Catalog Entry

Reading and Writing Poetry (3-0) Intensive study, reading and practice in the various forms and approaches within poetry writing, including workshop discussion of individual student poems. Prerequisites: CRW 3372 with a grade of “C” or better and departmental approval.

Course Description

“Is it romantic to imagine poetry accomplishing anything in a world of happenings?” Don Share, poet and editor of Poetry Magazine, asks in relation to W.H. Auden’s oft-quoted, yet misunderstood line: “poetry makes nothing happen.” The question of poetry’s “use” in a society plagued by inequality, indifference and inaction has long been discussed by poets, readers and scholars alike. In this course, while discussing elements of craft such as imagery, prosody and figurative language, we will also examine and experiment with poetry’s power as an instrument for social justice and service. For this purpose, we will read poetry that’s undeniably committed to action, and that can model your take on poetry that serves as a vehicle for social change. The course will feature lecture, class discussions, and workshop components.

Course Outcomes

Throughout this course, students will

● Recognize and apply literary devices used in poetry.
● Read and discuss poetry in relation to the thematic frame of the course.
● Provide and receive professional criticism of peers’ poetry submissions.
● Discuss revision and the structural elements of a collection of poems.
● Produce a final portfolio with a critical preface and four poems.

This course is also designed to promote your overall success, inside and outside the classroom. The coursework will help you improve in key areas such as communication, confidence, and critical thinking.
Course Materials & Technology Requirements

No textbook required; all course materials are available through Blackboard.

Ensure your UTEP email account is working and that you have internet access and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser. You will need to have access to a computer/laptop.

The following software is recommended: Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat Reader. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course. If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs for free via UTEP’s Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students.

Course Assignments

CRW 3372 is graded on a scale of 0-1000. The course assignments are outlined below. Please note that specific instructions will be provided on Blackboard, and in class.

**Syllabus Scavenger Hunt:** You will participate in a scavenger hunt designed for you to get familiar with the syllabus at your own pace. This activity will also ensure you navigate Blackboard and get comfortable with this learning management system. Due date: Monday, January 24 by 12 pm. **30 points**

**Reading Journals (RJs):** Active participation is vital to the dynamic and quality of the class, and your weekly participation will be noted through reading journals. Their purpose is to process the material by yourself to then engage in conversation with different perspectives. To write mindful reading journals please read the materials carefully before class, take notes, and make lists of observations and/or questions you’d like to share in your posts or during class. There are two types of RJs: 1) RJ BB (Blackboard), due on Mondays by 12 pm, to be posted on Blackboard [RJ BBs also include responding to one of your classmates’ posts] and 2) RJ TK (Talk) to be shared orally
during class. Ongoing, poor class participation when RJ TK’s are due will result in requiring all RJs be posted to Blackboard. 160 points/ 10 RJs = 16 points each

In-Class Assignments (ICAs): You will address specific prompts provided by the instructor to be worked in during class. The purpose of these exercises is to apply/test concepts taught during class, and to generate poems that will be workshopped and/or included in your final portfolio. Due date: Mondays by 12pm. 150 points/ 25 points each

Class Workshop: You will participate in class workshops toward the end of the semester where you’ll share your work with classmates and receive feedback. Week 11-13. 400 points

ANV’s Reading: In lieu of class on Wednesday, January 26, I ask that you accompany me to the reading of Thirty Talks Weird Love, my debut young-adult novel in verse, in the University Suite, Union East Building, Room 312 from 12-1:30 pm. This is organized by UTEP’s Department of Creative Writing; the time of this event, determined with input from the chair, should facilitate attendance by students already on campus. Also, a public reading highlights the performative power of poetry, which is the root of this literary genre. There will be a workshop component as well, so you will be writing! If you can’t attend due to an emergency, please contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss options to earn this credit. 30 points

Poetry Factory: You will participate in a class reading of the poems produced during the semester (time and location TBD, pending health guidelines). Alternatively, you can submit an individual video that features you reading your poem out loud, due on Wednesday, May 11 by 11:59 pm. 45 points

Final Portfolio: You will produce a final portfolio that contains a critical preface and the work you generated during the semester. Due date: Wednesday, May 11 by 11:59 pm. 185 points

Classroom Policies

Attendance: Attending class is mandatory. Students are allowed to miss four classes without penalty; every additional absence will lower the final grade by one letter grade. If more than 5 classes are missed without communicating with the instructor, the student might be dropped from the course. Please notify me as soon as possible if you encounter extraordinary circumstances that affect your ability to attend class.

