line, repetition, voice, and analogy, as well as on how these formal elements support the purpose, message, or content of the poem. In other words, you will describe how the poet has attempted to achieve aesthetic unity through a mutually supporting relationship between aspects of form and meaning.

1. We will schedule these presentations to occur throughout the semester.
2. On the day of presentation,
   a. you will introduce and read the poem for the class with confidence and skill;
   b. and you will then provide a presentation of at least 6 slides in which you will show and discuss with highlighted examples
      i. the shape of the poem,
      ii. how line functions in the poem,
      iii. how repetition functions in the poem,
      iv. how voice functions in the poem,
      v. how analogy functions in the poem,
      vi. how you believe the poet has attempted to achieve aesthetic unity.

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Minimum Requirements for Written Responses

For some reading assignments, you will compose a written response. These are one-page, informal typed entry of exactly 200 words based upon prompts provided by me. Before submitting this response, you will use your word-processing software to conduct a word count check, a spell check, and a grammar check, and then correct as indicated.

Reading responses serve as ongoing practice in developing strong reading and writing habits, especially as they help you learn close reading, textual analysis, and various responses for responding to and writing about the ideas of others. Reading responses will be the primary ongoing method for learning writing as a tool for learning and effective communication. Because they will also serve as the source material for small group work and class discussion, they will also strengthen collaborative learning and problem-solving skills.

To fulfill the minimum requirements of written responses, they

1. Must be free from virtually all errors in sentences and words.
2. Demonstrate honest effort, clear engagement, and fresh thinking on the chosen topic or issue.
3. Include at least one quote from the assigned reading that provides evidence to support your claims.
4. Follow the focus and structural requirements of the assignment.
BASIC LITERARY TERMS

aesthetics: the study of the rules and principles of art

aesthetic unity: the coherent relationship between form and message or style and sense; a correspondence between the container and the contained

cliché: a turn of phrase or analogy that is overused or trite that betrays a lack of original thinking

figurative meaning: associative or connotative meaning; representational

literal meaning: limited to the simplest, ordinary, most obvious meaning

TERMS RELATED TO POETRY

meter: measured pattern of rhythmic accents in a line of verse

rhyme: correspondence of terminal sounds of words or of lines of verse

Figurative Language

analogy: a comparison between seemingly unlike ideas, including personification, simile, and metaphor below

apostrophe: a direct address of an inanimate object, abstract qualities, or a person not living or present
Example: “Beware, O Asparagus, you’ve stalked my last meal.”

chiasmus: is a rhetorical device in which two or more clauses are balanced against each other by the reversal of their structures in order to produce an artistic effect. Example: “Never let a Fool Kiss You or a Kiss Fool You.”

hyperbole: exaggeration for emphasis (the opposite of understatement)
Example: “I’m so hungry I could eat a horse.”

metaphor: comparison between essentially unlike things, or the application of a name or description to something to which it is not literally applicable
Example: “[Love] is an ever fixed mark, / that looks on tempests and is never shaken.”

personification: the endowment of inanimate objects or abstract concepts with animate or living qualities
Example: “Time let me play / and be golden in the mercy of his means”

pun: play on words, or a humorous use of a single word or sound with two or more implied meanings; quibble
Example: “They’re called lessons . . . because the lessen from day to day.”

simile: comparison between two essentially unlike things using words such as “like,” “as,” or “as though”
Example: “My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun”

Poetic Devices

alliteration: the repetition of consonant sounds, particularly at the beginning of words
Example: “… like a wanderer white”

allusion: a reference to a person, event, or work outside the poem or literary piece Example: “Shining, it was Adam and maiden”
assonance: the repetition of similar vowel sounds  Example: “I rose and told him of my woe”

elision: the omission of an unstressed vowel or syllable to preserve the meter of a line of poetry  
Example: “Th’ expense of spirit in a waste of shame”

imagery: word or sequence of words representing a sensory experience (visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, and gustatory)  
Example: “bells knelling classes to a close” (auditory)

irony: a contradiction of expectation between what is said and what is meant (verbal irony) or what is expected in a particular circumstance or behavior (situational), or when a character speaks in ignorance of a situation known to the audience or other characters (dramatic)  
Example: “Time held me green and dying / Though I sang in my chains like the sea”

onomatopoeia: the use of words to imitate the sounds they describe  
Example: “crack” or “whir”

slant rhyme (off rhyme, half rhyme, imperfect rhyme): rhyme formed with words with similar but not wholly identical sounds  
Example: barn / yard

symbol: an object or action that stands for something beyond itself  
Example: white = innocence, purity, hope

