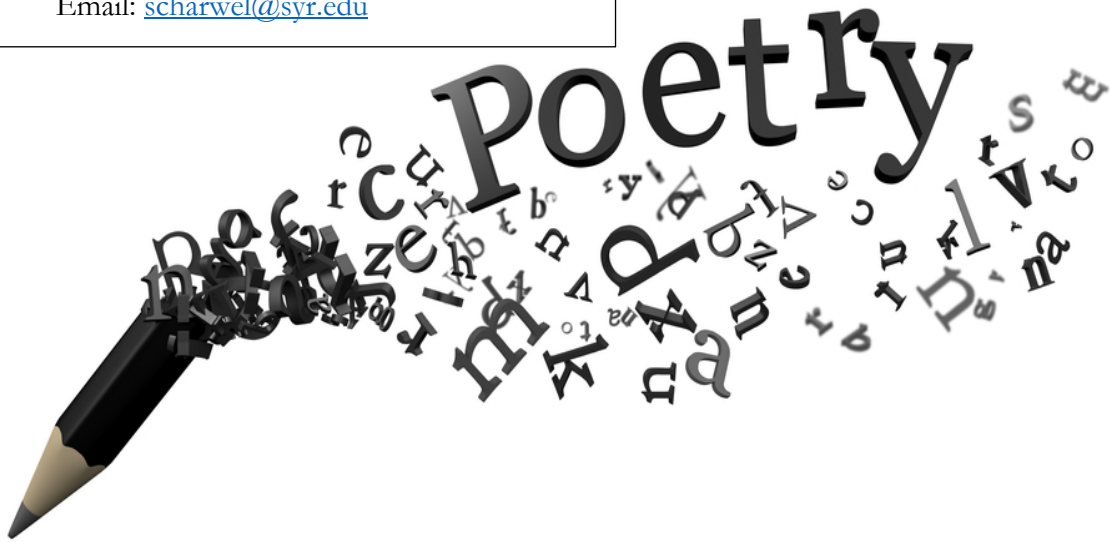


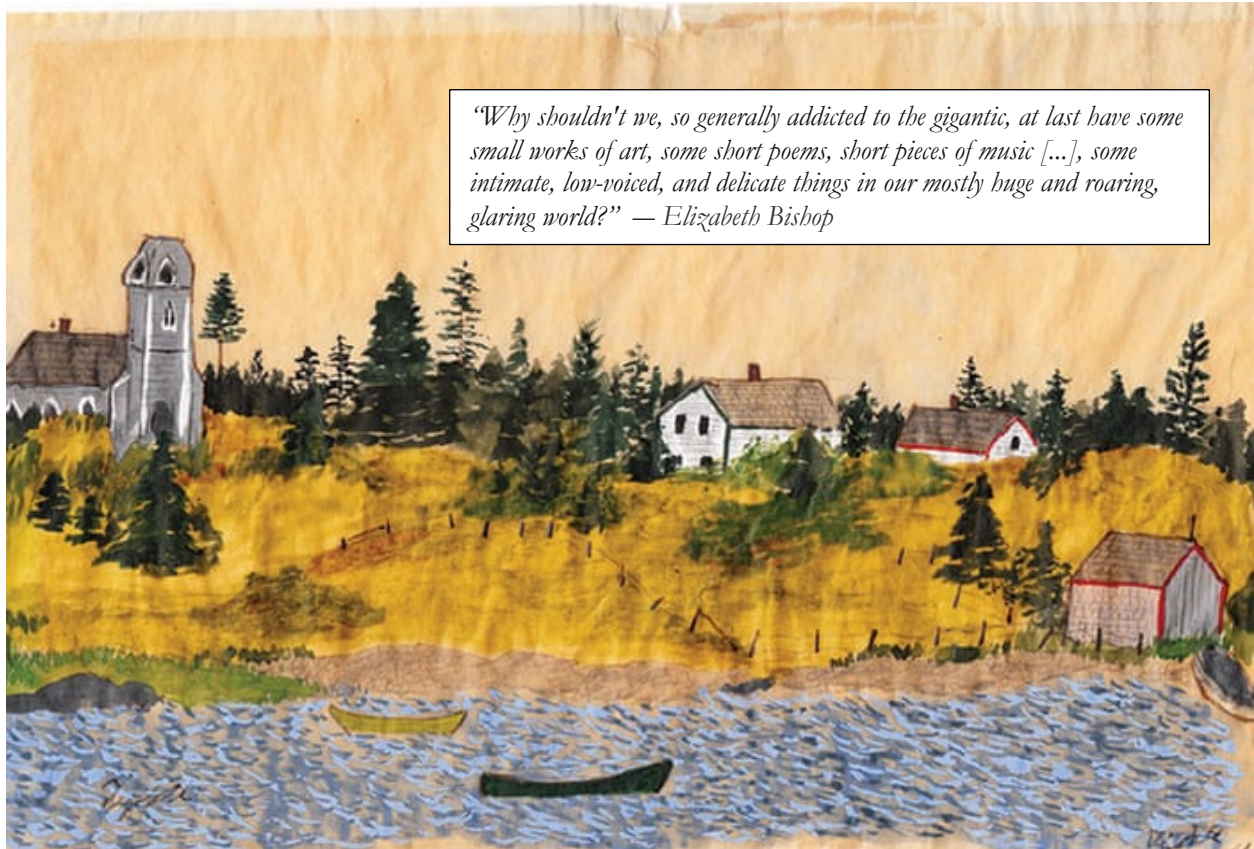
ENG 304:
Reading and Writing Poetry
Spring 2024