Communication: Maintaining constant, open lines of communication between students and instructors is key to a productive and enjoyable learning experience. This is especially the case as we continue adapting to the challenges posed by the ongoing global health crisis. For this reason, it is vital that you communicate with me as soon as possible about extenuating circumstances that affect your performance. I’m committed to help you navigate the course and succeed, but you have to reach out and keep me updated.

Grade Distribution

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<td>1000-900 = A</td>
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<td>899-800 = B</td>
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<td>799-700 = C</td>
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<td>699-600 = D</td>
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<td>599 and below = F</td>
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There are several ways in which communication will take place:

**Email:** Contact me at anarvaez2@utep.edu using your UTEP email. The first time you write to me please type my email as given; don’t rely on the automatic feature of the electronic directory, for it might send your message to the wrong domain. My response time for emails sent Monday through Friday 9-5pm is 24-48 hours; for emails sent on weekends, I will respond until the next day of business.

**Announcements:** I will send weekly communications through the Announcement tool in Blackboard. Please check your UTEP email often for that is where Blackboard announcements are sent instantly. You can also read my announcements by going to “Announcements” on Blackboard’s left-side menu.

**Virtual Office Hours:** I will use Zoom to hold virtual office hours. There are no set hours, so please schedule an appointment through email with at least one week of notice. Once we communicate, I will send you the corresponding Zoom link. If you prefer a face-to-face appointment, let me know and make an appointment; often, the best time for me to meet is after class.

**Assignment Feedback:** I will give you feedback on your assignments by using Blackboard and/or Vocaroo, a voice-recording website. I provide personalized input to help you reach your creative goals, so please make sure to read and/or listen my comments. My response time for grading and feedback is within 1 week for short assignments and up to 2 weeks for longer assignments.

**COVID-19 Precautions:** Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your result to covidaction@utep.edu so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

**Late Work:** Assignments are due by 12 pm on Mondays to Blackboard. Exceptions to this includes:

- ICA 1: due by the end of class on Wednesday, February 2.
- Copy of your poem for Class Workshops: due on Friday, April 1 by midnight.
- Final Portfolio and Individual Video: due on Wednesday, May 11 by midnight.

I will only accept late work on a case-by-case basis, and only if the student contacts me at least 24 hours before or after the assignment deadline. Please keep in mind that technology is fallible, like all things man made. For this reason, avoid posting or uploading assignments at the last minute. As stated previously, if you encounter technological issues, please contact UTEP’s Help Desk as soon as possible. If the issue is not fixed, then email the assignment as an attachment to anarvaez2@utep.edu to protect your grade.
Withdrawals: Each semester has a drop date beyond which an instructor can no longer drop a student with a “W.” Students who fail to fulfill assignments after the drop date must necessarily receive an “F.” However, in the event of exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the instructor of the course and the academic dean, a grade of “W” may be obtained. The student is responsible for supplying written documentation to support the request for a “W.” Acceptable reasons for a “W” include: personal or family emergencies, death of a family member, military leave, or an exceptional work schedule that prevents you from completing the course. Before you decide to withdraw from the course, please contact your academic advisor to discuss this option, and don’t hesitate to contact me as well for input.

The responsibility to withdraw from the course is yours. I will not automatically withdraw you if your performance is unsatisfactory. Please notify me as soon as possible if you encounter extraordinary circumstances that affect your ability to attend class. **Course drop deadline is Friday, April 1, 2022.**

Format: All assignments will be turned in through Blackboard in 12-point Times New Roman or a font of similar size, and with your name and title of your poem on the upper left corner. You may use single or double space for your poems. When naming files, I suggest you follow the following to keep track of your assignments: first name_CRW 3372_ICA 1. For example: Alessandra_CRW3372_ICA 1.

