

Dr. Tina Barr

Creative Writing: Advanced Poetry Workshop, Course 310, 11:20-12:50 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Office, 307 Palmer Hall, (901) 843-3979

You can also email me at: [TinaBarr@rhodes.edu](mailto:TinaBarr@rhodes.edu). **If you need to reach me, I may be working at home (725-1443), so call both numbers. I don't have email at my house.**

**Course Description:** This course is designed to help students develop their own voices and aesthetic sensibilities, to extend further their explorations in the process of revision--re-envisioning different directions for a poem--to open themselves up to different kinds of aesthetics, and to read and discuss theories of poetry.

**Required Texts:** *Coursepack*, which includes essays by: Longinus, Dante, Puttenham, Sidney, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Brooks, Olson, Hass. Additional handouts of poetry by these poets forthcoming. If you don't have a copy of *The Practice of Poetry*, edited by Robin Behn and Chase Twitchell, obtain one. You can refer to this for exercises if you're having trouble generating work.

**Course Requirements:** **1.** Students must **read the assignments carefully**, and be prepared to **contribute significantly to a discussion** on the critical text they've read for a particular week. **2.** Students must **choose several poems by a poet whose aesthetic they admire, and introduce the class to that poet's work.** This poet may have written during an earlier period, in which case the student should submit an essay in conjunction with his or her oral report. If the student's presentation is on a contemporary poet, he or she has the option of completing a book review in lieu of an essay on technique. **3.** Students must complete a **three page book review**, due on the date of their report on a contemporary poet, **or three page essay** on a poem or group of poems for presentation. **4.** Students will **turn in midterm and final portfolios of their own work.** Students should hand in a poem they have worked on each week. I will provide some in-class exercises, but you can also refer to the Behn book of exercises. **5.** Students will each **report on a literary journal** in the library.

**Grading:** Grades are based on talent as demonstrated in the work, including effort at revision-- which is a major part of writing (50%), careful reading and class participation (20%), intelligent leadership in discussion and oral reports (10%), careful consideration in essay or book review (20%).

**Procedures:** Students will be responsible for turning in two copies of each poem they want discussed in class. One will go into the packet I prepare for discussion; the other will go to Gail Stroud for duplication and distribution to the class. **When packets are handed out, students should go over them before the next class period, make comments and notations, and be prepared to offer feedback.**

**Conferences:** I am available for conferences. Students should request a conference at least once during a semester.

**Absences:** More than 3 absences will result in a mandatory report to the Dean's office, and the reduction of your final grade.

Please prepare all materials for discussion on Tuesdays; we may hold the workshop to discuss student work on Tuesdays, or Thursdays, depending on the needs of the class.

**Week 1      1/11**

Class requirements, in-class exercises.

**Assignment for next week:** Read essay by Longinus for class on 1/16. Work on your own poems, based on in-class exercises, to turn in.

**Week 2      1/16 & 1/18** Hand in your own poems for discussion, discussion of Longinus.

**Assignment for next week:** Read essay by Dante. Students with reports due should prepare. Work on your own poems.

**Week 3      1/23 & 1/25**

Hand in student poems, Dante discussion, [\\*student presentation of outside poet](#), workshop.

**Assignment for next week:** Read material by Puttenham. Students with reports due should prepare. Work on your own poems.

**Week 4      1/30 & 2/1**

Discussion of Puttenham, [\\*student reports](#), workshop. Trip to library to explore periodicals section.

**Assignment for next week:** Read material by Sidney; this is a longer assignment, so be prepared to spend some time on it. Work on your own poems. Explore literary journals and decide on one to report on later in semester. *Work on portfolios, due on 2/20, no exceptions*

**Week 5      2/6 & 2/8 no class on 2/8 (I will be in office during class hours to help students with questions on portfolio in conference)**

Discussion of Sidney, Sign-up for reports on literary magazines.

