

ENGLISH 313

Professor Mark Brazaitis

Office: 219 Colson Hall

Office Hours: immediately after class (for as long as you need) and by appointment

Email: Mark.Brazaitis@mail.wvu.edu

Class Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 10:00-11:15 a.m.

Class Location: Colson G18

Objective: In this class, you will become a better poet. To do so, you will both read and write a lot of poetry.

Requirements: Over the course of the semester, you will read three book-length works of poetry (Kim Addonizio's *Jimmy & Rita*, Yusef Komunyakaa's *Dien Cai Dau*, and Ada Limón's *Bright Dead Things*) as well numerous individual poems.

Grades: Grades will be based on the following: attendance/class participation (20 percent); Poetic Terms exercise (10 percent); poems you write for the class (50 percent); written feedback on your classmates' poems (10 percent); chapbook (10 percent). I hope everyone will work hard, learn a lot, have fun, and earn an 'A.'

Submitting Work: In some cases, your poems should be emailed to a group email chain I will make and/or posted to eCampus. In other cases, you'll email your poems (and your Poetic Terms exercise) directly to me. Your work should be formatted as a PDF or Word document (no Google docs, please).

Written Feedback on Your Peers' Work: You should provide the following comments on your peers' poems: 1) a sentence or two summarizing what the poem is about and/or what you think it's hoping to achieve; 2) one thing you liked or found effective about the poem; 3) one thing you thought could be improved in the poem and how it could be improved. Please write in complete sentences. Your comments should be professional, courteous, and clear.

Workshop Method: Do not address the writer by name. Refer to the writer as "the poet," "the writer," or "the author." When called on, be prepared to offer one positive comment (what you thought was effective about the work) and one suggestion (what could be improved in the work and how). Do your best not to repeat the comments of your classmates. The first person called on will be asked to explain (or try to explain!) what the poem is about.

Attendance: This is a small class, and your attendance is crucial. Do your best to attend all classes. If you cannot attend a class in person but can Zoom in, please email me at least five minutes before class is to start, and I will send you a Zoom link so you can join us. It's best not to make this a habit. However, your presence in any form (in person or virtual) is better, by far, than your absence. The attendance portion of your grade will be

a percentage of how many classes you attend. Thirty of thirty classes attended is 100 percent! That's an A+!

Extra credit: You may attend and write a one-page review of one or more 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. It should be between 1 and 2 pages. Email it to me as an attachment within a week of the event.) Each extra credit assignment counts for four extra points on one of your poems.

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.

Class Schedule and Day-to-Day Assignments

Thursday, August 19 Introductions. Review of Poetic Terms.

Tuesday, August 24 No class. Work on your Poetic Terms exercise. (It will have been emailed to you by midnight, Thursday, August 19.)

Thursday, August 26 **Due (by class time):** your Poetic Terms exercise (email it to me). Lecture, discussion, and reading: Haiku. Writing exercise.

Tuesday, August 31 Lecture, discussion, and reading: Haiku. Writing exercise

Thursday, September 2 **Due (by midnight):** 4 of your haikus (email it to everyone in the class via group email). Lecture, discussion, and reading: the Sonnet. Writing exercise.

Tuesday, September 7 Workshop (of the haikus you've written).

Thursday, September 9 Lecture, discussion, and reading: the Sonnet. Writing exercise.

Due (Saturday, September 11, by noon): your sonnet (email it to everyone in the class via group email).

Tuesday, September 14 Workshop (of your sonnets).

Thursday, September 16 Workshop (of your sonnets).

Tuesday, September 21 Lecture, discussion, and reading: the Narrative Poem. Writing exercise.

Thursday, September 23 Lecture, discussion, and reading: the Narrative Poem. Writing exercise.

****Thursday, September 23, at noon: Special Event: Gwen Strauss will read via Zoom. She is the author of *The Nine* (“*The Nine* tells the true story of a band of women who survived the worst of Nazi Germany...)****

Due (Saturday, September 25, by noon): your narrative poem.

****Monday, September 27, at 7 p.m. Special Event: James Tate Hill will read in the Gold Ballroom of the Mountainlair (event sponsored by the WVU Humanities Center). He is the author of *Blind Man’s Bluff* (“A writer’s humorous and often heartbreaking tale of losing his sight—and how he hid it from the world.**)****

Tuesday, September 28 Workshop (of your narrative poems).

Thursday, September 30 Workshop (of your narrative poems).

Tuesday, October 5 Read: part one of *Jimmy & Rita*. Pick three poems in part one to discuss with the class.

October 7-8 Fall Break – Enjoy!

****Monday, October 11, at 7:30 p.m. Special Event: Sturm Writer-in-Residence Valerie Sayers will read in the Milano Reading Room in the downtown library. She is the author of *The Age of Infidelity & Other Stories* (“In the spirit of Muriel Spark and Walker Percy, *The Age of Infidelity’s* eleven stories embrace the comic, the absurd, and the dead serious.**)****

Tuesday, October 12 Read: part two of *Jimmy & Rita*. Pick three poems in part two to discuss with the class.

Thursday, October 14: Read: part three of *Jimmy & Rita*. Pick three poems in part three to discuss with the class.

Due (Saturday, October 16, by noon): an imitation poem inspired by one of the poems in *Jimmy & Rita*. Email it to me as an attachment.

Tuesday, October 19 Read: the first 14 poems (“Camouflaging the Chimera” to “Night Muse & Mortar Round”) in *Dien Cai Dau*. Pick three poems in this batch to discuss with the class.

Thursday, October 21 Read: the second 14 poems (“One More Loss to Count” to “The One-legged Stool”) in *Dien Cai Dau*. Pick three poems in this batch to discuss with the class.