T,Th 9:30-10:50
Hall of Languages, Room 111

Professor: Sarah Coleman Harwell
Office: HL 420a
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00-1:00 in office (or zoom).
Also by appointment.
315-558-8327
Email: scharwel@syr.edu

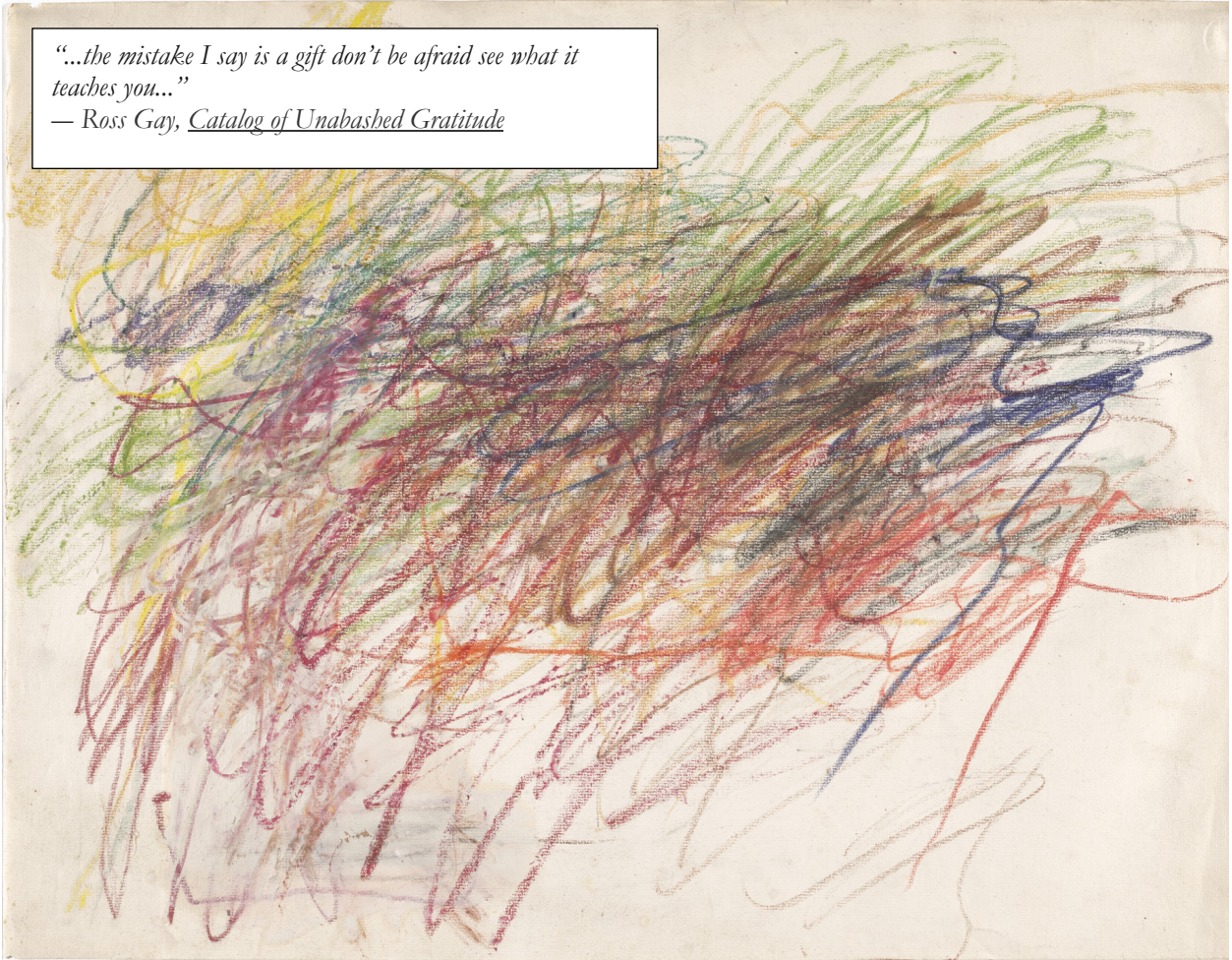


"Why shouldn't we, so generally addicted to the gigantic, at last have some small works of art, some short poems, short pieces of music [...], some intimate, low-voiced, and delicate things in our mostly huge and roaring, glaring world?" — Elizabeth Bishop



