

**Revised [25 January 2023] Syllabus: English 3321:001 Creative Writing: Poetry Spring Semester 2023  
Wed. evening 6:00-8:50 p.m.**

**Instructor: Dr. Nelson Sager Office: MAB 112D Office Hours: Tues., Wed., 9-11 others by appt.**

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**OBJECTIVES:** (1) to familiarize students with the terms, forms, and techniques of writing poetry; (2) to help students develop personal writing processes (stimulus, production, revision) for creating their own poetry; (3) to help students produce a portfolio of poetry they have created; (4) to guide students in producing a selection of poems to be submitted for publication (5) to give students the opportunity to present their poetry orally in a formal reading.

### **GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

[1] Attendance and Participation: Counting the night of the final, there are seventeen (17) meetings of this class; each one is worth two points in the compilation of your grade in the course. The minimal criteria of attendance is actual appearance in the classroom or virtual presence for the entire class; plus participation in discussion, exercises, work-shopping, or whatever comprises the activities for the class meeting. Just showing up for class is a minimum; I expect you to begin submitting poems for workshopping as soon as the second class (Jan 25). I also expect you to participate in the workshopping process: when another student reads his or her poem submitted to workshop, I expect you to take notes and be able to comment on the positive qualities of the submitted poem. I will call on various students and ask for their response to the poem being workshopped.

Total = (34 pts);

[2] Minimal Completion of Categories of Poetry: As the class examines various types, forms, and formats for poetic expression, students will be required to attempt writing poems from six different groups:

(1) a poem **effectively using meter**; [this poem must be marked to indicate accented syllables]

(2) a poem effectively **using rhyme**;

(3) a poem in an **open stanza form**;

(4) a poem written in a **closed stanza form**;

(5) a free verse poem with the **emphasis on effective verbal imagery**;

(6) a free verse or formal lyric poem in **which the voice is not your own**

TOTAL = (30 pts);

[3] Submission of Poetry for Publication: This is the most significant assignment in the class, preparation of three to five poems for submission to a magazine or journal in print or on-line. These must be turned in by May 08, 20123; (18-30 pts);

[4] participation in final poetry reading of poems (10 pts). There may be opportunities during the semester for bonus points from out-of-class projects and participation in readings on and off campus. For example, to perfect and practice the art of writing poetry, one can create poems for work-shopping on a regular schedule;

any extra poems created beyond the format poems and the poems for publication are worth 1 point per poem per week during the semester (i.e. the possibility of 12 bonus points).

TOTAL = (10 points)

1. Submission of poems for workshopping: (a) submit to me by email [nsager@sulross.edu]; (b) submit no later than the Tuesday before you wish to workshop the poem; begin as soon as next class (Tuesday, 25 Jan 2023), but your first submitted poem should be sent by Tuesday, January 31, 2023, at least Haiku length (3 lines) in correct format. If you are not familiar with the required qualities of a Haiku, you can find discussions on line. I will expect you to begin working toward the satisfaction of the 6 category poems as soon as possible, although for workshopping purposes; any poem of two lines or more can be submitted for workshopping. I will be sending you a revised syllabus including what I have presented orally tonight and also what element of Blackboard I will be using in this class.

Type of Submitted Assignment	Points possible for assignments	Rules applying to increased points
Any poem submitted for workshopping of two lines or more i.e. (couplet, haiku, ballad stanza, sonnet, etc.)	one point per poem	can be upgraded if work-shopped and submitted as a category poem with necessary features
Any submitted poem for workshopping of stanza length (Minimum of four lines) quatrain	three points per poem	can be upgraded if the poem meets the category requirements
Poems submitted that meet one of the category requirements	five points per poem	can be upgraded if the poem is submitted for publication
Poems submitted for publication with a submission letter	six points per poem	only assignment counted twice

The major assignments will be graded numerically on the basis of the values listed in the preceding chart. Points from attendance and graded assignments completed will be totaled to arrive at a course average. The course letter grade will be based on letter grade equivalents to the numerical class average as follows: [89.51-100+ = A] [79.51-89.50 = B] [69.51-79.50 = C] [60 -69.50 = D] [Below 60 = F]

**Text: Oliver, Mary. *A Poetry Handbook* , Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt, 1994. ISBN: 9780167244005.**

**Tentative Reading Assignments and Activities for the Course:** Since Mary Oliver take up subject matter in no particular order, I have listed material in the order in which it occurs. We may change these reading assignments as we get into the semester.

**Jan 18** Intro to class; lecture/discussion: a paradigm of poetry {i.e. How do we define poetry, as opposed to other literary generic forms} Reading Assignment: "Introduction, pp.1-5.

**Jan 25** Reading Assignment: "Getting Ready, pp. 7-9

**Feb 01** Reading Assignment: "Reading Poems, pp.10-12.

**Feb 8** Reading Assignment: "Imitation, pp. 13-18.

**Feb 15** Reading Assignment: "Sound," pp. 19-28.

**Feb 22** Reading Assignment: "More Devices of Sound," 29-34.

**Mar 01** Reading Assignment: "The Line, pp. 35-77.

**Mar 08** Reading Assignment: Some Given Forms, pp. 58-66.

**Mar 13 through Mar 17:** Spring Break (no class)

**Mar 22** Reading Assignment: "Verse That Is Free, pp. 67-75.

**Mar 29** Reading Assignment: "Diction, Tone, and Voice," pp. 76-91.

**Apr 05** Reading Assignment: "Imagery,' pp. 92-108.

**Apr 12** Reading Assignment: "Revision," pp. 109-111.

**Apr 19** Reading Assignment: "Workshops and Solitude," pp.112-118.

**Apr 26** Reading Assignment: "Conclusion," pp. 119-122.

**May 03** Deadline for submission of all required assignments, counted in averaging the course letter grade.

**May 10** Last Class Day

**May 12, 15-17** dates designated for final exams: we will have a formal reading of poems written in class on this Wednesday: May 17