

SPRING 2003: CRW 3310, Section 0326: POETRY WRITING

UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA

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COURSE OUTLINE

In this course we will attempt to become better writers and readers of poetry. Writing poetry entails reading poetry; thus reading and responding to readings will be an integral part of the course. No one who doesn't read poetry can write poetry he or she can expect anyone to read. If you don't wish to read poetry as well as write it, this is not the class for you. Central to the course will be the idea that writing is a craft and an art whose fundamentals can be learned and which can be judged according to the criteria of the art. That is, poetry is not "whatever you feel like."

There will be a poem due every week; writing is a continuous activity, and there is no room for "writer's block" in this class. Approximately half the poems will be assignments based on the required texts. I have selected books by contemporary poets that will expose students to poetic possibilities they may not have encountered before, books that may expand students' ideas of what can be done in poems. I don't hold up the readings as models of what poetry "should" be, nor do I say any of them is perfect; all of them have both virtues and flaws. In your response poems, you should look at the assigned books as tool boxes through which you can rummage for techniques: rhythms, syntactical patterns, metaphors, images, etc., that you can use in your own poems. Often the readings will focus on some specific aspect of writing: imagery, syntax, etc. I will talk about each book and some things you should look for the week before every assignment is due.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Lucie Brock-Broido, *The Master Letters*, Knopf

Jocelyn Emerson, *Sea Gate*, Alice James Books

Jorie Graham, *The Dream of the Unified Field*, Ecco Press

Linda Gregg, *Too Bright to See and Alma*, Graywolf Press

Amy Newman, *Camera Lyrica*, Alice James Books

Adrienne Rich, *The Dream of a Common Language*, W.W. Norton

Karen Volkman, *Spar*, University of Iowa Press

CLASS SCHEDULE

1/6: Introduction

1/8 Hand in and discuss free poems #1

1/13: NO CLASS: I will be out of town doing a reading

1/15: Discuss free poems #1

Hand in Linda Gregg response poems

1/20: NO CLASS: Martin Luther King Day

1/22: Discuss Linda Gregg response poems (*Too Bright to See*, pp. 1-63)

Hand in free poems #2

1/27: Discuss Linda Gregg response poems

1/29: Discuss free poems #2

Hand in Adrienne Rich response poems

2/3: Discuss free poems #2

2/5: Discuss Adrienne Rich response poems

Hand in Amy Newman response poems

2/10: Discuss Adrienne Rich response poems

2/12: Discuss Amy Newman response poems

Hand in Jocelyn Emerson response poems

2/17: Discuss Amy Newman response poems

2/19: Discuss Jocelyn Emerson response poems

Hand in free poems #3

2/24: Discuss Jocelyn Emerson response poems

2/26: Discuss free poems #3

Hand in Jorie Graham response poems (pages to be assigned)

3/3: Discuss free poems #3

3/5: Discuss Jorie Graham response poems

Hand in free poems #4

3/10: NO CLASS: Spring Break

3/12: NO CLASS: Spring Break

3/17: Discuss Jorie Graham response poems

3/19: Discuss free poems #4

Hand in Karen Volkman response poems

3/24: Discuss free poems #4

3/26: Discuss Karen Volkman response poems

Hand in free poems #5

3/31: Discuss Karen Volkman response poems

4/2: Discuss free poems #5

Hand in Lucie Brock-Broido response poems

4/7: Discuss free poems #5

4/9: Discuss Lucie Brock-Broido response poems

Hand in free poems #6

4/14: Discuss Lucie Brock-Broido response poems

4/16: Discuss free poems #6