



CATALOG ENTRY

Forms and Techniques of Poetry (3-0) A course in directed reading and writing that leads the student to an understanding of the creative process through analysis and imitation of important works of poetry. Prerequisite: Department approval.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Unlike other arts—and perhaps other forms of writing—readers and writers alike often associate poetry with feeling, not technique,” says Rebecca Hazelton. This emotive quality of poetry, while powerful and democratizing, limits the understanding of the form—understood simply as the physical structure of a poem— and technique necessary for writers to develop a strong poetic practice. For this reason, this online, seven-week course will examine closed forms, such as the sonnet, villanelle and ghazal, whose writing depends on following specific meters, rhyme schemes and/or constraints. Contemporary interpretations of these forms will also be studied. Then we will consider open forms, written in free verse, in the context of selected persona, documentary and ekphrastic poetry. These conversations will be informed by *City Without Altar* by Jasminne Mendez and other selected materials. The course will include two small workshops and one individual conference conducted through Zoom.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

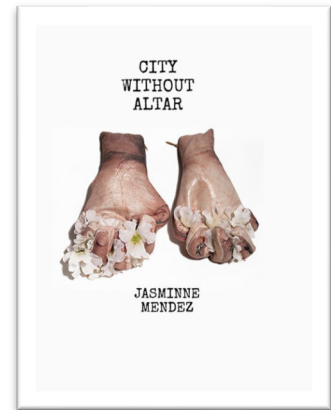
- Recognize and apply different forms of poetry.
- Practice critical-thinking skills through weekly discussion boards.
- Foster a sensibility for providing and receiving mindful feedback for classmates’ creative work.

COURSE DELIVERY

The course will be delivered online and it will make use of Blackboard Ultra. For this purpose, students must have access to a computer and the internet. This is not a self-paced class; the course is organized by weeks with corresponding assignments and deadlines.

COURSE MATERIALS

Weekly materials will be available on Blackboard for download in PDF format. See the course calendar for a complete list of reading assignments. On Weeks 4-6, we will read *City Without Altar* (2022) by Jasminne Mendez, available through [Noemi Press](#), [Best World Books](#) & Amazon.



TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

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 Technology Support](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students.

ASSIGNMENTS

This course works on a 1,000-point scale. The associated point value for each assignment is detailed below.

Assignments will be posted and submitted to Blackboard. Please see course calendar for specific due dates.

- **Syllabus Scavenger Quiz:** You will fill out a quiz testing your knowledge about the course requirements and the course's Blackboard shell. This activity ensures you read the syllabus carefully and navigate Blackboard at your own pace. Due date: Sunday, March 24 by midnight. *30 points*
- **Introduction & Netiquette Pledge:** You will complete these two brief activities found in the Welcome folder of Blackboard. Due date: Sunday, March 24 by midnight. *20 points*
- **Discussion Boards (DB):** You will participate in five discussion boards that will serve to stimulate your critical-thinking skills and ability to articulate your thoughts to your classmates and instructor. **250 pts/ 5 DBs.**

Please observe this timeline:

- **Thursday:** Post your reply by midnight. Your responses should be carefully crafted and meaningful, and they should include evidence from the text to support your thinking. You will not get credit for merely stating your opinion or summarizing the main points of a reading.
- **Sunday:** Reply to at least two of your classmates' posts in 200-word answers by midnight.
- **Creative Exercises (CE):** You will receive specific prompts during the seven-week course, during which you will apply concepts discussed through readings and discussion boards. CE 1 and CE 3 only require you to post your work; CE 2 and CE 4 require you to post your work *and* provide feedback to classmates for small group workshop. This is an important difference, for CE 2 and CE 4 are acting as small group workshops. **250 pts / 5 CEs.**
- **Small Groups Workshops:** You will participate in two class workshops on Weeks 3 and 5. **200 pts/ 2 workshops.**
Please observe this timeline:
 - **Thursday:** Post your work by midnight.
 - **Sunday:** Post your feedback for your classmates' work by midnight. You have a responsibility to your classmates to read their work carefully and make constructive and critically informed comments to help them to achieve publishable quality.
- **Individual Conference:** We will schedule a Zoom appointment on Weeks 4-6 to discuss either CE 1 or CE 3. You should schedule your virtual conference by Sunday, March 31 by accessing the OneDrive file found in the folder for Week 2. **50 pts**
- **Final Portfolio:** This assignment will consist of a critical preface, creative exercises, a video discussing the fifth creative exercise and feedback for classmates' prefaces and videos. Due on May 2 and May 5. **200 pts**

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

1000-900 = A

899-800 = B

799-700 = C

699-600 = D

599 and below = F

CLASSROOM POLICIES

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 for an online classroom. For this reason, it is vital that you communicate with me as soon as possible about extenuating circumstances that might affect your performance. I'm committed to help you navigate the course and succeed, but you must reach out and keep me updated. There are several ways in which communication will take place:

- **Email:** Contact me at anarvaez2@utep.edu using your UTEP email. Please note my response time: if you contact me Monday through Friday, 10am-5pm, I will reply within 48 hours; if you contact me on the weekend, I will reply until the next day of business (i.e. Monday). Feel free to use the Blackboard Ultra messaging system as well, but send me an email if my response time goes beyond what I've outlined above.
- **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:** There are no set hours, so please schedule an appointment through email with at least one week of notice. Please note I'm on Mountain Standard Time (MST).
- **Feedback:** I will provide you with personalized commentary for a selected assignment during individual conferences. Additional feedback on a different assignment will be given at the instructor's discretion; you may also reach out through email, if needed. Please consider that this is a fast-paced gateway course that is designed to invite students to try new forms of poetry in a fast-paced environment; for this reason, it is not designed to provide ongoing feedback. My response time for grading and feedback is within 1 week for short assignments and up to 2 weeks for longer assignments.

