

ENGLISH 213/001

Professor Mark Brazaitis

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Office Hours: Tuesday (11:30-1), Thursday (11:30-12:30) and by
appointment

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Class Hours: TTh 10:00-11:15

Class Location: 119 Armstrong

Objective: In this class, you will learn to become a poet. To become a poet, you must dedicate yourself to both writing and reading poetry, and this class will allow you—and require you—to do both.

Requirements: Over the course of the semester, you will read more than one hundred poems and write at least six, which you will collect in a mini-chapbook. You will be expected to master poetic terminology. You will be required to write an in-depth analysis of two of the poems on our reading list. You will also write two poems inspired by (or in imitation of) two of the poems on our reading list. In addition, you will be expected to participate in classroom discussions and give written feedback to your fellow students on their work.

Texts: *Tell Me* (by Kim Addonizio); *Red Kimono, Yellow Barn* (by David Hassler); *Dear Darkness* (by Kevin Young); *The Empty House* (by Faith Shearin); and *I Go to the Ruined Place: Contemporary Poems in Defense of Global Human Rights* (edited by Melissa Kwasny and M.L. Smoker).

Grades: Grades in this class will be based on the following: attendance and participation (10 percent); two tests on poetic terms and readings (30 percent); analyses of two poems from our reading (20 percent); two imitation poems (10 percent); four or more of your original poems to be critiqued in class and collected in a mini-chapbook along with your imitation poems (30 percent).

Attendance: Attendance will be graded as follows: 0-2 absences (A); 3-4 absences (B); 5-7 absences (C); 8 or more absences (F). Grading Key: 100=A+; 94-99=A; 90-93=A-; 85-89=B+; 83-84=B; 80-82=B-; 75-79=C+; 73-74=C; 70-72=C-; 65-69=D+; 63-64=D; 60-62=D-; 59 and below=F. **Note:** If you miss more than seven classes, you will not pass this class.

Extra credit: You may attend and write a one-page review of any two of the “special events” listed below. A review consists of a summary of the event as well as your opinion of the event. (Please type your review.) The extra credit assignment counts for three extra points on one of your tests.

Class Schedule and Day-to-Day Assignments

Tuesday, August 23 Get acquainted

Thursday, August 25 Review poetic terms. Read: “Blue Vein” by Sandra Alcosser; “Key to the Kingdom” by Peter Anderson; “Bearing Witness” by Ellen Bass; “Cletis Pratt” by Joseph Bathanti; and “Bagram, Afghanistan,” by Marvin Bell. All poems are in *I Go to the Ruined Place*.

Tuesday, August 30 Review poetic terms. Read: “Poem Wrapped Around a Quotation from Samantha Power” by Donna Brook; “A Woman Calls” by Victor Camillo; “Lynch” by Martha Collins”; “Again, the Serbs” by Sarah Conover; and “A True War Story” by Roger Dunsmore. All poems are in *I Go to the Ruined Place*.

Thursday, September 1 Review poetic terms. Read: “Raped Man’s Stream of Consciousness” by Adrian English; “The Museum of Stones” by Carolyn Forché; “Reburial” by Gabe Furshong; “Gates of the City” by Kim Goldberg; and “Mars Conjunct Uranus (Or: The Same Old Story). All poems are in *I Go to the Ruined Place*.

Tuesday, September 6 Review poetic terms. Read: “Self Help for Fellow Refugees” by Li Young Lee; “Watching the Baby Sleep” by Philip Memmer; “Blossoms Culled, Unripe” by Farnoosh Moshiri; “Mohamud at the Mosque” by Susan Rich; and “EZ” by Carolyne Wright. All poems are in *I Go to the Ruined Place*.

Thursday, September 8 **Test** on poetic terms and class readings.

Tuesday, September 13 Lecture “Writing and Knowing” and “The Family: Inspiration and Obstacle.” Read the following five poems by Kevin Young: “Cousins” (page 9), “Tuff Buddies” (page 16), “Bachelorhood” (page 58), “Hang Dog Blues” (page 61) and “Amen” (page 125).

Thursday, September 15: Lecture: “Death and Grief” and “The Shadow.” Read the following five poems by Kim Addonizio: “Virgin Spring” (page 31), “The Divorcee and Gin” (page 45), “The Revered Poet Instructs...” (page 57), “Fine” (page 82) and “One Night Stands” (page 85).

Special Event: Thursday, September 15^h, at 7:30 p.m. in room 130 of Colson Hall, novelist Glenn Taylor and nonfiction writer and poet Ellesa High will be reading.

