

Advanced Poetry Workshop

Hartwick College
ENGL 412-B
TuTh 10:10 a.m.–12:10 p.m., Clark 251
(4 Credits; EL; ILS; WGS; GEO 2, 4)
Spring 2023

Dr. Bradley J. Fest
Associate Professor of Literature, Media, and Writing
Cora A. Babcock Chair in English

Office: Clark 226, ext. 4921
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: festb@hartwick.edu

Required Texts

Ashbery, John. *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror*. 1976. Penguin, 2009.
Eliot, T. S. *The Waste Land and Other Writings*. Modern Library, 2002.
Hejinian, Lyn. *My Life and My Life in the Nineties*. Wesleyan UP, 2013.
Philip, M. NourbeSe. *Zong! As Told to the Author by Setaey Adamu Boateng*. Wesleyan UP, 2011.
Plath, Sylvia. *Ariel: The Restored Edition*. Harper Perennial, 2005.
Stein, Gertrude. *Tender Buttons: The Corrected Centennial Edition*. Edited by Seth Perlow, City Lights, 2014.
Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass: The Original 1855 Edition*. Dover, 2007.

Additional texts to be covered can be found on the calendar below. These will be available on D2L under “Content Browser: Readings.” See endnotes for bibliographic citations.

Recommended Materials

I recommend acquiring a folder dedicated exclusively to this course. Students may also want to set aside roughly ten dollars for printing costs if they go beyond their allotted quota.

Prerequisites

The successful completion of ENGL 213 Introduction to Creative Writing and ENGL 312 Intermediate Poetry Workshop are prerequisites for creative writing majors.

Catalog Description

Practice in writing poetry. Students will be expected to produce a manuscript of finished poems. Workshop and conference. Offered alternate years. (EL; ILS; WGS; GEO 2, 4)

Course Description and Purpose

In this advanced workshop, students will continue to practice the art of poetry. Building upon the work done in Introduction to Creative Writing and Intermediate Poetry Workshop and those courses’ focus on *craft* and *form*, students in Advanced Poetry Workshop will continue honing their verse in a rigorous, intensive writing workshop. This course will also encourage students to think about their writing as a *practice*, to think of themselves seriously *as writers*. As such, in addition to workshopping individual pieces, this course will approach writing as a practice of

publication. Over the course of the semester, students will submit their work to literary magazines and will complete a chapbook of poems for their final project.

As the course's focus will be on the composition of not just individual poems but a sustained *collection* of poetry, readings will focus on important book-length works (collections, long poems, and sequences) from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Course readings include John Ashbery, T. S. Eliot, Lyn Hejinian, M. NourbeSe Philip, Sylvia Plath, Gertrude Stein, Walt Whitman, and others. The course will also include a number of readings in *poetics*—that is, critical and theoretical writing about poetry—in order to give students a better understanding of the important conversations about poetry that have taken place during the past 170 years in the United States. This is the most advanced poetry course offered at Hartwick College, so I will approach its participants—in terms of both my expectations and the feedback I provide—as students who may become professional writers.

How This Course Works

This course will function much like Intermediate Poetry Workshop. During most class periods, the first half of class will be devoted to discussing that day's reading with the second half devoted to a writing workshop. Students will again be assigned primary readers (see Primary Reader Assignment). The main differences: students will briefly workshop project proposals and submissions for publication, and, during the second half of the course, writers being workshopped will be able to preface the conversation during workshop with their own comments and concerns about their writing.

Learning Outcomes

In addition to skills of literary and poetic analysis, students in this course will: 1) identify more advanced creative writing techniques; 2) read as writers and poet-critics and use this knowledge to more successfully write and discuss lengthier works of poetry; 3) produce a poetry manuscript that demonstrates an understanding of literary and formal conventions while also articulating a personal artistic vision (GEO 2); 4) situate poems within their cultural, political, social, historical, and literary context (GEO 4); and 5) explore the ways that poetry can access and illuminate diverse voices (GEO 4).

