

Bergen Community College
School of English
Department of Composition and Literature

COURSE SYLLABUS

WRT 207: Creative Writing Workshop - Poetry
Day/time/Room: TBA

Course Description:

WRT-207 Creative Writing: Workshop in Poetry is a workshop course in which students write poetry using both lyric and narrative styles. The course will focus on a study of contemporary poetry, but students will also gain an understanding of traditional poetic forms such as the sonnet, villanelle, sestina, ode, and elegy. In addition to producing a portfolio of original poems, students will read and discuss each other's work as well as that of published authors.

The Prerequisite for this course is WRT 101: Composition I
WRT 207 is a 3 Credit Elective Course
WRT 207 is not a General Education Course

Student Learning Objectives:

As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, you will be able to:

1. Recognize the special genre demands of poetry by reading and discussing the work of published poets.
2. Utilize the elements of craft and style to write original poems.
3. Review publication conventions and apply standards of professional manuscript preparation in revising and preparing drafts of work for classroom submission or submission for publication.
4. Practice critical approaches and exercise aesthetic sensibilities through interaction with others in the workshop process.
5. Locate and evaluate important writer resources such as publications, markets, and continuing educational opportunities.

Course Requirements:

Students will be required to do the following:

1. Write and revise several works of poetry in various styles and forms. (Meets student learning objectives 1-3)
2. Practice poetic and narrative techniques through assigned exercises, which will be reviewed during the semester by both the instructor and peers.
(Meets student learning objectives 1, 2, 4)
3. Read, interpret, and analyze the craft of professional literary works and model student works.
(Meets student learning objectives 1, 4)

4. Comprehend and apply various literary terms/techniques in discussion of professional and student works.
(Meets student learning objectives 1, 4)
5. Present various works in workshop and participate in the discussion of other students' work.
(Meets student learning objective 1, 4)
6. Participate in discussions and other class activities (visits of guest speakers, practice readings, evaluation of writer resources, exercises) that support the development of quality work.
(Meets student learning objectives (1, 3, 4)
7. To review the conventions and apply standards of professional manuscript preparation.
(Meets student learning objective 5)

Course Content:

Students in this course can expect to explore their creativity by practicing the craft of writing lyric and narrative poetry. Many of students will have already done some creative writing, but whether a practiced writer, considering writing as a career, or someone trying creative writing for the first time, this course will give students the opportunity to work in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. As students read and discuss the work of professional writers, they will note poetic techniques and see how various elements combine to create strong and effective poems. Students will apply this knowledge in writing their own poems. Students will hone their critical skills and benefit from receiving "audience" reaction by participating in workshops with fellow students. By listening to, reading and discussing the works of others, each student will be exposed to the diverse voices and worlds of the other students.

Suggested Recommended Texts:

Strand, Mark and Eavan Boland. *The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms*. Norton (April 2001)
ISBN-10: 0393321789
ISBN-13: 978-0393321784

McClatchey, J. D. *The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Poetry*. Vintage (April 2003)
ISBN-13: 978-1-4000-3093-4

Suggested Supplemental Resources:

Behn and Twichell, **The Practice of Poetry**
Meyers and Wukash, **Dictionary of Poetic Terms**
www.poetryfoundation.org
www.poets.org
www.awpwriter.org
www.pw.org

Evaluation

Evaluation of student performance in WRT-207 is based on the Student Learning Objectives. Students will show their achievement of these objectives through the following:

Assignment Type	Recommended Percentage
Poetry Journal	20%
Writing Exercises	20%
Workshop	20%
Portfolio	40%

Recommended Grading Scale	
100-90	A
89-85	B+
84-80	B
79-75	C+
74-70	C
69-60	D
59 and below	F

Recommended Assignments

Poetry Journal:

For each week, students should read 5 poems from the *Vintage Book of Contemporary American Poetry* and write a brief discussion of the techniques each poet employs. Journals should focus critically on aspects of craft. For example, students may discuss how these 5 poets use sound, repetition, or rhythm in interesting ways. Journal posts should be around 200+ words.

Writing Exercises:

Throughout the course, students should complete a number of writing exercises, both in and out of class. These exercises are meant to help students focus on various elements of poetic craft and find sources of inspiration. Many of these exercises may evolve into poems, which may be submitted for workshop and the portfolio.

Workshop:

A large portion of this course involves participating in weekly workshops of student work. While workshop etiquette will be covered in class, basic involvement means:

- Posting work for other students to read and comment on.
- Constructively discussing the work of others by making at least one positive comment and one constructive comment.
- Returning written comments of work-shopped poems to the writer.