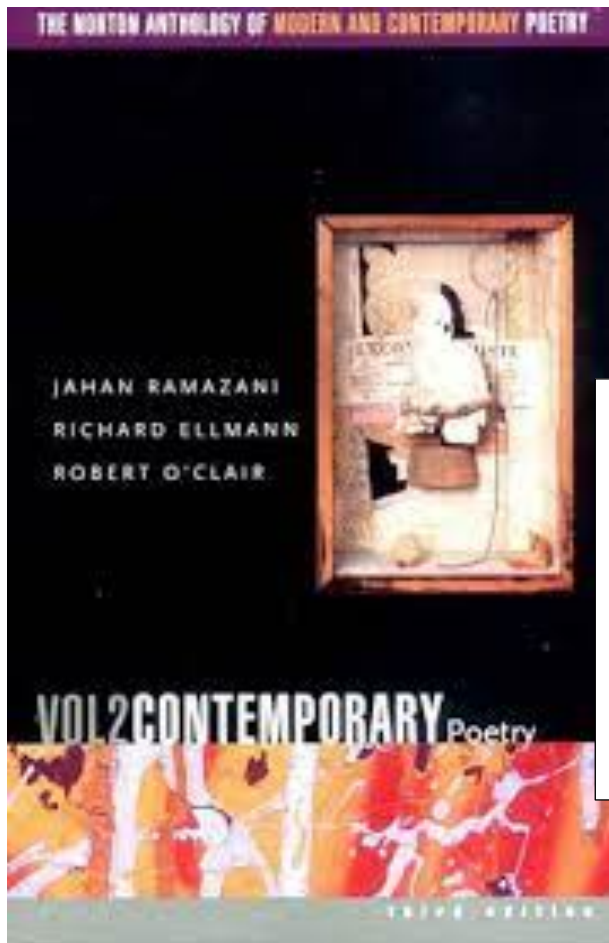
“...the mistake I say is a gift don't be afraid see what it teaches you...”

— Ross Gay, *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*



Class Description

T. S. Eliot said that minor poets borrow while great poets steal. From classical antiquity to the present, poets have always learned their trade by imitating other poets. They have pursued their individual talent by absorbing, assimilating and in some cases subverting the lessons of the traditions they inherit. In this class, we will read and imitate six poets: Elizabeth Bishop, Frank O'Hara, Gwendolyn Brooks, Seamus Heaney, Sylvia Plath and Ross Gay. We'll examine each poet closely, sympathetically, and predatorily. That is, we'll read like aspiring writers, looking for what we can steal. We'll attend to each poet's stylistic and formal idiosyncrasies, their techniques and habits, and then use those techniques to write our own poems of great beauty and skill.



Required Texts: The Norton Anthology of Contemporary Poetry; 3rd edition; 0-393-97792-7; eds. Ramazani, Ellman, O'Clair

Many of the poems can also be found on the web.

These sites are particularly helpful:

Poetry Foundation website

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/>

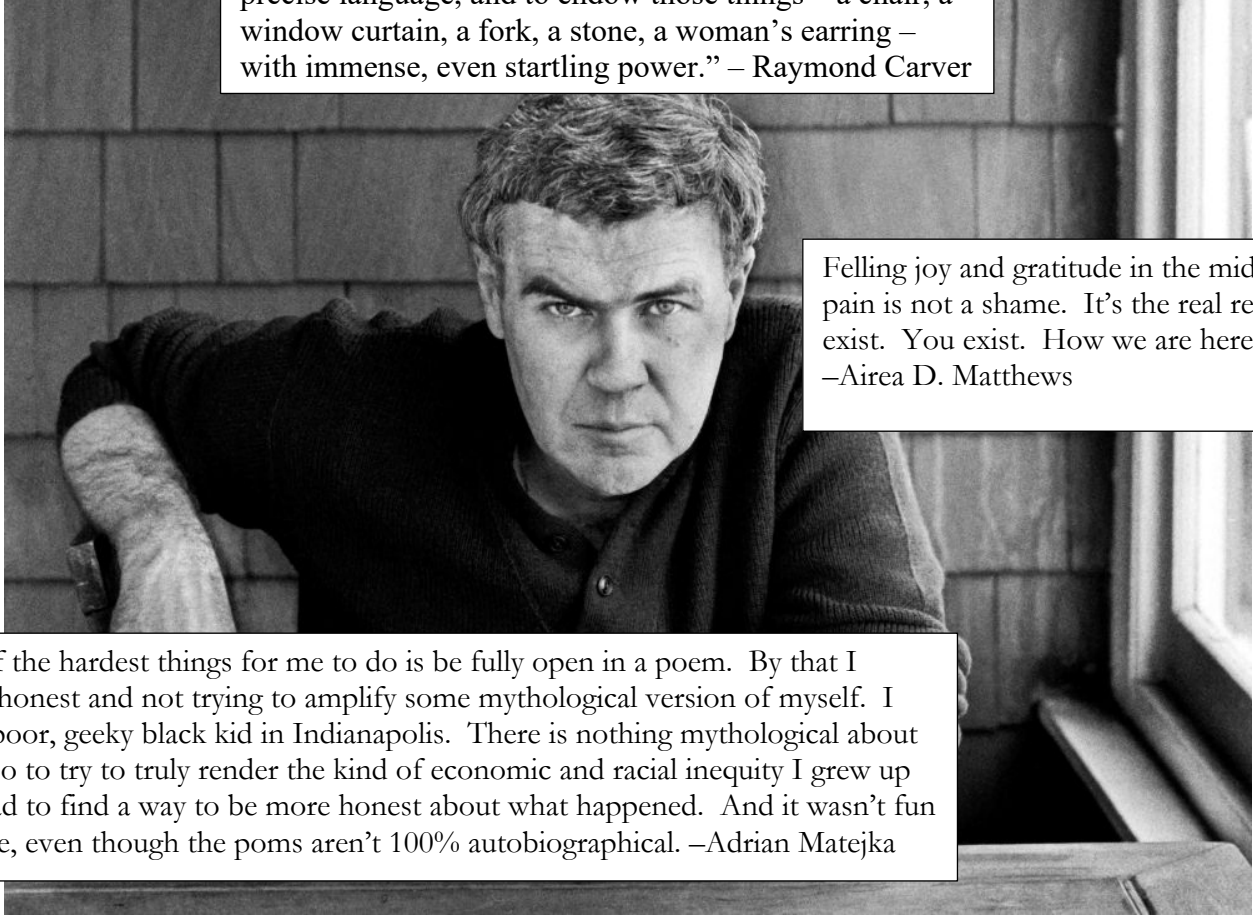
and

Academy of American Poets <https://poets.org/poems>



"I can't think of a case where poems changed the world, but what they do is they change people's understanding of what's going on in the world." — Seamus Heaney