Other Course Requirements and Assignments

Texts—Students are required to have read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts for each class meeting, including the writing of your peers. Students must also bring the assigned texts to class, including peers' work. Additional readings for the course (see below) can be found under the "Content" then the "Readings" section of D2L. All students *must* obtain the edition of the texts specified above. Students should expect to read between 50 and 150 pages per week.

Chapbook—Students will submit a publication-ready *chapbook* of poems by the end of the semester. Students will compose and workshop a project proposal for this chapbook, spend the semester composing a manuscript, and workshop rough drafts during the final week of class. Chapbooks should display an awareness of the various issues that were discussed in class and include thoughtful revisions based on the comments provided during workshop and in written feedback. They should also show awareness and thought about what it means to assemble a manuscript of poetry, including attention to its layout and design. Assignments will follow.

Weekly Poetry Assignments—Students will write poems throughout the semester, turning in roughly one poem per week (sometimes two). Rather than responding to individual assignment prompts, students will write poems based on their initial project proposal. Individual poems will not be graded, though I will return comments after each workshop. For logistical reasons, poems will not be accepted late. Failure to turn in a poem will cost a student 10% off their overall chapbook grade. All poems *must* be handed in as hard copies in class to me and to each of your peers *and* uploaded to D2L. On D2L, there will be a link under “Discussion” to upload your poems.

Submission to Journals—Later in the semester, students will draft and workshop a cover letter and poetry submission, and then submit their work to at least three literary journals. Failure to turn in a draft of their submission or failing to provide evidence that students submitted their work to at least three journals will cost a student 10% off their overall chapbook grade. The due dates are below and the assignment will be provided later in the semester.

D2L Uploads—Save all files in the following format: Last Name, First Name--Poem ##.

Reading Responses—Students will compose weekly reading response that they will post to D2L. I will grade responses (out of 10), post scores to D2L, and drop the lowest two grades. See the Reading Response Assignment for more specific details.

Participation—Because this is an advanced workshop and it will be a relatively small class, engaged and rigorous participation is essential. I am approaching this class as a *seminar*: a collective inquiry that will privilege the thinking, reading, and writing of its participants. Students are expected to be well prepared for class and to actively participate. Among other things, I expect students to have read everything I assign for each class meeting, so students’ participation grades will suffer if it is clear they have not done the reading. Students should also make sure to read and comment on their peers’ work. Since this class will rely heavily on student participation, your attendance is a necessity. *More than three absences will negatively affect your grade, in which case you may want to consider withdrawing from the course and taking it again under better circumstances. Students who are marked absent for more than six total classes will automatically fail the course.*

That said, I understand that it is possible that a student may miss significant class time due to illness, a positive COVID-19 test, or other unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, it is each individual student’s responsibility to communicate with me regarding any issues they might have attending class sessions or doing the work of the course. If students communicate with me about legitimate issues that may cause them to miss class time, I will do my best to work with them to make sure that they are given the opportunity to succeed.

Grading

Participation: 20%

Primary Reader Responses: 5%

Weekly Reading Responses (10 total; 2 lowest dropped): 25%

Chapbook: 50%

FlightPath

Hartwick's FlightPath is a student-centered program that is flexible and adaptable to support your pathway to graduation and to prepare you for what lies ahead. By the time you graduate from Hartwick, you will have a suite of skills and experiences that tie together the breadth of your Hartwick education and highlight your accomplishments. This course supports the development of student educational outcomes in the following way(s): it fulfills FlightPath General Education Outcomes 2 and 4, fulfills a requirement for the Creative Writing Major, counts as a Women and Gender Studies (WGS) course, and is a possible elective in the English Major. This course also fulfills the Liberal Arts in Practice requirement for Experiential Learning and Integrated Learning Seminar for senior students. (Note: this course does *not* fulfill either the WD or WL3 requirements.)