Students must participate in workshop discussions to receive full credit. Failure to produce original work when scheduled will result in a reduction of the overall workshop grade.

Portfolio:

At the end of the semester, students should submit a portfolio of original work. Complete portfolios will consist of:

- 4 Traditional Form Poems
- 4 Free Verse Poems
- 2-4 Additional Poems of any style
- Earlier Drafts of Revised Poems

- Writing Exercises

Late Work is not accepted in this course.

Attendance Policy

BCC Attendance Policy: “All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.”

Class Attendance Policy: Performance in this course is directly related to participation in Student Workshops. Each round of workshops will be graded on a 20 point scale, and will be averaged together at the end of the semester. Absence as a reader will result in a 5 point reduction for each day missed in that round. Absence as a writer will result in a 10 point reduction for that round of workshops.

This is the English Department notice about plagiarism; see p. 43 in BCC 2006-07 College Catalog for official policy on cheating and plagiarism.

A STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

In college, we read and critically explore ideas that represent the intellectual property of researchers and scholars. Just as stealing another’s property is wrong in everyday life, so also is the taking of someone’s intellectual property without giving the creator/author credit. Plagiarism is the presentation of others’ language, ideas and thoughts as if they were our own.

The Latin word *plagiarius* means “kidnapper.” Plagiarism is taking another’s intellectual property without the owner’s permission or without acknowledging the source. Whether the plagiarism occurs purposefully or carelessly, the offense is serious and carries severe academic penalties.

How Can Students Prevent Plagiarism?

Students must carefully use citations to credit:

- Ideas that are not common or general knowledge;
- Facts and statistics from published research;
- Graphs, charts, and diagrams from published research;
- The exact words of another in spoken or written form (quotations);
- Material published in books, magazines, encyclopedias or journals;
- Material from electronic on-line sources;
- Material written by other students or individuals;
- Material obtained from paper-writing “services.”

A Matter of Integrity

Personal integrity is at the heart of the issue. A blemish on one’s integrity has serious academic and career repercussions. Plagiarism destroys the essential trust between students and teachers.

A plagiarized paper calls into question all the work produced by a student. Just as academic achievement produces respect, plagiarism produces academic disgrace. Students would be wise to preserve the ethical integrity of their character through a conscientious avoidance of plagiarism.

(Prof. Charles Bordogna, Bergen Community College 12/20/2000)

In this class, the College policy on cheating and plagiarism as stated in the Bergen Community College Catalog will be followed. Plagiarism on any assignment will result in an F on assignment and a possible F in the course depending on the severity of the case.

Suggested Course Outline

Note: This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change. An individual workshop schedule will be created during the first few weeks of the course, and overall workshop dates listed below may be adjusted based on enrollment and need.

- Week 1: Introduction
Favorite Poem Discussion
- Week 2: Free Verse vs. Traditional Forms
Lyric Poems vs. Narrative Poems (McClatchey: selected poems)
Exercise 1: Thinking Lyrically
- Week 3: Basics of Poetry – Line, Meter, Stanza (Strand: 136-161)
The Sounds of Words: Alliteration, Assonance, Rhyme
(McClatchey: selected poems)
Exercise 2: Line Breaks
- Week 4: The Importance of Image and Image Patters (McClatchey: selected poems)
Exercise 3: The Natural World as Image
Workshop
- Week 5: Figures of Speech: Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Hyperbole
Exercise 4: Create an Image Pattern
Workshop
- Week 6: Voice and Tone (McClatchey: selected poems)
Exercise 5: Working with Metaphor
Workshop
- Week 7: Poetic Endings (McClatchey: selected poems)
Exercise 6: Creating sound patterns
Workshop
- Week 8: The Sonnet (Strand: 55-72)
Exercise 7: Art as Inspiration
Workshop
- Week 9: The Villanelle and The Pantoum (Strand: 5-20; 43-54)
Exercise 8: Repeating Oneself
Workshop
- Week 10: The Ballad and Blank Verse (Strand: 73-100; 101-120)
Exercise 9: Historic Allusions
Workshop
- Week 11: The Ode and The Elegy (Strand: 167-205; 240-258)

Exercise 10: Sincerity and Sentimentality
Workshop

Week 12 The Pastoral (Strand: 207-238)
Exercise 11: Free Association
Workshop

Week 13 Writing About Things That Matter: The Difficulty of Current Affairs
Exercise 12: Current Event
Workshop

Week 14 Discussion on Publication Markets
The Art of Submission

Week 15 Why Poetry Matters (Selected Poems)
Portfolios Due