Please note that while assignments will be submitted electronically, I might occasionally request a print copy to ease physical discomforts associated with the use of the computer screen and keyboard. I ask for your understanding! In turn, I understand printing credits are limited (more importantly, our tree population is being decimated), so I will limit this request as much as possible.

Quality: While this is a writing class where creative pieces are produced, and credit is given for turning these and other assignments on time, evident lack of effort and/or failure to follow guidelines will affect your grade.

Workshop Etiquette: You should take the literary critic role seriously, as your classmates’ poems are highly personal pieces that deserve your careful reading, time and respect. If these are observed, then the critique of your work should never be taken personally. Also, I will defend your writing from disrespectful, pointless critique (which is a rare, rare occurrence) so please enjoy writing creatively, sharing your work, and receiving feedback.

Netiquette: Your conduct during class should always be respectful and professional towards your instructor and classmates alike. For that reason, a professional tone should extend to all the writing you do for this class (posts and emails included). Therefore, please consider the template below when addressing me or your classmates through email or Blackboard, and don’t forget to include a subject when writing an email.

Hello or Dear [name of recipient; address me as Alessandra or Professor/Ms. Narváez Varela],

Write the content of your email here. Make sure you proofread for proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Try to use formal, professional language.

Sincerely or Best [the sign off is up to you as long as you signal it is the end of your message],
For more suggestions to communicate successfully and professionally in an online setting, please go to Blackboard>Weeks>Week 1>Read Me First.

**Tech Etiquette:** As a courtesy to your classmates and instructor, please refrain from using cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc. for recreational purposes while class is ongoing. Creative writing courses are taught in small classrooms, not in large auditoriums where non-academic use of technology goes unnoticed.

### University Policies and Services

**University Writing Center (UWC):** I encourage you to make use of the UWC during the planning, drafting, and/or revising phases of writing any assignment in this class. The trained writing consultants can help give you a fresh perspective on ideas and help you with things like correctness, formatting, etc. The UWC is located on the main floor of the library, to the right of the elevators and computer lab.

**Academic Integrity:** An act of plagiarism (or other form of academic dishonesty) will result in an ‘F’ for the course, and may include other University disciplinary action, such as suspension or expulsion. You should become familiar with the ethical guidelines for conduct spelled out in the Student Affairs section of the Handbook for Operating Procedures. Additionally, please be aware that you may not submit work for this class that was produced for another class. You must produce your own original work in this class and appropriately identify and portion of your work which is collaborative with others, borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Always cite your information. If you have doubts as to whether or not you are using your own or others’ work legally and ethically, ask me or stop by the UTEP Writing Center. Follow this primary principle: Be upfront and honest.

**ADA:** The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need accommodation, please contact The Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) at (915)747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu. The CASS office is located in Room 106, Union East. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor with any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.

**Military Student Success Center:** If you are a military student (veteran, dependent, active), consider visiting the Military Success Center at Library Room 205 or online at https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/mssc/. Please inform me if you need special accommodations. If you make me aware of a complication, I will work to assist you or put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you.
Creative Writing Undergraduate Advising and Resources Webpage: Click here to find information about registration, advising, Wellness and Support Services, as well as Health and Covid-Related Services.

Calendar

This calendar is subject to change. Attend class and check Blackboard for changes of readings or due dates.

Reading key: **BB**=Blackboard; **ICA**=In-Class Assignment

### Week 1: Welcome!

**Wed 1/19**

CRW 3372’s Meet and Greet  
**Read**  
Syllabus  
**Explore**  
Blackboard

### Week 2: Can poetry be direct? Can poetry be play?

**Due by Mon 1/24 @ 12 pm**

- **RJ1 BB (Blackboard):** Go to Blackboard> Weeks>Week 2> RJ1 BB + Response  
- **Syllabus Scavenger Hunt:** Go to Blackboard> Weeks> Week 2>Syllabus Scavenger Hunt  
- **Extra Credit:** Go to Blackboard> Weeks> Week 2>Extra Credit: Tips from You!

