EN 412  Poetry Writing Workshop  Fall 2008
Professor: Kendall Dunkelberg  Office: Painter 104
email: kdunkelberg@as.muw.edu  Phone: 329-7169
web: http://www2.muw.edu/~kdunk  Hours: MWF 10:00-11:00
Time: MWF 11:00-11:50  TTh 1:30-3:00

Texts:
Written in Water, Written in Stone. Ed. Martin Lammon [WW]
Lyric Postmodernisms. Ed. Reginald Shepherd [LP]

Course Content:
EN 412 is an advanced course in writing poetry with an emphasis on craft. In the first weeks of the
course we will discuss essays on poetics and conduct focused workshops to get started. We will
also read poems by contemporary poets and discuss their styles and the choices they have made.
Since this is a writing workshop, discussion of student work will also be an essential component.
As the semester progresses, emphasis will shift to workshops on student poems. In addition, each
student will meet with me out of class for a biweekly conference to discuss work in progress.

Goals:
• to improve your writing through revision of a portfolio of poems
• to learn rules and techniques of prosody and apply them in your work
• to grow as a critical reader by participating in writing workshops
• to explore the work of contemporary poets and complete an in-depth analysis of one poet

Course Requirements:
Poetry Notebook: You will be asked to keep a poetry notebook in which you record ideas for
writing. I will assign a number of specific exercises for the focused workshops; these should be
included in your notebook along with the revisions that result from class discussion. Also feel free
to write down any ideas that come to you for poems or to do your own warm-up writing exercises.
The notebook will be graded more on quantity than quality. It’s okay to write drafts that never end
up as poems, so long as they show you made a serious effort with the exercises.

Book Review: You will write one 4-6 page review of a book of poetry. You may choose any of the
poets we read for class or any poet whose essay we discuss, or any other living poet with a national reputation. (If you wish to write on a poet we are not covering in class, you must get my approval prior to starting your paper.)
You should find a book or chapbook (minimum 24 pp) by the poet and review the collection as a whole. You may need to order the book through interlibrary loan or purchase a copy of the book. (Books by the Welty writers will be available.) Though you may discuss individual poems, you do not need to critique every poem in the volume. In your essay, you should respond to the themes in the book and to the poet's style. You may also compare this poet to others we have read in class or discuss what you have learned from reading this book. This essay is not meant to be literary criticism or analysis of the kind you do in a literature class; it is meant as an opportunity to discuss how you react as an artist to another poet's work and ideas.

Midterm Portfolio: In order to help you move from the experimental stages of your writing in your
notebook to a more polished draft of your work, and in order to give an accurate assessment of your work for midterm grades, I ask you to turn in a portfolio of poems in progress. This portfolio should be at least 6-8 typed pages. The poems should be neatly typed and proofread for errors; however, they do not all need to be finished or even complete drafts. They should represent the best work from your poetry notebook, which has been revised and reshaped after discussion in class or conference. You may also include work that was begun prior to this class; however, any poems that you have written prior to this semester must be substantially revised, and I should have seen evidence of this revision in conference.

Final Portfolio: The main assignment for the course will be the completion of a 10-15 page
portfolio of poems. For the purposes of this portfolio, fourteen or more lines of poetry will equal one page. In other words, if you write short forms like haiku, regardless of whether you decide to print them on one page, a group of poems must equal fourteen or more lines to be considered a page. Similarly if a poem is more than one page long, each page will count, as long as each page is filled and there are twelve or more lines on the final page of the poem. The work submitted for the final portfolio should include your best work for the course; it should contain most of the work from the midterm portfolio (revised), though not all work from the midterm portfolio need be included and new work should be added. I should have seen all poems in conference or in class. Your portfolio will be graded on the quality of work and the strength of your revisions.

Final Exam: There will be a final exam, which will cover the essays on poetics, information in lectures, and the poems that we have read from the anthology. The exam may include definitions of concepts we have discussed, short answer questions about specific poets, as well as longer essay questions that ask you how you might apply what you have learned from these readings. Extra credit toward the final can be earned by taking part in the WebCT discussion board for the course.

Attendance Policy:
Since discussion of each other’s writing is essential to the success of the course, attendance is mandatory and will be recorded at the beginning of each class. If you arrive late, please inform me after class that you were present; otherwise, you will be counted absent. If you must leave early, please inform me before class and slip out as quietly as possible. Students are required to attend a minimum of 75% of scheduled classes to receive a passing grade. Excessive absences (more than 4) will be considered due cause for lowering your final grade.

Exercises for the focused workshops will be announced in class and posted in WebCT. Be sure to check each week and bring your work to class. Poems for full workshop sessions will be distributed in the WebCT component of this course. If you must miss class before a workshop, check online to get a copy of the poems. In preparation for the workshops, you should read each poem carefully, writing comments and suggestions for revision in the margins. You should also write a paragraph or two with suggestions for global revision. After discussion, return your copy to the author.

In addition to regularly scheduled classes, each student will meet with me for a 20 minute conference every other week. In conference, we will discuss work in progress. Turn in one to three poems at least two days in advance. If you must miss a scheduled conference, please inform me in advance and reschedule. Conference attendance will affect your grade. Therefore, if you have no new work to discuss, come anyway; we will discuss strategies for overcoming writer's block.