Tuesday, September 20 Lecture: “Witnessing” and “Poetry of Place.” Read the following five poems by David Hassler: “Sabishi” (page 1), “O-bon” (page 6), “Eating Soba” (page 9), “In the English Teachers’ Room” (page 11), and “Morning Ride on the Yamanote Line” (page 20).

Thursday, September 22 Lecture: “Images” and “Simile and Metaphor.” Read the following five poems by Faith Shearin: “I Have Lived in Many Houses” (page 6), “

Preschool” (page 30), “Learning to Drive” (page 43), “Paddles” (page 51) and “Canoe” (page 58).

Tuesday, September 27 Lecture: “The Music of the Line,” “Voice and Style,” “Meter, Rhyme, and Form,” “Repetition, Rhythm, and Blues,” “More Repetition: Villanelle, Pantoum, Sestina,” and “The Energy of Revision.”

Thursday, September 29 **Test** on lectures as well as the four poets we discussed (Addonizio, Young, Hassler, and Shearin).

Tuesday, October 4 **Due**: an analysis of one of the following five poems by Kevin Young (or a poem of your own modeled after one of his five poems): “Black Cat Blues” (page 53), “Something Borrowed Blues” (page 64), “Flash Blood Blues” (page 68), “Bling Bling Blues” (page 71), and “Why I want my favorite band to break up” (page 74). **Note**: An analysis should be between one and five typed, double-spaced pages. It should have a title. If you write a poem modeled after a Kevin Young poem, it can be any length but should imitate the style and/or address the subject matter of the poem you are modeling it after. Give your poem a title. Please note: You must write a total of two analyses and two imitation poems relating to the four poets (Young, Addonizio, Hassler, and Shearin) we are studying. So if, for example, you write an analysis of a Young poem, you have one analysis and two imitation poems to go.

Thursday, October 6 **Due**: an analysis of one of the following five poems by Kim Addonizio (or a poem of your own modeled after one of her five poems): “Siamese” (page 30), “The Embers” (page 53), “What Do Women Want?” (page 74), “Getting Older” (page 86), and “For Desire” (page 87).

Special Event: Monday, October 10th, Sturm Writer-in-Residence (and poet) Carol Frost will read at 7:30 in the Gold Ballroom of the Mountainlair.

Tuesday, October 11 **Due**: an analysis of one of the following five poems by David Hassler (or a poem of your own modeled after one of his five poems): “Long Walk Home” (page 30), “The Circle” (page 32), “Red Kimono” (page 44), “Pasim’s Cafe” (page 50), and “My Father in the Stacks” (page 58).

Thursday, October 13 **Due**: an analysis of one of the following five poems by Faith Shearin (or a poem of your own modeled after one of her five poems): “Real Estate” (page 5), “Safety, 1975” (page 11), “Living History” (page 74), “Moving” (page 78), and “Almost” (page 80).

Special Event: Friday, October 14th, novelist and poet Valerie Nieman will read from her work at noon in Colson Hall 130.

Tuesday, October 18 **Due**: First poem. (Bring enough copies for everyone in the class plus a copy for the professor).

Thursday, October 20 Workshop

Tuesday, October 25 Workshop

Thursday, October 27 Workshop

Tuesday, November 1 Workshop **Due:** Second poem. (Bring enough copies for everyone in the class plus a copy for the professor).

Thursday, November 3 Workshop

Tuesday, November 8 Workshop

Thursday, November 10 Workshop

Tuesday, November 15 Workshop

Thursday, November 17 Workshop **Due:** Third poem (Bring enough copies for everyone in the class plus the professor).

Thanksgiving Break --- Enjoy

Tuesday, November 29 Workshop **Due:** Fourth poem (Bring enough copies for everyone in the class plus the professor).

Thursday, December 2 Workshop

Tuesday, December 6 **Due:** a collection of the six poems you wrote for this class (including the two imitation poems). The poems should be revised based on the comments you received from your classmates and your professor.

Thursday, December 8 Class reading of work. Collections returned. Final grades given.

Core Values/Social Justice at West Virginia University

The following core values establish the foundation for Social Justice at West Virginia University: Every person has intrinsic worth and dignity;

Respect for the law is fundamental;

Freedom from fear is universal;

A climate of opportunity, mutual respect, and understanding engenders a feeling that the future should be shared by all community members;

There is an absence of discrimination and harassment based on age, color, disability, ethnic origin, marital status, pregnancy, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, and veteran status; and

The rich diversity of people, their cultures, and the bonds that tie people together are appreciated and celebrated.