**Mon 1/24**

**Read**  
“Literalists of the Imagination” (Matthew Zapruder)  
“How to Read a Poem” (Edward Hirsch)  
“Poetry” (Marianne Moore)  
“Microaggression Bingo” and “Map Home” (Fatima Asghar)

**Wed 1/26**  
**ANV Reading** 12-1:30 pm | University Suite | UTEP Union Building East Room 312

### Week 3: Can poetry be political?

**Due by Mon 1/31 @ 12 pm**

- **RJ 2 BB**  
- **Extra Credit ICA**

**Mon 1/31**

**Read**  
“Poetry Like Bread: Poets of the Political Imagination” &  
“Ode to a Soccer Ball Sailing Over a Barbed-Wire Fence” &  
“Power” (Audre Lorde)  
**Consider**  
Social/political issue to explore throughout semester.

**Wed 2/2**

**Read**  
“The Body Politic” (Steve Kowit)  
**Bring**  
Published poem that relates to one of the political/social issues you included in your Pre-ICA 1 table. (UPLOAD to Blackboard before class)
### Prepare
To discuss poem in small groups

### Submit
ICA 1 (end of class)

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### Week 4: Can poetry be “awful”? Can poetry be abstract?

#### Mon 2/7
**Read**
- “Awful Poetry”
- “Images” (Kim Addonizio and Dorianne Laux)
- “This Craft of Verse: Metaphor” (Jorge Luis Borges)

**Prepare**
RJ 3 TK

#### Wed 2/9
**Read**
- “Dim Lady,” “We Are Not Responsible” and “Elliptical” by Harryette Mullen

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### Week 5: Can political poetry be about love?

#### Due by Mon 2/14 @ 12 pm
- ICA 2
- RJ 4 BB

#### Mon 2/14
**Read**
- “KR Talk: Jericho Brown”
- “Prayer of the Backhanded” (Jericho Brown)
- “Wade in the Water” (Tracy K. Smith)
- “Paramour” (Rosa Alcalá)
- “These Hands, if Not Gods” (Natalie Diaz)

**Bring**
Valentine’s Card

#### Wed 2/16
**Mental Health Day: NO CLASS**

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### Week 6: Can poetry be a song?

#### Due by Mon 2/21 @ 12 pm
- ICA 3

#### Mon 2/21
**Read**
- Prosody handout
- “Line Breaks” (Steve Kowit)
- “Sagas of the Accidental Death (excerpts)” and “Skinhead” (Patricia Smith)
- “This is America” (Childish Gambino)

**Prepare**
RJ 5 TK

#### Wed 2/23
**Read**
- “Some Thoughts on Form and Why I Rhyme” (Matt Zapruder)
- “The Colonel” (Carolyn Forché)
- “My Mom Texts Me for the Millionth Time” and “Citizen Illegal” (José Olivarez)

**Prepare**
To experiment with the music of your poem.
## Week 7: Student Presentations

**Due by Mon 2/28 @ 12 pm**
- ICA 4
- RJ 6 TK (presentation=credit)

**Mon 2/28**
**Prepare**
To discuss your prosodic experiments and decisions. 9 students present; 5 mins each.

**Wed 3/2**
9 students present; 5 mins each.

## Week 8: Can poetry be documentary and experimental?

**Mon 3/7**
**Read**
- “From Reznikoff to Public Enemy: The poet as journalist, historian, agitator” (Philip Metres)
- “The Trump-Era Boom in Erasure Poetry” (Rachel Stone)
- “In California” (Reginald Dwayne Betts)
- “what’s not to liken” (Evie Shockley)
- “Book of the Dead” (excerpt; Muriel Rukeyser)

**Prepare**
RJ 7 TK

**Bring**
Document (form, law, questionnaire, etc.) related to your social/political issue + Sharpie

**Wed 3/9**
**Read**
“truth in advertising” & “mesostics from the american grammar book” (Evie Shockley)

**Instructions:** John Cage’s Mesostic

**Bring**
For mesostic: 2 sources: 1) for a central strand (or you can just write/type it) 2) for wing words. **NOTE:** None of these sources have to be “literature,” as we know it; you can bring Oprah magazine or a vacuum instruction manual!