**Method of Evaluation:**
Your poetry notebook will receive a $\sqrt{(+\text{ or }-)}$ the first time you turn it in, based on the amount of work and the number of assigned exercises completed. I will assign letter grades to your portfolios, the final poetry notebook, and response essay. They will have the following numeric values:

$$
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{A+} & \text{98} & \text{B+} & \text{88} \\
\text{A} & \text{95} & \text{B} & \text{85} \\
\text{A-} & \text{92} & \text{B-} & \text{82} \\
\text{C+} & \text{78} & \text{C} & \text{75} \\
\text{C-} & \text{72} & \text{D} & \text{65} \\
\text{D+} & \text{68} & \text{D-} & \text{62} \\
\text{F} & \text{0-59}
\end{array}
$$

Final grades will be based on the same system and will be a composite of the following:

- Poetry Notebook and Conferences: 20%
- Book Review: 10%
- Midterm Portfolio: 20%
- Final Portfolio: 40%
- Final Exam: 10%

**Plagiarism** will result in an F (0) on the assignment, and in severe cases is grounds for failure in the course. Plagiarism includes using paraphrased or quoted information from a source without
proper documentation or turning in someone else’s work as your own. Using quoted information without putting it in quotes (or indenting for long quotes) is also considered plagiarism, regardless of whether the source is cited. If you are unsure whether you have used material appropriately, see me before the assignment is due. Since the conventions for creative writing differ from those of academic writing, if you are considering using source material in your poems, discuss this with me in conference. I can help you decide whether it is necessary to document your source and find strategies to indicate the source if necessary. Please refer to the MUW Bulletin for policies regarding plagiarism and academic honesty.

Students with disabilities: A reasonable attempt will be made to accommodate students with documented disabilities. Students must first obtain an accommodations plan through Academic Support Services and make a request for accommodations prior to the due date of the assignment. When a general accommodations plan is presented, it will be tailored to the demands of the Poetry Writing Workshop to create a plan that is fair to all students. All information regarding a student’s disability will be kept confidential.

Use of Cell Phones and other electronic devices is not allowed in class unless you get my permission. In an emergency, I might allow you to set your phone to vibrate and take a call outside of class. You should not use text messaging or other features, including the clock, during class. If I hear or see you with an unauthorized device, I will ask you to turn it off and put it away. If it becomes a problem, I will take it from you for the duration of the class. Laptops and tape recorders may be used to take notes or to record discussion. They may not be used during an exam.

Course Schedule

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<th>Week 1</th>
<th>August 13-15</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>William Matthews “Dull Subjects” WW 17-26</td>
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<th>Week 2</th>
<th>August 18-22</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Workshop on Favorite Poems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Catherine Pierce poems (see WebeT for links)</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>Workshop on Image</td>
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<th>Week 3</th>
<th>August 25-29 Group A</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>C. S. Giscombe LP 73-84??</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Robert Creeley “From an Interview with Linda Wanger” WW 59-68</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>Workshop on Rhyme</td>
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<th>Week 4</th>
<th>September 1-5 Group B</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Amy Clampit “Robert Frost and the Better Half of Poetry” WW 11-16</td>
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<td>David Lehman “Notes on Poetic From” WW 46-49</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>Workshop on Rhythm</td>
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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>September 8-12 Group A</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Nathaniel Mackey LP 133-147</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Charles Wright “Improvisations on Form and Measure” WW 27-29</td>
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<td>James Wright “From the Pure Clear Word” WW 71-80</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>Workshop on Line</td>
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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>September 15-19 Group B</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge LP 26-40</td>
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<td>Wed</td>
<td>Gregory Orr “The Interrupted Scheme” WW 30-36</td>
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<td>Marvin Bell “What does Art ‘Imitate,’ and How?” WW 37-45</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>Workshop on Stanza</td>
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Week 7  September 22-26  Group A
Mon  Forrest Gander LP 62-72
Wed  Louis Simpson “Reflections on Narrative Poetry” WW 102-107
Fri  Workshop on Narrative

Week 8  September 29 - October 3  Group B
Mon  Timothy Liu LP 122-132
Wed  David Ignatow “The Necessity of the Personal” WW 89-101
Fri  Workshop on the Personal  Poetry Notebook Due

Week 9  October 6-10  Group A
Mon  Fall Break
Wed  Tess Gallagher “The Poem as Time Machine” WW 108-118  Midterm Portfolio Due
Fri  Kathleen Fraser LP 50-61

Week 10  October 13-17  Group B
Mon  Angela Ball poems (see WebCT for links)
Wed  Rodney Jones poems (see WebCT for links)
Fri  Welty Symposium (attendance required)

Week 11  October 20-24  Group A
Mon  Rosmary Waldrop LP 241-251
Wed  Diane Wakoski “Poetry as the Dialogue...” WW 147-154
Fri  Workshop

Week 12  October 27-31  Group B
Mon  Marjorie Welish LP 252-258
Wed  Alicia Ostriker “A Wild Surmise” WW 256-260
Fri  Workshop

Week 13  November 3-7  Group A
Mon  Robert Hayden “How it Strikes a Contemporary” WW 193-201
Wed  Martha Ronk LP 180-190
Fri  Workshop  Book Review Due

Week 14  November 10-14  Group B
Mon  Workshop
Wed  Workshop
Fri  Workshop

Week 15  November 17-21  Group A
Mon  Workshop
Wed  Workshop
Fri  Workshop  Poetry Notebook Due

Week 16  November 24-28
Mon  Course Review  Final Portfolio Due
Wed/Fri  Thanksgiving Holiday

Final Exam: Thursday, December 4, 11:30-2:30

Important Dates:
Aug. 19  Last day to enter a class for credit and change from credit to pass-fail
Sept. 17  Last day to withdraw without WP or WF or to change from credit to audit
Oct. 15  Last day to drop a course and receive WP or WF designation
Nov. 7  Last day to withdraw from the university