College COVID-19 Policy

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, circumstances may necessitate adjustments to instruction, such as shifts in mode of instruction (to remote or hybrid), classroom capacity limits, or indoor mask requirements. Updates will be provided on the College website (<https://www.hartwick.edu/about-us/covid-19-updates/>). Instructors will communicate with students about any specific adjustments that are being made to their courses, such as modality of instruction, expectations for participation, and any changes to assigned work; students should check their Hartwick email accounts frequently for information from their instructors.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. It will result in a zero for the assignment and a formal charge will be filed with the Office of Academic Affairs. Plagiarism could also result in more serious action, including a student failing the class and being suspended from the College. *Plagiarism includes: lack of proper citations when quoting from someone else's work; representing someone else's work as your own; and knowingly allowing one's work to be submitted by someone else. Plagiarism also includes: copy and pasting from online (or offline) sources without quotation or attribution; using online paraphrase tools (such as QuillBot) to change other people's words and then submitting them as your own; and using an AI text generation system (such as ChatGPT) and submitting its output as your own.* Violations of Hartwick's Academic Honesty policy are not limited to plagiarism, so students should familiarize themselves with it at: <https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/academic-affairs/academic-policies/>.

Academic Adjustments and/or Modifications

Students must present me with an updated Academic Plan Letter for the Spring 2023 semester in order to be eligible for academic adjustments. Hartwick College is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If a student with a disability wishes to request academic adjustments, they should contact Lara Sanford, Director of AccessAbility Services, at sanfordl@hartwick.edu or AccessAbilityServices@hartwick.edu. AccessAbility Services is located on the fifth floor of Yager Library in the Center for Student Success. Any information regarding a student's disability will remain confidential. Requests for academic adjustments should be made as early as possible. Please reach out to the instructor with any other concerns you might have about the course, including accessing course texts.

The Writing Center

Located in Clark Hall 230, the Writing Center offers free one-on-one writing support for any stage of writing, including brainstorming, outlining, drafting, and revising. The Writing Center offers personalized feedback on short assignments, essays, senior theses, resumes, graduate school applications, scholarship applications, and other documents. Students can request in-person or [Zoom](#) support by scheduling thirty-minute or one-hour appointments through [Navigate](#). Asynchronous email support is also available by emailing your assignment prompt, assignment, and any questions to WritingCenter@Hartwick.edu. In some cases, I may send you to the Writing Center for help on a particular problem.

E-mail Communication Policy

Each student is issued a college email address (username@hartwick.edu) upon admittance. This email address may be used by the college for official communication with students. I will also communicate with students via their hartwick.edu address. Students are expected to regularly read email sent to this account. Failure to read and react to communications from either the College or from me in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to communications sent to their Hartwick email address.

Health and Success

Success in this course depends heavily on your personal health and wellbeing. Recognize that stress is an expected part of the college experience, and it often can be compounded by unexpected setbacks or life changes outside the classroom. Your other instructors and I strongly encourage you to reframe challenges as an unavoidable pathway to success. Reflect on your role in taking care of yourself throughout the term, before the demands of exams and projects reach their peak. Please feel free to reach out to me about any difficulty you may be having that may impact your performance in this course as soon as it occurs and before it becomes unmanageable. In addition to your academic advisor, I strongly encourage you to contact the many other support services on campus that stand ready to assist you. Hartwick offers free counseling for students who are experiencing personal or emotional difficulties. The Counseling Center is located in the Perrella Health Center and offers psychological services and sexual assault services. Appointments can be made Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., by calling (607) 431-4420 or emailing counselingcenter@hartwick.edu.

Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Reporting

Hartwick College is committed to equal opportunity and providing a safe community free from all forms of sexual misconduct including sexual-/gender-based harassment, discrimination, dating or domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and sexual assault. If you wish to make an official report to the College or have questions about the College policy and procedures regarding sexual misconduct, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, Michael Arno, at titleix@hartwick.edu or (607) 431-4293. Online reporting and policy information is available at <http://www.hartwick.edu/titleix>. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact one of the following resources: Perrella Wellness Center, Health or Counseling: (607) 431-4120; or Opportunities for Otsego's Violence Intervention Program: (607) 432-4855. All other employees of the College are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator so that support and resources can be provided for all parties.

Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion, or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Calendar¹

- 2.7 Syllabus
Introductions
Look at sample chapbooks
Lecture on modernism and the historical trajectory of the course
- 2.9 **Reading Response 1 due (on DuPlessis)**
Rachel Blau DuPlessis, “Statement on Poetics”¹
Ross Gay, “Out of Time (Time: The Fourth Incitement)”²
- 2.14 **Reading Response 2 due (on Nietzsche)**
Friedrich Nietzsche, “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense”³
Walt Whitman, preface to *Leaves of Grass* (pp. 1–20)
- 2.16 **Reading Response 3 due**
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (pp. 21–44)
- 2.21 **Project Proposal due**
Viktor Shklovsky, “Art as Device”⁴
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (pp. 44–68)
- 2.23 **Reading Response 4 due (on Deleuze [and/or Deleuze and Guattari] and Whitman)**
Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “Introduction: Rhizome”⁵
Gilles Deleuze, “Whitman”⁶
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (continued)
Workshop Project Proposals
- 2.28 **Poems 1 and 2 due**
T. S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” in *The Waste Land* (pp. 99–108)
T. S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” in *The Waste Land* (pp. 3–7)
- 3.2 **Reading Response 5 due (on “The Waste Land”)**
Mary Karr, “How to Read ‘The Waste Land’ so It Alters Your Soul Rather Than Just Addling Your Head,” in *The Waste Land* (pp. ix–xviii)
T. S. Eliot, “The Waste Land,” in *The Waste Land* (pp. 38–51 [don’t read notes])
Workshop
- 3.7 **Poem 3 due**
Re-read T. S. Eliot, “The Waste Land,” in *The Waste Land* (pp. 38–56 [read notes])²
Workshop
- 3.9 **Reading Response 6 due (on Stevens)**
Wallace Stevens, “The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words”⁷
T. S. Eliot, “The Waste Land” (continued, bring *The Waste Land* to class)

¹ Please note that additional readings or handouts may be assigned when appropriate and that the schedule is subject to change. For ease with citation, bibliographic endnotes to the readings available on D2L (anything with an endnote rather than page numbers) have been provided below in MLA style.

² Also, if you’re interested in an annotated edition, I’ve made that available on D2L under today’s date. See Eliot, T. S. “The Waste Land.” *The Waste Land: Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism*, edited by Michael North, Norton Critical Edition, W. W. Norton, 2001, pp. 3–26.

Optional: Ryan Ruby, “Dig It Up Again: A Century of ‘The Waste Land’”⁸
Workshop

3.14 **Poem 4 due**

Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (pp. 7–31)
Workshop

3.16 **Reading Response 7 due**

Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (pp. 32–76)
Workshop

3.21 No Classes, Spring Break

3.23 No Classes, Spring Break

3.28 **Poem 5 and 6 due**

Sylvia Plath, *Ariel* (pp. xi–44)
Workshop

3.30 Class canceled

4.4 **Poem 7 due**

Sylvia Plath, *Ariel* (pp. 45–90)
Workshop

4.6 **Reading Response 8 due**

John Ashbery, *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* (pp. 1–66)
Workshop

4.11 **Poem 8 due**

John Ashbery, *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* (pp. 67–83)
Workshop

4.13 **Reading Response 9 due (on Bernstein)**

Charles Bernstein, “Artifice of Absorption”⁹
John Ashbery, *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* (continued, bring to class)
Discussion of Submission Processes

4.18 **Poem 9 due**

Lyn Hejinian, *My Life* (pp. 3–33)
Workshop

4.20 **Submission Draft due**

Lyn Hejinian, “The Rejection of Closure”¹⁰
Lyn Hejinian, *My Life* (pp. 34–67)
Workshop