Meter

iambic (iamb): a metrical foot containing two syllables—the first is unstressed, while the second is stressed

iambic pentameter: a traditional form of rising meter consisting of lines containing five iambic feet (and, thus, ten syllables)

pause (caesura): a pause for a beat in the rhythm of the verse (often indicated by a line break or a mark of punctuation)

stress: greater amount of force used to pronounce one syllable over another

Poetic Forms

blank verse: unrhymed iambic pentameter

closed: poetic form subject to a fixed structure and pattern

couplet: a pair of lines, usually rhymed

enjambment: the continuation of a sentence or clause over a line-break

free verse: lines with no prescribed pattern or structure

heroic couplet: a pair of rhymed lines in iambic pentameter (tradition of the heroic epic form)

line: a unit of language into which a poem or play is divided, which operates on principles which are distinct from and not necessarily coincident with grammatical structures, such as the sentence or clauses in sentences

open: poetic form free from regularity and consistency in elements such as rhyme, line length, and metrical form

quatrain: four-line stanza or grouping of four lines of verse

stanza: unit of a poem often repeated in the same form throughout a poem; a unit of poetic lines (“verse paragraph”)
Midterm Literary Analysis Essay

Compose a 1000 word six paragraph essay on an assigned poem in which you respond to this poem from the perspective of four response types: a personal, topical, formal, and aesthetic response. That is, compose a six paragraph essay with an introduction, four response paragraphs, and a conclusion. In your conclusion, describe how these four ways of responding have helped you better understand and appreciate the craft and value of this poem.

Recommended Outline

1. Introduction
   a. Summary
   b. Thesis
2. Personal Response
3. Topical Response
4. Formal Response (shape, length, repetition, voice, analogy)
5. Aesthetic Response
6. Conclusion

Evaluation Rubric

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Midterm Reflection Essay

The purpose of this essay is to reflect upon your learning so far in this class.

Compose a three-page typed paper in which you reflect on the degree to which you feel you have gained a better understanding of the aesthetics of poetry, the craft of reading poetry, and the craft of writing poetry.

This essay will have an introductory paragraph in which you set the stage for your reader by describing your experience as a writer and reader of poetry prior to this class and end with a thesis statement that previews the remainder of the essay.

This essay will also have a concluding paragraph in which you describe what other achievements you wish to achieve this semester as a writer and reader of poetry.

This essay will include references to what you have learned about metaphor from Lakoff and Johnson, about the reading and writing of poems from Dobyns, from the poets you most enjoyed reading in class so far, and from the poems you’ve composed during the first half of the semester.

Evaluation Rubric

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Final Literary Analysis Essay

Compose a 1000 word six paragraph essay on an assigned poem in which you respond to this poem from the perspective of four response types: a personal, topical, formal, and aesthetic response. That is, compose a six paragraph essay with an introduction, four response paragraphs, and a conclusion. In your conclusion, describe how these four ways of responding have helped you better understand and appreciate the craft and value of this poem.

Recommended Outline

1. Introduction
   a. Summary
   b. Thesis
2. Personal Response
3. Topical Response
4. Formal Response (shape, line, repetition, voice, analogy)
5. Aesthetic Response
6. Conclusion

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Final Reflection Essay

The purpose of this essay is to reflect upon your learning during the second half this class.

Compose a three-page typed paper in which you reflect on the degree to which you feel you have gained a better understanding of the aesthetics of poetry, the craft of reading poetry, and the craft of writing poetry.

This essay will have an introductory paragraph in which you set the stage for your reader by describing your experience as a writer and reader of poetry during the first half of this class and end with a thesis statement that previews the remainder of the essay.

This essay will also have a concluding paragraph in which you describe what other achievements you wish to achieve after this class as a writer and reader of poetry.

This essay will include references to what you have learned about the reading and writing of poems from Dobyns, from the poets you most enjoyed reading in class after midterm, and from the poems you’ve composed during the second half of the semester.

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Worksheet on Literary Analysis of a Poem

Personal Response  (How do I relate my experience or someone’s experience I know to the poem and why?)

Topical Response  (What are the topics introduced in the poem and how are they introduced?)

Formal Response  (How has the author crafted the poem using conventional formal elements?)
  Poetry: shape, length, repetition, voice, analogy

Aesthetic Response  (How has the poet attempted to achieve aesthetic unity in the poem?)
Expectations in Literary Analysis Essays for Poems

**Sample thesis:**

After reading “Poem” from the perspective of personal, topical, formal, and ethical response strategies, I can better appreciate and understand the poem.

**Sample topic sentences:**

Reading this poem from a personal perspective, I can relate to ....

While there are a variety of topics in this poem, such as X, Y, and Z, I believe the most pronounced topic is W because.....

Focusing on the formal elements of the poem, including shape, line, repetition, voice, and analogy, I can better understand how the author crafted the poem in the following ways ....

When examining the aesthetic unity of the poem, I believe the form of the poem supports the content, purpose, or message of the poem in the following ways...

**Sample topic sentence for conclusion:**

After examining “Poem” from these four perspectives, I can better appreciate and understand.....

**Sample citation introductions:**

The narrator in the poem says, “....................” (#).

The author of the poem writes, “....................” (#).