“It’s possible, in a poem or short story, to write about commonplace things and objects using commonplace but precise language, and to endow those things – a chair, a window curtain, a fork, a stone, a woman’s earring – with immense, even startling power.” – Raymond Carver



Felling joy and gratitude in the midst of pain is not a shame. It’s the real reason I exist. You exist. How we are here at all.
–Airea D. Matthews

One of the hardest things for me to do is be fully open in a poem. By that I mean, honest and not trying to amplify some mythological version of myself. I was a poor, geeky black kid in Indianapolis. There is nothing mythological about that. So to try to truly render the kind of economic and racial inequity I grew up in, I had to find a way to be more honest about what happened. And it wasn’t fun to write, even though the poms aren’t 100% autobiographical. –Adrian Matejka

Raymond Carver Reading Series

Excellent reading series with contemporary poets, nonfiction, and fiction writers.

<https://thecollege.syr.edu/english-department/creative-writing-mf-program/raymond-carver-reading-series/>

All readings begin at 5:00 p.m. and are preceded by a question-and-answer session that begins at 4:00 p.m. They are open to the public and take place in Gifford Auditorium, HBC

Schedule:

W 1/31 – Reading 1 – *Airea D. Matthews: Poet*

W 2/14 – Reading 2 – *Anelise Chen: Fiction, Leonard and Elise Elman*

Visiting Writer

W 2/28 – Reading 3 – *Adrian Matejka, Poet*

W 3/30 – Reading 4 – *Monica Brashears: Fiction*

W 4/3 – Reading 5 – *Gina Gail Nutt: Non-Fiction*

W 4/24 – Reading 6 – *Hernan Diaz: Fiction, The Jane and Daniel Present*

Lecturer

OH, HOW HARD CAN THIS BE???



Technology

Due to previous problematic addictive behaviors no laptops or cellphones are to be used during class unless you have a special accommodation. In other words, the cute \$300 boots should be bought AFTER class. Not during. Besides, it's very bad for your posture.



Learning Outcomes:

- Students will show the ability to read closely and analyze texts across historical periods and in various genres.
- Student will be able to recognize and express the aesthetic qualities of literature and a knowledge of literary forms.
- Students will be able to recognize and produce good writing and explain what literary aspects make it good.
- Students will improve their own work through self-conscious and analytical processes.
- They will be able to discuss peer work and other written texts in a thoughtful and constructive manner.



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY SHARED COMPETENCY

Critical and Creative Thinking: Exploration and synthesis of ideas, artifacts, issues, and events to inform and evaluate arguments, develop new insights, and produce creative work. Reflection on, and application of divergent modes of inquiry, analysis, and innovation to research, knowledge, and artistic creation.

This course is designed to help you stretch as a poet, to think about ways you can intelligently and excellently read and write poetry. That is, by analyzing the tools and strategies of a variety of diverse poets you will begin to think more creatively about your own poems, to go beyond your habits and your defaults, to write poems with a deeper keel, poems that are more moving and beautiful and true.

REQUIREMENTS



Requirements:

1. **Class attendance and participation, including pop quizzes.** This class is dependent on your participation. I expect all students to come prepared, participate fully in the discussions, and engage with the topics at hand. To engage fully you must do the readings. We will have pop quizzes on the reading that will count toward your participation grade. You will each be allowed two absences, after which your final grade will be affected: $\frac{1}{2}$ grade off for each additional absence. Excessive absences (5 or more) will result in failure of the class. 20%
2. **Responses/Critiques:** Everyone will be required to write responses discussing techniques the student author is using (or not using), as well as an evaluation of the poem on its own merits. You will turn in this response on Blackboard. This response should be 125-150 words long. You will also be graded on your participation during the workshops, which means you are expected to express an understanding of the craft elements the student is using as well as an appreciation of the poem, insights, helpful comments, constructive criticism, etc. 20%
3. **Poems, Writing Exercises:** You will submit 6 poems throughout the semester, using techniques from the poets we have studied. Occasionally you will be asked to do writing exercises, some of which might be collected. 40 %
4. ***Final Paper:** A 6-8 page paper that includes an analysis of one of the poets you imitated as well as a consideration of the craft and creative decisions that went into your poem. In addition to an analysis of the assigned poems we talked about in class you should also include **two additional poems** (not analyzed in class) by the author you have chosen to write about. 6-8 pages. 12 pt, Times New Roman font, standard margins. Due May 2. 20% See below for further instructions.

