

## WR242 Creative Writing: Poetry

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**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday 2:00 – 2:30 and Tuesday 1:00 – 3:00  
**CRN:** 26061 IA232; Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 11:30 – 12:50  
**Text:** *A Poetry Handbook* by Mary Oliver

### Course Description:

Welcome to our poetry writing workshop. This class is designed to help sharpen our sensitivity to language and enhance our skills as readers and writers of poetry. We'll review the basic elements of poetry (e.g. imagery, voice, lineation, meter). We'll work on in-class writing exercises and prompts. We'll develop an out-of-class "ritual of practice" to ensure that these "learned skills of the conscious mind" keep "appointment" with our feelings and deep thoughts. In our class workshops, we'll discuss our poems in depth. Our goal in work-shopping one another's poems will be to sharpen our own critical understandings and appreciation as well as to provide useful critical responses for the poet. We'll put in place effective revision strategies to turn our exercises into completed poems. We'll also read and study a variety of published poems to better appreciate the art of poetry. We'll read our poems out loud to each other each week and "perform" our poems at the end of the term in a final poetry presentation / celebration. We'll come to recognize ourselves as active members of this extraordinary tradition.

... Poetry arrived  
in search of me. I don't know, I don't know where  
it came from, from winter or a river.  
I don't know how or when. . . Pablo Neruda

### Course Outcomes:

- Demonstrate the skills of poetry writing (rhyme, meter, free verse, word choice, symbolism etc.) through learning and practicing the craft of poetry writing in a workshop environment.
- Write and speak effectively about the craft of poetry writing.
- Interpret poetry through critical evaluation.
- Write poetry that addresses elements of the human condition.
- Participate in activities that encourage personal awareness, growth, and/or creativity through poetry writing.

**Prerequisites:** WR121 (or an equivalent skill level) is required for this workshop. If you do not have WR121 level writing and analytical skills, you are not prepared for a class on this level.

**Strongly Recommended:** ENG106 (Intro to Poetry) is strongly recommended for success in this class. You must understand the elements of poetry to participate in this writing-intensive workshop.

A habit and love of reading is essential.

## The Work We'll Do

### Class Workshops/Discussion/Participation (30%)

Plan to be active in class writings and discussions. Plan to prepare well before class and to participate in writings, discussions, and peer response during class. Present and participating earns full credit. Please always be present for class! **You** – your consistent presence and participation – contribute to the integrity of our classroom community. More than three absences will negatively affect your final grade for the course.

The LBCC community is enriched by diversity of all kinds. We all share the privilege of thinking, learning, writing and working together in an encouraging environment. In our classroom community, we will work toward creating and enjoying a community of mutual respect, appreciation, encouragement, and goodwill.

### Weekly Writings (30%)

We'll be practicing poetry techniques through focused exercises. I'll provide the focused exercise / assignment each Thursday. You'll bring your draft (word-processed along with four copies) to class on Tuesday for workshop. You'll revise this work-shopped draft to turn in each Thursday along with the accompanying steps (word-processed) which will be due every Thursday.

### Your Poetry Chapbook (40%)

You'll be showcasing the poetry you accomplish this term in an end-of-term *Poetry Chapbook*. Your collection of poetry will begin with a *Preface* (consider this your *Final Essay*) which will introduce the collection and describe in detail how this selection of poems illustrates your growth as a poet this term. A *Table of Contents* will organize the selections. You must include at least six work-shopped poems. You may include more, but please only include poems that you wrote this term.

“A mind that is lively and inquiring,  
compassionate, curious, angry,  
full of music, full of feeling,  
is a mind full of possible poetry.  
Poetry is a life-cherishing force.  
And it requires a vision – a *faith*, to use an old-fashioned term.  
Yes, indeed.  
For poems are not words, after all, but fires for the cold,  
ropes let down to the lost,  
something as necessary as bread in the pockets of the hungry.  
Yes indeed.”  
Mary Oliver

