

POETRY AND PERFORMANCE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

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Fall 2011
Creative Writing: Poetry
WF 2:00-3:30 and 3:30-5:00

So you've written the first draft of a poem that's promising enough to be a wonderful piece once it's developed some more. You've said what you wanted to say, you told the whole story, but the poem's not there yet?

This course will give first year students some things to consider when revising such as the speaker's intent, tone, physical, and psychological details—all of which will help your poems perform well on the page. Think of these as extra tools in the writer's tool belt that will make you a better-informed writer whose decisions on the page are conscious ones.

The prerequisites for this course are pen, paper, positive attitude, and the willingness to reexamine your work. Think of the workshop as an opportunity to "sharpen you blade," so to speak. In that context, your mind will be the blade this course hopes to sharpen during our time together.

There is no required textbook. I will supply the handouts of published poems by various poets. First year students will analyze these poems with those new tools. In class, first year students will discuss how tone, physical details, and psychological details affect the speaker's intent (do they intensify or take away from the speaker's intent). In class, first years will also write poems based on the prompts provided. These drafts will be collected in each student's portfolio that will be presented for a mid-term grade.

In addition to utilizing the "new tools," there will be a unit on publishing. I will provide you with online resources to help inform you on the poet's market. In following Duke Ellington's theme on reinvention, first year students will operate like 21st century writers. Today's writers are utilizing online resources such as Duotrope and Newpages to learn the publishing market. First years will learn it, too. We will discuss the advantages of publishing poems online vs. in print publications. You will use one of these resources to locate at least three journals--either online or print--that you enjoy reading. We will discuss query letters and you will start submitting your work to your favorite journals. The goal of the program is to not only create better writers but to also make sure first year students are publishing writers, who send their work out to publications and build a national audience for their work.

If you're panicked by the task, please don't be. I will guide you through the process by providing class time to prepare cover letters, pick poems, and email or postal mail submissions. Prior to sending off your submission, your chosen poems will be workshopped in class with your peers to help tighten those poems before they go off to be considered by various publications.

GRADING: The portfolio is worth 25%, participation 25%, revisions 25%, and submission to journals 25%.

WORKSHOP: I will provide copies of handouts on workshop etiquette.

PORTFOLIO: For your mid-term grade, you will submit the poems produced through in-class writing prompts. This will give you a chance to not only revise and use what you've learned this semester, but to also view every poem as a draft. Poems are never finished since the writer can always go back to them and add or take away. Be sure to include copies of workshopped poems.



LMC Code of Conduct Policy

In the Literary Media & Communications Department we believe in holding our students to a very high standard of conduct. It is our belief that an early understanding of how you are expected to carry yourself in the working world will instill a valuable set of tools; soft skills that will serve you well for years to come.

In light of this we have created a simple code of conduct and grievance procedure that will enable both faculty and students alike to maintain a professional learning environment.

We expect students, faculty and guests:

- To be respectful of one another, and to carry themselves with both intelligence and humility.

We expect students:

- To dress appropriately.
- To hand in completed assignments on time. Late and incomplete work is unacceptable.
- Absence and tardiness will not be tolerated.
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
- Poor participation will not be tolerated.
- To respect the individual classroom rules of all teachers, both arts and academics (For example, no food and drink around the computer equipment in the lab).

Students who fail to comply with the above will be subject to a penalty scoring system:

Five-Point Penalty System

There will be two soft warning before a student accumulates their first penalty point.

1pt: Mediation and possible detention.

2pts: Parent contacted.

3pts: Parent/Teacher conference with Chair.

4pts: Student placed on probation list, consultation with Father Payne.

5pts: Student is placed on Transfer list.



LMC Grievance Procedure

We believe that students are entitled to a voice and want to give them that space to air any concerns they might have. However we believe it's important that students express their grievances in the correct manner, to ensure that there is no conflict and that their complaints are both heard and handled appropriately.

We believe that this formal procedure will help create a healthy environment in which to learn, as well as eliminate any potential conflict and miscommunication.

Complaint with Member of Staff

If a student believes they have a concern or complaint with a member of staff, we ask that students not confront that person but rather, in the first instance, seek out another member of staff in the department. That member of staff will act as a mediator to resolve any dispute.

If they feel as if their grievance has not been resolved at that first stage, students have the recourse to then put their complaint into writing and discuss the issue with the department Chair.

We do believe we can resolve most disputes internally in a professional manner and will work hard to achieve this, however if students still feel as if the matter has not been tackled to their satisfaction, it is within their right to:

- Request a parent / teacher conference with Chair present
- Put their concerns into writing to the Dean of Arts / Dean of Students
- Put their concerns into writing to the Principal.

Complaint with Fellow Student

If a student believes they have a concern or complaint with a fellow student, again, we ask that you do not confront that student. You should seek out a member of staff who will in the first instance attempt to mediate on your behalf. If the complaint cannot be resolved at this stage, students have the right to follow the same steps they would take with a staff grievance.

SCHEDULE:

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| 9/2 – 9/16 | | Writing exercise and discussion on craft. |
| 9/21 | W | Unit on tone, pass out copies of “tone” handouts, go over possibilities of tone in literature, read poem on handout, discuss “tone” and how it affects speaker’s intent. |
| 9/23 | F | Unit on tone, continued. |
| 9/28 | W | |