Tuesday, October 26 Read: the rest of the poems in *Dien Cai Dau*. Pick three poems in this batch to discuss with the class.

Due (Wednesday, October 27, by noon): an imitation poem inspired by one of the poems in *Dien Cai Dau*. Email it to me as an attachment.

Thursday, October 28 Read: part one of *Bright Dead Things*. Pick three poems in part one to discuss with the class.

Tuesday, November 2 Read: part two of *Bright Dead Things*. Pick three poems in part two to discuss with the class.

Thursday, November 4: Read: part three of *Bright Dead Things*. Pick three poems in part three to discuss with the class.

****Thursday, November 4, 7 p.m. — Special Event:** Alison Bass will read in Colson 130 She is the author of *Brassy Broad: How one woman helped pave the way to #MeToo*. (“I was the first reporter in the nation to write about how common it was for male psychiatrists to have sex with their female patients and how that abuse of trust devastated survivors.”)**

Tuesday, November 9 Read: part four of *Bright Dead Things*. Pick three poems in part four to discuss with the class.

Due (Wednesday, November 10, by noon): an imitation poem inspired by one of the poems in *Bright Dead Things*. Email it to me.

Thursday, November 11: Writing exercises.

Due (Saturday, November 13, by noon): one of your original poems. Send it to everyone via the group email.

Tuesday, November 16 Workshop of original poems.

Thursday, November 18 Workshop of original poems.

November 20-28 – Fall Recess – Enjoy!

Due (Monday, November 29, by noon): one of your original poems.

Tuesday, November 30 Discussion of original poems. Note: no written comments on these original poems will be required.

Thursday, December 2: Lecture, discussion, and reading: the Prose Poem. Writing exercise.

Due (Monday, December 6, by noon): your original prose poem.

Tuesday, December 7 Discussion of your prose poems. Note: no written comments on these original prose poems will be required.

Thursday, December 9 Class reading of your poems.

Due (Sunday, December 12, by midnight): a chapbook with revised versions of all the poems you've written for this class. Your chapbook should: 1) have a cover page with the chapbook's title (it can be named after one of the poems therein, though it doesn't have to be); 2) a table of contents page, with poem titles and page numbers; 3) the poems themselves (no more than one poem per page). Send your chapbook to me via email as a PDF or Word document.

WVU COVID-19 Overview

- WVU will resume pre-pandemic campus programming this fall.
- The University strongly recommends all students and employees be vaccinated for COVID-19. [Reasons to Get Vaccinated](#)
- You are considered fully vaccinated:
 - 2 weeks after your second dose in a 2-dose series, or
 - 2 weeks after receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine
- At this time, students and employees are not required to be vaccinated. The University will reevaluate vaccination requirements upon FDA approval.
- Vaccinated students and employees — including those who had received the vaccine from a WVU or WVU Medicine vaccine clinic — must [verify their vaccine status](#) by entering their information into the Vaccine Verification System.
- Individuals who have questions about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine are encouraged to speak with their primary care physician or a representative from [WVU Medicine Student Health](#).
- [Mask requirements](#) for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals

Inclusivity Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in your classes, please advise your instructors and make appropriate arrangements with [the Office of Accessibility Services](#). (<https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>)

More information is available at the [Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) (<https://diversity.wvu.edu/>) as well.

Incomplete Policy

The WVU Catalog contains the full [Incomplete Policy](#).

Sale of Course Material Statement

All course materials, including lectures, class notes, quizzes, exams, handouts, presentations, and other course materials provided to students for their courses are protected intellectual property. As such, the unauthorized purchase or sale of these materials may result in disciplinary sanctions under the [Student Conduct Code](#). (<https://studentconduct.wvu.edu/campus-student-code>)

Sexual Misconduct Statement

West Virginia University does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence. It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff; keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the [Title IX Coordinator](#).

If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the [Carruth Center](#), 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the [Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center](#) (RDVIC), 304- 292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline).

For more information, please consult [WVU's Title IX Office](#) (<https://titleix.wvu.edu/resources-offices>).

Student Evaluation of Instruction Statement

Effective teaching is a primary mission of West Virginia University. Student evaluation of instruction provides the university and the instructor with feedback about your experiences in the course for review and course improvement. Your participation in the evaluation of course instruction is both strongly encouraged and highly valued. Results are strictly confidential, anonymous, and not available to the instructor until after final grades are released by Admissions and Records. Information about how you can complete this evaluation will be provided by your instructor.

Important Telephone Numbers

1. [911](#) (9-911 from campus phones)
2. Department of Public Safety / Campus Police: [\(304\) 293-2677](#)
3. Environmental Health and Safety: [\(304\) 293-3792](#)
4. Health Sciences Safety Office: [\(304\) 293-6924](#)
5. Carruth Center for Counseling and Psychological Services: [\(304\) 293-4431](#)
6. Faculty-Staff Assistance Program: [\(304\) 293-5590](#)
7. Parents Club Hotline: [1 \(800\) 988-0096](#)
8. Student Health Service: [\(304\) 285-7200](#)

Student Emergencies Numbers

In the event of emergencies involving WVU students, students and parents should contact the Office of Campus and Community Life at [\(304\) 293-5611](tel:3042935611).

If the emergency occurs outside normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:15 am – 4:45 pm), please call the Department of Public Safety at [\(304\) 293-3136](tel:3042933136) where someone is on call 24 hours a day.

How do I get zoom?

Follow these instructions:

<https://app.box.com/s/dzop520q0pm3kf0p4d4zngslh48ynb83>

What happens if I am ill or quarantined?

Please contact me to devise a plan to complete the work, per University policy:

https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements# covid_syllabus.

Students may also request an emergency leave of absence in some situations:

<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/enrollmentandregistration/#Emergency>