*Final Paper: Analysis of Poems, Theirs and Yours

Paper. Due May 2, 2024. A 6-8 page paper divided into two parts. The first part will analyze one of the poets you used as your influence. This must include, in addition to referencing the poems we read in class, analysis of two additional poems (not analyzed in class) by the same author. The paper is to be double-spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman. It is not necessary to use any sources. Do NOT include biographical information. This is an analytical paper where you look at various **craft issues** in the author's work—e.g. image, metaphor, rhythm, lyric, narrative, stanzas, diction, rhyme, anaphora, other kinds of repetition, etc. Remember to use the poems as proof of your analysis! You will analyze one of the authors you imitated in terms of technique (e.g. imagery, sound, line, etc.) and then apply that analysis to the poem you wrote. How did the poet write an effective poem? The second half of the paper is where you should discuss your own poem (the one connected to the author you just analyzed)—the craft and creative decisions that went into the writing of your poem and how you utilized techniques from the author. Do not spend time telling me how good/bad you are. Analyze the decisions you made, the effect on the poem, and what you learned from using those techniques. You are welcome to tell me what you thought worked and didn't work. Here are some questions to help you get started: What techniques did the poet use and to what end? Which techniques did you use in your own poem? How was it different than the author you studied? Was your poem effective in creating meaning and emotion and beauty? What about their poems?

Pro tip: Don't start out your paper with filler. That is, don't say things like "Frank O'Hara was considered one of the best poets of his time." Blah blah blah. This kind of "I have to get to 6 pages oh my god how I am going to do that I know I will steal from the internet and make broad statements I can't support" weakens your paper and bores your poor teacher. I am interested in your ANALYSIS, not what you can glean from Wikipedia. I am capable of reading Wikipedia on my own time. Here's is an example of what not to do: <https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/a-generic-college-paper>

Why am I making you do this?

This paper is designed to help you solidify skills we've been developing during class. We've spent the entire semester looking at poems with an eye to making our own writing more effective. This paper gives you a chance to use your new skills and think more deeply about a single poet and your own poem. You will analyze your poem with the same cool, precise eye that you use when looking at an established author's work.

During this process you will think about the aesthetic qualities of the poems (LO #2), what literary techniques and forms help create an effective and moving poem (LO #3) and begin to understand that, to improve your own work, you need to understand your creative work both analytically and self-consciously (LO #3).

This paper will also fulfill the **Critical and Creative Thinking shared competency** as it explores and synthesizes the idea that poetry is made up of ideas and techniques and that understanding can produce a more insightful and compelling poem.

What will you learn from doing this?

Poets have always learned their trade by imitating other poets. In this assignment you will gain a better understanding of the poetic tradition in order to learn to write a more compelling poem. You will learn what it means to do a close reading and you will learn rhetorical strategies to write effectively.

This will help you not just to write good poems, but give you skills that are transferable to any field that uses language to convince, to move, to argue, to inform or to give pleasure, including, but not limited to, advertising, film, lawyering, novelists, technical writing, speech writing, journalism, getting out of a speeding ticket, etc.

Instructions:

1. Pick one of the six poets we studied in class.
2. Analyze the author's poetic techniques using poems that we discussed in class and at least two additional poems we did not discuss.
3. Analyze your own poem produced in response to that author in terms of his or her techniques and any other poetic effects. How effective was your deployment of these techniques? Did they work how you wanted them to work? Does the feedback from your classmates and teacher align with your own understanding of what you were trying to accomplish?

How to do well:

The best papers are cleanly written (please proofread—even better, read it out loud before you turn it in), and follow the instructions. “A” papers eschew filler like biographical information of the poet and provide a comprehensive and intelligent analysis of the poems using the text of the poem to elucidate your argument.

Breakdown:

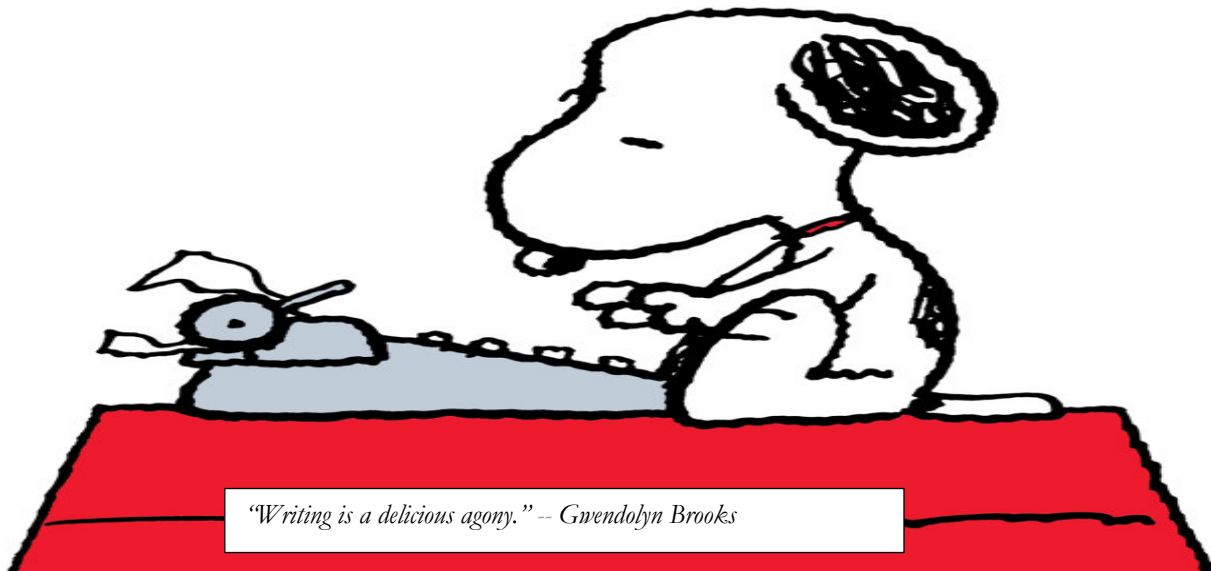
Analysis of published poet (including one poem not discussed in class): 40%