**Assignment for next week:** Read Wordsworth's *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*. Students with reports should prepare. *Work on portfolios, due on 2/20, no exceptions.*

**Week 6**      2/13 & 2/15 **Dr. Barr will be reading her poetry at Burke's Book Store on Poplar, the evening of 2/15.**

**Midterm portfolios due 2/20.** Discussion of Wordsworth, [\\*student reports](#), workshop.

*Assignment for next week:* Read Coleridge entry.

**Week 7**      2/20 & 2/22

**Submit portfolios. No late portfolios will be accepted.** In-class exercises, discussion of Coleridge.

*Assignment for next week:* Read Shelley's *From a Defense of Poetry*. Work on poems, prepare student reports.

**Week 8**      2/27 & 3/1

Discussion of Shelley, [student reports](#), In-class exercises.

*No Assignment over Spring Break*

**Week 10**     3/13 & 3/15

In-class exercises, video of contemporary poets.

*Assignment for next week:* Read Cleanth Brooks's "What Does Poetry Communicate?" Work on your poems, Students should prepare reports on journals.

**Week 11**     3/20 & 3/22

Discussion of Brooks's essay, [student reports on journals](#), workshop.

*Assignment for next week:* Read essay and work by Olson, "Projective Verse."

**Week 12**     3/27 & 3/29 **Famous fiction writer, Jayne Anne Phillips, to read in Blount at 7:30pm on 3/29. Be There.**

Discussion of work by Olson, Handout and discussion of Lowell poem.

*Assignment for next week:* Read essay by Robert Hass on Lowell's "Quaker Graveyard."

**Week 13**     4/3 & 4/5

Discussion of Hass essay. [Student reports on literary journals.](#)

***Assignment for next week:*** Work on revisions of poems in preparation for turning in portfolio on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Turn in revisions for class discussion as a way of preparing for your final portfolio. Bring enough copies for all your classmates on 4/10.

**Week 14** 4/10—No class on April 12<sup>th</sup>, (Easter Break)

Class discussion of revisions on April 10<sup>th</sup>. **Student reports on journals.**

***Assignment over Easter Break:*** Work on revisions of poems in preparation for turning in portfolio on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Week 15** Conferences on 4/17 & No class on 4/19, Dr. Barr will be attending the Associated Writing Programs conference.

Dr. Barr will be in her office during the class period on 4/17, so that you can drop by or schedule a conference if you have questions on your portfolio.

**Week 16** 4/24 & 4/26

**Portfolio due on April 24<sup>th</sup>.** **Student reports on journals.** **Complete evaluations.** **Class party.**

## **Report on Individual Poet**

You should pick a poet whose work you really admire. You can choose a poet from any period or culture, either from an anthology or because you own or acquire a book by a particular poet. Select a group of 3-5 poems for the class to read, and make copies available for everyone on the day of your presentation, or give them to the class and professor ahead of time. (If you can't cover xeroxing costs, you can see me and I'll run them off, but give me lead time on this.)

You are introducing the class to the poet, or discussing further work by a poet the rest of us may already know. Be prepared to talk about why you find this poet's work or these particular poems engaging, and find a way for us to enter into that engagement. Ask questions to direct a discussion, don't lecture! Include biographical information in a way that is constructive to discussion of the poetry.

This is a chance to bring your own taste to bear on our discussion of poetry. Why is this poet's aesthetic important to you?

You must also complete either a three page book review, (if you're working from an individual collection,) *or* a three page essay, based on the technical aspects of a poem or poems, on the poems you're introducing to the class on the day your report is due.

## **Report on Literary Journal**

I will take us all over to the library, and I'll talk informally about the literary journals in the library. I want you each to become familiar with a journal of your choice, and prepare a report and discussion on that particular journal for later in the semester. It's important to recognize that they are at the forefront of publishing in contemporary poetry, that editors of journals reflect a particular kind of taste, and that there are various tiers of journal publication and many different literary magazines that are available for poets.

You may want to bring in a packet of xeroxed materials, describe the history or reflect on the editorial taste of the journal you choose. You are introducing each other to these journals.