Preferred Mode of Address

The Department of Creative Writing at UTEP supports students' right to define their identity in terms of name, pronoun, and mode of address. This class will provide each student the opportunity to let their preference be known and will support and respect that preference. Should you need to discuss this issue with your instructor in private, you are encouraged to make an appointment early in the semester.

Late Work

I do not accept late work, unless there are extenuating circumstances and the student contacts me at least 48 hours before or after the assignment deadline. Please keep in mind that technology is fallible, like all things man made. For this reason, avoid uploading assignments at the last minute. As stated previously, if you encounter technological issues, please contact [UTEP Technology Support](#) 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 Monday, April 22, 2024.**

Netiquette

Netiquette, defined as the “etiquette governing communication in the internet,” is a term that entered our vocabulary in the late 80s ([Merriam Webster](#)). Expectedly, Netiquette has become a vital element of online learning.

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 (emails and posts included). Below a template to use when addressing me or your classmates through email or Blackboard; for emails, please include a subject.

Dear Name (Alessandra or Professor/Ms. Narvez 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,

Your name

For more suggestions to communicate professionally in an online setting, please go to Blackboard> Week 1>Welcome>Netiquette Pledge. In this same section, you will be asked to 1) commit to maintain a safe and respectful online environment and 2) add your own recommendations.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & SERVICES

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. Be upfront and honest.

ChatGPT Use: Because of the rapid pace of change represented by ChatGPT and similar programs, it is necessary to set clear standards regarding their use in a creative writing class: *all* assignment submissions *must* constitute original pieces of writing composed by the student-author *without* the assistance of AI text generators. I recognize ChatGPT can be a valuable generative tool, if a writer is experienced, and has a clear idea of how to use it to further their creative goals. For the purposes of this course, however, it’s vital that students rely on their original ideas, process and creativity to generate creative work. The same policy applies to reading journals.

ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support

Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) at (915)747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal. 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.

COURSE CALENDAR

Please note that the calendar is subject to change, so check Blackboard for updates. I will notify you about changes with enough notice, except for family or health emergencies that affect my ability to communicate with you promptly. Please check Blackboard and your email often. **DB=Discussion Board** & **CE=Creative Exercise**

WEEK	READINGS/MULTIMEDIA	ASSIGNMENTS	DUE DATE
1	"On Becoming a Poet" (Strand)	DB 1 (Week 1 Folder)	Post by Thurs 3/21 @ midnight Reply by Sun 3/24 @ midnight
		Syllabus Scavenger Quiz Introduction & Netiquette Pledge (Week 1 Folder> Welcome)	Complete by Sun 3/24 @ midnight
2	"Why Write in Form?" (Hazelton) "Poetic Form: Open and Closed" (Lindsay, Bergstrom, Weal) "The Sonnet" (Hacker) "The Villanelle" (Strand & Boland) 📌 Schedule your Individual Conference by Sun 3/31	DB 2	Post by Thurs 3/28 @ midnight Reply by Sun 3/31 @ midnight
		CE 1	Post by Thurs 3/28 @ midnight
3	"The Choice of Constraint" (Hazelton) "The Sestina" (Turco) "The Golden Shovel Anthology" (Kahn, Shankar, Smith; excerpt)	CE 2 (Small Group Workshop 1)	Post by Thurs 4/4 @ midnight Reply by Sun 4/7 @ midnight
4	<i>City Without Altar</i> (Mendez) "City Without Altar by Jasminne Mendez" (Aguilar & Villareal)	DB 3	Post by Thurs 4/11 @ midnight Reply by Sun 4/14 @ midnight
		CE 3	Post by Thurs 4/11 @ midnight

	<p>“From Reznikoff to Public Enemy” (Metres)</p> <p>“The Trump-Era Boom of Erasure Poetry” (Stone)</p> <p> Individual Conferences (Zoom)</p>		
5	<p><i>City Without Altar</i> (Mendez)</p> <p>“Ghazal: To Be Teased into DisUnity” (Ali)</p> <p>“The Pantoum’s Postcolonial Pedigree” (Gotera)</p> <p>“Learning the Persona Poem” (Hazelton)</p> <p>“Skinhead” (Smith)</p> <p> Individual Conferences (Zoom)</p>	CE 4 (Small Group Workshop 2)	<p>Post by Thurs 4/18 @ midnight</p> <p>Reply by Sun 4/21 @ midnight</p>
6	<p><i>City Without Altar</i> (Mendez)</p> <p>“Your Guide to Ekphrastic Poetry (It’s Fantastic)” (Rau)</p> <p> Individual Conferences (Zoom)</p> <p>! Course Drop Deadline Mon April 22, 2024</p>	DB 4	<p>Post by Thurs 4/25 @ midnight</p> <p>Reply by Sun 4/28 @ midnight</p>
		CE 5	<p>Post by Thurs 4/25 @ midnight</p>
7		Final Portfolio + CE 5 Video	<p>Post by Thurs 5/2 @ midnight</p> <p>Reply by Sun 5/5 @ midnight</p>