Analysis of student poem in relation to published poet: 30%

Analysis of student poem in relation to feedback from students and teacher: 10%

Grammar, syntax, spelling, etc.: 20%





Grading

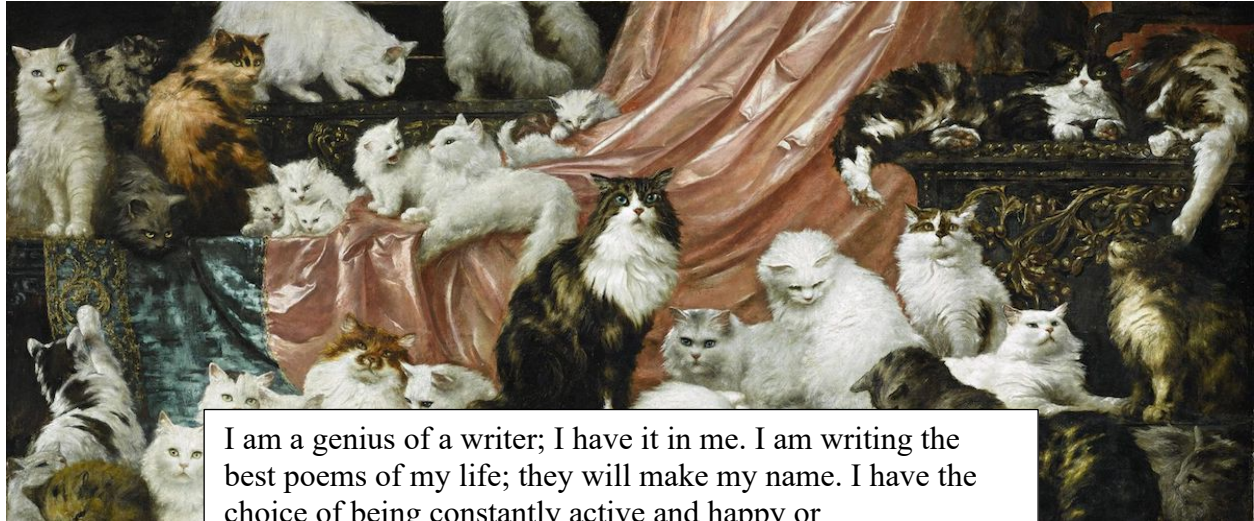
A: is a high honors grade, reserved for truly exceptional work. A and A- students actually exceed expectations; at minimum, they do all course work to the utmost, are always prepared for workshop with careful critiques, prepare notes on the readings in advance, contribute regularly and meaningfully to in-class discussions; excel on writing projects.

B±: is also considered an honors grade, reserved for students who perform the work to their utmost ability, are always prepared to contribute meaningfully to class discussions and critiques, who hand in all work on time.

B: means that the student is doing consistently good work, but perhaps there are a couple of absences, or some missing work, or perhaps the student is periodically inattentive to the assignments and guidelines, seems unprepared in a few classes, or does not fully contribute with reliable consistency.

B-minus and C±: means that the student is probably turning in work that is satisfactory, but not excellent. The student is perhaps coming to class under-prepared, is missing assignments, missing too many classes, or is not contributing to class discussions or critiques.

C to D range: Missing work, too many absences, failure to contribute to class discussions or critiques, turns in late or rushed work

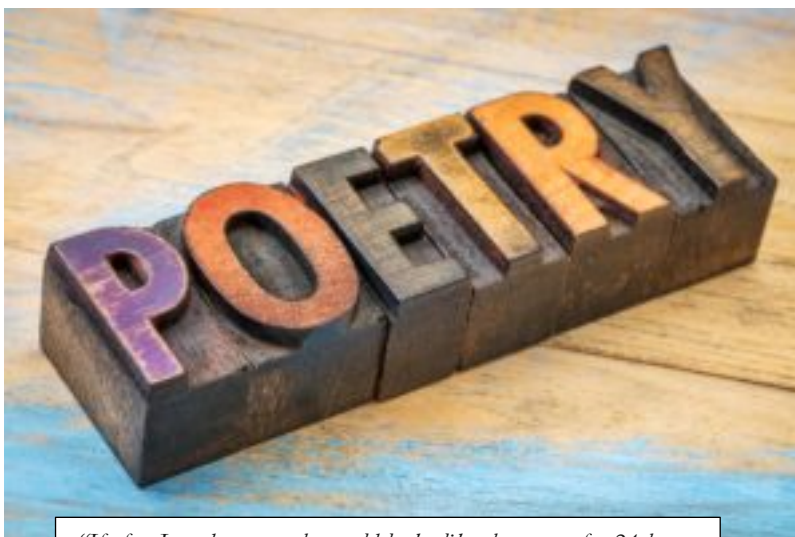


I am a genius of a writer; I have it in me. I am writing the best poems of my life; they will make my name. I have the choice of being constantly active and happy or introspectively passive and sad. Poetry at its best can do you a lot of harm.—Sylvia Plath