4.25 **Poem 10 due**

Primary Reader Response to Submission Drafts Due

Lyn Hejinian, *My Life* (pp. 68–100)
Lyn Hejinian, “Barbarism”¹¹
Workshop

- 4.27 **Reading Response 10 due**
Beverly Dahlen, “A Reading: A Reading”¹²
Workshop
- 5.2 **Evidence of three submissions (minimum) due**
Primary Reader Response due on remaining poems
M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong!* (pp. 1–98)
Workshop
- 5.4 Class canceled
- 5.9 **Draft of Chapbook due**
M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong!* (pp. 99–211)
Erica Hunt, “Notes for an Oppositional Poetics”¹³
- 5.11 Workshop Chapbooks
Discussion of layout and MS Word
Optional: Bradley J. Fest, “Something Worth Leaving in Shards: An Interview with Rachel Blau DuPlessis”¹⁴
- 5.16 **4:00–7:00 p.m. [Meeting time and location most likely will change]**
Chapbooks due and class wrap-up: Group Reading

Endnotes

¹ DuPlessis, Rachel Blau. “Statement on Poetics: Pleasures, Polemics, Practices, Stakes.” *Inciting Poetics: Thinking and Writing Poetry*, edited by Jeanne Heuving and Tyrone Williams, U of New Mexico P, 2019, pp. 13–37.

² Gay, Ross. “Out of Time (Time: The Fourth Incitement).” *Inciting Joy: Essays*, Algonquin, 2022, pp. 43–56.

³ Nietzsche, Friedrich. “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense.” 1873. *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, translated and edited by Ronald Speirs, edited by Raymond Geuss, Cambridge UP, 1999, pp. 139–53.

⁴ Shklovsky, Viktor. “Art as Device.” 1917. *On the Theory of Prose*. 1925; 2nd ed., 1929. Translated by Shushan Avagyan, afterword by Lyn Hejinian, Dalkey Archive Press, 2021, pp. 5–25.

⁵ Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. “Introduction: Rhizome.” *A Thousand Plateaus*. 1980. Translated by Brian Massumi, U of Minnesota P, 1987, 3–25. Vol. 2 of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.

⁶ Deleuze, Gilles. “Whitman.” 1993. *Essays Critical and Clinical*, translated by Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco, U of Minnesota P, 1997, pp. 56–60.

⁷ Stevens, Wallace. “The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words.” 1942. *The Necessary Angel: Essays on Reality and the Imagination*. Vintage, 1951, pp. 3–36.

⁸ Ryan Ruby. “Dig It Up Again: A Century of ‘The Waste Land.’” *Poetry Foundation*, 12 Dec. 2022, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/159319/dig-it-up-again>.

⁹ Bernstein, Charles. “Artifice of Absorption.” 1987. *A Poetics*, Harvard UP, 1992, pp. 9–89.

¹⁰ Hejinian, Lyn. “The Rejection of Closure.” 1983. *The Language of Inquiry*, U of California P, pp. 40–58.

¹¹ Hejinian, Lyn. “Barbarism.” 1995. *The Language of Inquiry*, U of California P, pp. 318–36.

¹² Dahlen, Beverly. “A Reading: A Reading.” *Writing/Talks*, edited by Bob Perelman, Southern Illinois UP, 1985, pp. 113–34.

¹³ Hunt, Erica. “Notes for an Oppositional Poetics.” *The Politics of Poetic Form: Poetry and Public Policy*, edited by Charles Bernstein, Roof, 1990, pp. 197–212.

¹⁴ Fest, Bradley J., and Rachel Blau DuPlessis. “Something Worth Leaving in Shards: An Interview with Rachel Blau DuPlessis.” *boundary 2*, vol. 50, no. 2, forthcoming May 2023, MS.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Jake Wolff for language used in the “Learning Outcomes” section of this syllabus and to the Rochester Institute of Technology for their statement on health and success (<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/syllabus-design/rit-policies>).