English 4377 – Poetry Writing Workshop
Spring 2018

A writer is not so much someone who has something to say as he is someone who has found a process that will bring about new things he would not have thought of if he had not started to say them.

William Stafford, *Writing the Australian Crawl*

Poems are what you make when you experience life in a certain way. Alive to yourself in the world, observant of inner and outer reality, and connected to language.

Kim Addonizio, *Ordinary Genius*

“The work of art is a copula: a bond, a hand, a link by which the several are knit into one. Men and women who dedicate their lives to the realization of their gifts tend the office of that communion by which we are joined to one another, to our times, to our generation, and to the race.”

Kewis Hyde, *The Gift*

**Instructor:** Dr. Chris Ellery  
**Office:** A021B  
**Hours:** 8-9 MWF. 2-3:30 MW; 1:30-3:30 TR  
**Phone:** 942-2268 x228  
**E-mail:** cellery@angelo.edu

**Catalogue Description:**
“Intensive practice in writing and evaluating poetry. May be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: English 3356.”

**Student Learning Outcomes:**  
The broad learning goal for this course is Goal 4 of the BA English in Creative Writing Program: “Students should demonstrate the principles and conventions of creative writing to produce thoughtful, engaging, relevant, and original texts.” More specifically,

- Students should understand and use the elements of poetry as a genre, including prosody, form, voice/persona, style, figurative language.
- Students should create poetry of literary quality publishable in contemporary American literary magazines.
- Students should be able to respond as knowledgeable and encouraging editors to poems written by other students.

**Text:**  

**Grading:**
- Workshop & Daily Work 20%
- Six Poems 20%
- Portfolio/Chapbook 30%
- Reflective Essay 20%
- Final Exam/Poetry Reading 10%
Much class time will be spent responding to student poems. To get full credit for the workshop, students should be present for the discussion of the poem and submit written responses on the day of the discussion using the critique form posted on Blackboard. Additional daily work will include quizzes, exercises, and miscellaneous assignments.

- Students will submit six poems based on exercises in Addonizio or following specific assignments given by the instructor.

- The poetry portfolio (or chapbook) consists of 8-10 of the student’s best poems written in the creative writing courses at ASU; at least five of these should be written during this semester. (See full instructions under Content on Blackboard.)

- The student will submit a reflective essay with the portfolio. (See full instructions under Content on Blackboard.)

- As a final exam, the class will organize a poetry reading, and each student will give a public reading.

### Attendance and Make-up Policy:

- **This is a face-to-face class.** Regular attendance is essential for success in the class. Attendance will be taken daily at the beginning of the period. Students who arrive late should see the instructor after class to be sure they are counted present. Students who enter during a quiz will not receive extra time to complete the quiz.

- **Be prepared for class each day.** An absence does not excuse the student from being prepared for the next class. Thus, students who miss class should contact a classmate or the instructor to be sure of the assignment for the next class.

- **All assignments are due when called for.** Being permitted to accept work after the deadline gives students an advantage over those who turn work in on time; thus **late work will be accepted without penalty only in the case of excused absences.** The penalty for an unexcused late assignment is one-half letter grade for each day late.

- **Students must present credible documentation to receive an excused absence.** Absences are excused for school travel, religious holidays, illness, or personal or family emergency. Contact the instructor as soon as possible (before a school trip or personal travel) to excuse the absence and arrange make-up work.

- **Daily grades for quizzes and other in-class activities cannot be made up.** Two daily grades will be dropped at the end of the term.

- **E-mailed assignments will be accepted only at the request of the instructor.**

### Department Statement on Academic Honesty:

All ASU students are expected to understand and to comply with the University policy on academic honesty as stated in the ASU catalogue and in the ASU student handbook. Students who violate the policy on academic honesty will be subject to disciplinary action that could seriously jeopardize their grades and/or University standing.

### Special Needs:

The dean of Student Life has issued the following statement regarding students needing accommodation for disabilities: “Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, 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.”
**Best Practices for a Productive Semester**

1. Consider the class an opportunity for both artistic and psychological (spiritual) growth. Consider the class as a sacred community. Commit yourself to your writing and to one another. William Stafford: “Art has its sacramental aspect. The source of art’s power is one with religion’s: the discovery of the essential self and the cultivation of it through the act of its positive impulses” (*Writing the Australian Crawl* 51).

2. Keep a journal. Play with language, with image, with thought, with the forms of this world and your own imagination.

3. Read poetry! Regard the poems you write and those of your classmates as sacred. Explore poets.org, journal websites, and other publishers of contemporary. Discover your taste. Share with the class; share your enthusiasm (and poems) with friends, families, strangers. Remember the world needs poetry, and so do you.

4. Think of every poem as an adventure, a hero’s journey. Die along the way; come back to life. Slay the giant, overcome temptations (to quit or not to care). Take risks in your writing. “No thrill for the writer, no thrill for the reader.” Discover yourself.

5. Be generous with your attention and your creative gift. Remember Blake: “I will not Reason & Compare; my business is to Create.”

**Tentative Schedule:**

**Week 1**
- T 1/16: Introduction
- R 1/18: Addonizio Chs. 1-3

**Week 2**
- T 1/23: Addonizio Ch. 4
- R 1/25: Addonizio Ch. 5

**Week 3**
- T 1/30: **Poem 1 due**
  - Addonizio Ch. 6
- R 2/1: Addonizio Ch. 7

**Week 4**
- T 2/6: Addonizio Ch. 8
- R 2/8: Addonizio Ch. 9

**Week 5**
- T 2/13: **Poem 2 due**
  - Addonizio Ch. 10-11
- R 2/15: TBA

**Week 6**
- T 2/20: Addonizio Ch. 12-13
- R 2/22: ASU WRITERS CONFERENCE IN HONOR OF ELMER KELTON
Week 7
T 2/27 Poem 3 due
Addonizio Ch. 14-15
R 3/1 Addonizio Chs. 16-17

Week 8
T 3/6 Addonizio Chs. 18-19
R 3/8 Addonizio Chs. 20-21

March 12-16: Spring Break

Week 9
T 3/20 Poem 4 due
Addonizio Ch. 22
R 3/22 Addonizio Ch. 23

Week 10
T 3/27 Addonizio Chs. 24-25
R 3/29 Addonizio Ch. 26

Week 11
T 4/3 Poem 5 due
Addonizio Ch. 27-28
R 4/5 TBA

Week 12
T 4/10 Addonizio Ch. 29-30
R 4/12 Addonizio Chs. 32-33

Week 13
T 4/17 Poem 6 due
Addonizio Ch. 34
R 4/19 Addonizio Chs. 35-36

Week 14
T 4/24 Workshop
R 4/26 Portfolio and Reflective Essay due

Week 15
T 5/1 Addonizio Ch. 31
R 5/3 Evaluation and Review

Final Exam: Thursday, May 10, 8-10 a.m.