Schedule:

Date of class	Theme	
January 16, 18	Introduction/Description /Vocabulary/Exercises Elizabeth Bishop	
January 23, 25	Reading and Discussion	Elizabeth Bishop Note: Bishop poems due Saturday, January 27 by midnight
Jan 30, February 1	Creative Work	Discussion of Imitations Responses due by Sunday Feb 4
February 6, 8	Reading and Discussion	Gwendolyn Brooks Note: Brooks poems due Saturday, Feb 10 by midnight
February 13,15	Creative Work	Discussion of Imitations Responses due by Sunday Feb 18
February 20, 22	Reading and Discussion	Frank O'Hara Note: O'Hara poems due Saturday, Feb 24 by midnight
February 27, 29	Creative Work	Discussion of Imitations Responses due by Sunday, Mar 3

March 5, 7	Reading and Discussion	Seamus Heaney Note: Heaney poems due Saturday Mar 16
March 12, 14	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
March 19, 21	Creative Work	Discussion of Imitations Responses due by Sunday, March 24
March 26, 28	Reading and Discussion	Ross Gay Note: Gay poems due Saturday Mar 30
April 2,4	Creative Work	Discussion of Imitations Responses due by Sunday, April 7
April 9,11	Reading and Discussion Note: Class cancelled April 11	Sylvia Plath
April 16,18	Reading and Discussion	Sylvia Plath Note: Plath poems due Saturday April 20
April 23,25	Creative Work	Discussion of Imitations Responses due by Sunday April 28
May 2		Final Papers Due



"If after I read a poem the world looks like that poem for 24 hours or so I'm sure it's a good one—and the same goes for paintings. "
— Elizabeth Bishop

I don't ... like rhythm, assonance, all that stuff. You just go on your nerve. If someone's chasing you down the street with a knife you just run, you don't turn around and shout, 'Give it up! I was a track star for Mineola Prep.'—Frank O'Hara



Important Syllabus Reminders

ACADEMIC DROP DEADLINE

As part of our efforts to track satisfactory academic progress, the Academic Drop Deadline and the Financial Drop deadline will both occur on February 6, 2024, for the spring semester. Students may still withdraw from courses after these deadlines; this would place a 'WD' grade on their transcripts. Students enrolled in "flex" classes (Flexibly formatted classes) have different deadlines and will need to check MySlice for the academic drop deadline that pertains to their class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY and ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Statement on Academic Integrity

Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit and for upholding course-specific, as well as university-wide, academic integrity expectations. The policy governs citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and truthfulness in all academic matters, including course attendance and participation. The policy states that any work a student submits for a course must be solely their own unless the instructor explicitly allows collaboration or editing. The policy also requires students to acknowledge their use of other peoples' language, images or other original creative or scholarly work through appropriate citation. These expectations extend to the new, fast-growing realm of artificial intelligence (AI) as well as to the use of websites that charge fees or require uploading of course materials to obtain exam solutions or assignments. Students are required to ask their instructor whether use of these tools is permitted – and if so, to what extent – before using them to complete any assignment or exam. Students are also required to seek advance permission from instructors if they wish to submit the same work in more than one course. Failure to receive this permission in advance may violate the Academic Integrity Policy.

Under the policy, instructors who seek to penalize a student for a suspected violation must first report the violation to the Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS). Students may not drop or withdraw from courses in which they face a suspected violation. Instructors must wait to assign a final course grade until a suspected violation is reviewed and upheld or overturned. Upholding Academic Integrity includes abiding by instructors' individual course expectations, which may include the protection of their intellectual property. Students should not upload, distribute, or otherwise share instructors' course materials without permission. Students found in violation of the policy are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered, as outlined in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. Students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice.

Using artificial intelligence to complete any assignments and exams is prohibited because developing your own voice as a writer is a key goal of this course. AI detection tools including Turnitin's built-in AI writing indicator, may be used as one factor in evaluating potential inappropriate use of AI in this course.

All academic integrity expectations that apply to in-person quizzes and exams also apply to online quizzes and exams. In this course, all work submitted for quizzes and exams must be yours alone. Discussing quiz or exam questions with anyone during the quiz or exam period violates academic integrity expectations for this course.

Using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course material (e.g., Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as

your own violates academic integrity expectations in this course and may be classified as a Level 3 violation, resulting in suspension or expulsion from Syracuse University.

The Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric establishes recommended guidelines for the determination of grade penalties by faculty and instructors, while also giving them discretion to select the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level. **Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.**

Plagiarism is a serious offense that leads to failure of the assignment and other further disciplinary action, including automatic course failure. Plagiarism is using other people's or machine/AI-generated words and ideas and presenting them as one's own, whether the material is taken from a book, a friend, an app, a writing tool, or the internet; it is any work that repeats verbatim or rephrases someone else's ideas or arguments without acknowledging the source. Cite all reading and research sources with footnotes or endnotes in your paper. If you have questions or problems regarding your papers, please come see me during office hours or make an appointment. Keep a hard copy of all of your assignments and research notes until the final grade is posted. All papers in this course will be submitted to the Turnitin anti-plagiarism program.

Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty:

Other violations of academic honesty include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Handing in to a class written assignments including papers and Blackboard posts written wholly or partially by someone else or by something else including AI, paraphrasing software or websites such as Quillbot or Grammarly, or similar writing tools.
- Handing in as an original work for a class a paper one has already submitted to another course.
- Handing in the same paper simultaneously to two courses without the full knowledge and explicit consent of all the faculty members involved.
- Having someone else rewrite or clean up a rough draft and submitting those revisions as one's own work.

For more information, see:

The Academic Integrity Policy: <https://class.syr.edu/academic-integrity/policy/>

ATTENDANCE POLICY (including Absence Notification)

Attendance in classes is expected in all courses at Syracuse University. It is a federal requirement that faculty promptly notify the university of students who do not attend or cease to attend any class. Faculty will use Early-Semester Progress Reports and Mid-Semester Progress Reports in Orange SUccess to alert the Registrar and Financial Aid Office on non-attendance. For more information visit:

Faculty: [Information for Faculty: Non-attendance or Stopped Attending](#)

Students: [Information for Students: Non-attendance or Stopped Attending](#)

If a student is unable to participate in-person or virtually for an extended period of time (48 hours or more), the student may request an absence notification from their home school/college Dean's Office or through Student Outreach and Retention (SOaR) office. Instructors will be notified via the "Absence Notification" flag in Orange SSuccess.

Barnes Center at the Arch (Health, Counseling, etc.) staff will not provide medical excuse notes for students. When Barnes Center staff determine it is medically necessary to remove a student from classes, they will coordinate with SOaR case management staff to provide appropriate notification to faculty through Orange Success. For absences lasting less than 48 hours, students are encouraged to discuss academic arrangements directly with their faculty.

Additional information may be found at [Student Outreach and Retention: Absence Notifications](#)

BLACKBOARD LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

This class will use the Blackboard Learning Management to house the syllabus, course content, links to external course materials, assignments, quizzes, exams, feedback, and grades. Note when submitting materials that the University's Blackboard Learning Management System is on Eastern Time.

Information about Blackboard is available on [Answers Blackboard](#); alternatively, you can contact Information Technology Services by sending an email to help@syr.edu, calling 315.443.2677, or in-person at the ITS Service Center, located at 1-227 CST in the Life Sciences Complex. Business hours for the Service Center can be found on the ITS Website at http://its.syr.edu/its_service_center/

DISABILITY SYLLABUS STATEMENT

Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to contact me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process.

If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit [Center for Disability Resources](#). Please call (315) 443-4498 or email disabilityresources@syr.edu for more detailed information.

The CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process.

DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

The University does not discriminate and prohibits harassment or discrimination related to any protected category including creed, ethnicity, citizenship, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, gender, pregnancy, disability, marital status, age, race, color, veteran status, military status, religion, sexual orientation, domestic violence status, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender..

Federal and state law, and University policy prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sex or gender (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If a student has been harassed or assaulted, they can obtain confidential counseling support, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, from the [Sexual and Relationship Violence Response Team](#) at the Counseling Center (315-443-8000, Barnes Center at The Arch, 150 Sims Drive, Syracuse, New York 13244). Incidents of sexual violence or harassment can be reported non-confidentially to the University's Title IX Officer (Sheila Johnson Willis, 315-443-0211, titleix@syr.edu, 005 Steele Hall). Reports to law enforcement can be made to the University's Department of Public Safety (315-443-2224, 005 Sims Hall), the Syracuse Police Department (511 South State Street, Syracuse, New York, 911 in case of emergency or 315-435-3016 to speak with the Abused Persons Unit), or the State Police (844-845-7269). I will seek to keep information you share with me private to the greatest extent possible, but as a professor I have mandatory reporting responsibilities to share information regarding sexual misconduct, harassment, and crimes I learn about with the University's Title IX Officer to help make our campus a safer place for all.

FAITH TRADITION OBSERVANCES

[Syracuse University's Religious Observances Policy](#) recognizes the diversity of faiths represented in the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their traditions. Under the policy, students are given an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance, provided they notify their instructors no later than the academic drop deadline. For observances occurring before the drop deadline, notification is required at least two academic days in advance. Students may enter their observances in MySlice under Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances/Add a Notification.

HEALTH & WELLNESS CONSIDERATIONS

Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. As such it is essential that during your college experience you develop the skills and resources effectively to navigate stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns. Please familiarize yourself with the range of resources the Barnes Center provides (<https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/>) and seek out support for mental health concerns as needed. Counseling services are available 24/7, 365 days, at 315-443-8000, and I encourage you to explore the resources available through the Wellness Leadership Institute, <https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/wellness-leadership-institute/>

ORANGE ALERT

In the event of an emergency, please use one of the following numbers to reach us:

From any phone: 315.443.2222
From your cell phone: #78 (#SU)
Campus landline: 711

For more information on ORANGE ALERT, including how to update your contact information, visit the [DPS website](#)

TRIGGER WARNING

Because of the nature of the topics covered in this class, the course readings or class discussions may generate intellectual and emotional discomfort. These responses are natural parts of intellectual growth. If, however, your emotional response becomes acute psychological distress (triggering), please communicate with me. I invite you to contact me if you have concerns in this regard.

Introduction to Poetry -Billy Collins

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem's room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to water-ski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.