A good example of this form is when the author of the poem writes, “....................” (#).

This topic is evident in the passage when the author of the poem describes X and writes, “....................” (#).
This page demonstrates the standard format for the literary analysis essay for this class. Left, right, top, and bottom margins are set at one inch. The header at top right contains the writer’s last name and page number. Use the header/footer function to format this header so that the page number is automatically updated from page to page.

The standard heading at the top left is left-justified and single-spaced. For the purposes of this course, I’ve added an extra line in the heading so that a writer can include a description of the assignment, such as the reading response number or essay assignment. After the heading, the title of the essay is centered above the body of the essay. This title does not require quotation marks or underlining, nor should it be bold. However, the title must be an original title that you have created for your response or essay.

All other text is left-justified, double-spaced, and set in Arial, Times New Roman, or Calibri no larger than size 12. The first line of each paragraph begins with a one-half inch tab, and there should be no extra spaces between paragraphs.
Creating Titles

1. Copy out of your draft a sentence that could serve as a title.
2. Write a title that is a question beginning with What, Who, When, or Where. (Where Do Titles Come From?)
3. Write a title that is a question beginning with How or Why. (Why Are Titles Necessary?)
4. Write a title that is a question beginning with Is/Are, Do/Does, or Will. (Are Some Titles Better Than Others?)
5. Pick out of the draft some concrete image — something the reader can hear, see, taste, smell, or feel — to use as a title.
6. Pick another concrete image out of the draft. Look for an image that is a bit unusual or surprising.
7. Writing a title that begins with an –ing verb (Creating a Good Title).
8. Writing a title beginning with On (On Creating Good Titles).
9. Write a title that is a lie about the draft. (You probably won’t use this one, but it might stimulate your thinking.)
10. Write a one-word title – the most obvious one possible.
11. Write a less obvious one-word title.
12. Think of a familiar saying, or the title of a book, song, or movie, that might fit your draft.
13. Take the title you just wrote and twist it by changing a word or creating a pun on it.
14. Find two titles you’ve written so far that you might use together in a double title. Join them together with a colon.

from “Twenty Titles for the Writer” by Richard Leahy, College Composition and Communication, Vol. 43, No. 4, December 1992
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Academic Performance Agreement

In order to make the requirements of this class and your responsibilities as a student as clear as possible, I’ve created this document titled “Academic Performance Agreement.” Please read this information carefully because it outlines the kinds of behaviors, study habits, and attitudes necessary for success in this class, as well as in the University writing community at large. If you agree to the terms and conditions set forth below, please sign your name on one of the two copies I’ve provided you. By signing and returning this agreement to me, you commit yourself to the standards of conduct and academic performance listed below.

1. I understand that attendance is a requirement of the class and that 6 absences of any sort will result in automatic failure. I also understand that if I miss class that I should contact another student to discover what I’ve missed.
2. If I miss more than one class in sequence, I will contact the professor to let him know the reasons for my absences.
3. I understand that arriving late to class is inappropriate because it disrupts the class. I understand that the instructor will shut the door to the classroom when the class starts and that I will not attempt to enter the class after the door has been closed.
4. I understand that cell phones must be turned off before entering class. I understand if my cell phone rings during class I will be asked to leave the class.
5. I understand that this class has substantial reading and writing requirements. These requirements will demand that I manage my time carefully and schedule at least 6 hours of study time per week or 2 hours of study time for every one hour of scheduled class time.
6. I understand that I should be prepared each day to bring the text under discussion with me to class.
7. I understand that I should be prepared each day to share my responses to the reading assignments in class.
8. I understand that I will be required to contribute to class discussions and small group work in class. In other words, I will be required to speak in class, share my ideas, and respect the ideas of others.
9. I understand that any writing I submit must be my own and written exclusively for this class.
10. I understand that when I use the ideas of others in my writing that I must let my readers know whose ideas are whose and where I found them. I understand that plagiarism (or the failure to acknowledge the ideas of others appropriately) is a form of academic dishonesty and will result in failure.
11. I understand that I will benefit from discussing my ideas and writing with my family, friends, and other students. I also understand that I can get help with my ideas and writing in the Writing Center. However, I also understand that I should never claim someone else’s ideas or writing as my own.
12. I understand that I must adhere to the due dates for all writing assignments because late work will not be accepted or penalized, at the discretion of the instructor.
13. I understand that I should think of writing as a complex process of planning, drafting, revising, editing, and presentation. Consequently, I understand that I should schedule time to complete each of these tasks before submitting my work.
14. I understand that I can make an appointment with my instructor to talk about any aspect of the class, including course assignments, my writing, the required reading, extended absences or comments and grades on my writing.
15. I understand that failure to demonstrate care in the selection of lyrics for class presentation will result in expulsion from the class.

I intend to fulfill the requirements for a ________ grade in this class.
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Student Signature _______________________________________ Date _________________________