**NOTE:** You can choose to write a mirror poem of “truth in advertising”

## Spring Break

March 14- March 18
No class

## Week 9: Can poetry include a different language, vernacular and cuss words?

**Due by Mon 3/21 @ 12 pm**
ICA 5

**Mon 3/21**
**Read**
- “The New Bathroom Policy at English High School: Dispatches from the Language Wars” (Martín Espada)
- “There’s Nothing Wrong with Black English” (John McWorther)

TBD by Langston Hughes
Bilingüe/Bilingual (Rhina P. Espaillat)
“More than One Man Has Reached Up My Skirt” and “Criada”
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 3/23</td>
<td>Prepare RJ 8 TK</td>
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<td>Read “Reader Discretion Advised” (Clare Luchette)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 10: Can poetry talk to other art forms? + Workshop Guidelines</strong></td>
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<td>Due by Mon 3/28 @ 12 pm</td>
<td>ICA 6</td>
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<td>Mon 3/28</td>
<td>Read “Your Guide to Ekphrastic Poetry (it’s Fantastic!)” (Christina M. Rau)</td>
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<td>“womanish” (Evie Shockley)</td>
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<td>“dinosaurs in the hood” (Danez Smith)</td>
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<td>Prepare RJ 9 TK</td>
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<td>Bring</td>
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<td>Photograph, painting, sculpture, scene/plot from a movie that you feel relates to your social/political issue. <strong>NOTE:</strong> you can bring a personal photo!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 3/30</td>
<td>Workshop Guidelines</td>
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<td>Due on Fri 4/1 @ 11:59 pm</td>
<td>Poem for Class Workshop</td>
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<td>Fri 4/1</td>
<td><strong>Course Drop Deadline</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Week 11: Class Workshop</strong></td>
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<td>Mon 4/4</td>
<td>3 classmate poems</td>
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<td>Wed 4/6</td>
<td>3 classmate poems</td>
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<td><strong>Week 12: Class Workshop</strong></td>
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<td>Due by Mon 4/11 @ 12 pm</td>
<td>Feedback Posts for assigned poems</td>
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<td>4/11</td>
<td>3 classmate poems</td>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>3 classmate poems</td>
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<td><strong>Week 13: Class Workshop</strong></td>
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<td>Due by Mon 4/18 @ 12 pm</td>
<td>Feedback Posts for assigned poems</td>
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<td>Mon 4/18</td>
<td>3 classmate poems</td>
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<td>Wed 4/20</td>
<td>3 classmate poems</td>
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<td><strong>Week 14: Can poetry be transformed, re-envisioned?</strong></td>
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<td>Due by Mon 4/25 @ 12 pm</td>
<td>Feedback Posts for assigned poems</td>
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<td>RJ 10 BB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 4/25</td>
<td>Read “Scissors &amp; Gluesticks: Re-Visioning the Poem” (Laurie Kutchins)</td>
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<td>“Two Wrongs Make a Right: Revision through Recycling” (Scott Wiggerman)</td>
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<td>“Shapeshifting Poems: The Power of Transformation” (Lisa D. Chávez)</td>
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<td>Prepare</td>
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<td>To revise your poem in class</td>
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<td>Wed 4/27</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<td><strong>Week 15: Student Presentations</strong></td>
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<td>Mon 5/2</td>
<td>Prepare</td>
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To discuss the revision of one of your poems. 9 students present; 5 mins each.

| Wed 5/4 | 9 students present; 5 mins each. Poetry Factory Dates/Times TBD |

Congratulations! You made it this far 😊

For Syllabus Scavenger Hunt (last question) due Mon 1/24 by 12 pm

Knock, Knock.
Who's There?
Voodoo.
Voodoo Who?
Voodo you think you are asking me so many questions?!

Week 16:
Final Portfolio due Wednesday, May 11 at 11:59 PM