

Writing 2220F: Introduction to Writing Poetry

Fall 2026

Section 001

Instructor: David Barrick

Course Objectives

As students develop their own poetic voice, they will explore a range of contemporary styles and techniques, with a particular focus on these essential elements: imagery, voice, structure (line breaks & stanzas), literary devices, sound, and rhythm. In addition to class workshops, craft discussions, poetry analysis, and writing exercises, this experiential course will immerse students in current small press publishing trends, including direct engagement with London's poetry community. Students will consider the larger context of literary culture in Canada and how, as emerging writers, they might participate in it.

Students who successfully complete Writing 2220F should be able to do the following:

- Communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences;
- Generate poem ideas, images, and drafts through writing exercises;
- Write using a variety of poetic approaches, including free verse, lyric and narrative techniques, formal verse, prose poetry, ekphrasis, and experimentation;
- Analyze the work of published poets;
- Work effectively with classmates, giving and receiving constructive feedback;
- Incorporate feedback into revisions of course work;
- Understand the importance of engaging with literary community in the form of researching publishers, reading journals/contemporary poets, attending readings, and submitting poems.

Texts

Best Canadian Poetry 2019. Ed. Rob Taylor. Windsor: Biblioasis, 2019. ISBN: 9781771963305 (\$22.95)

The Next Wave: An Anthology of 21st Century Canadian Poetry. Ed. Jim Johnstone. Windsor: Anstruther Books/Palimpsest Press, 2017. ISBN: 9781926794709 (\$25.45)

Rekdal, Paisley. *Real Toads, Imaginary Gardens: On Reading and Writing Poetry Forensically*. New York: Norton, 2024. ISBN: 9780393881981 (\$30.60)

Suggested: Barrick, David. *Nightlight*. Windsor: Palimpsest, 2022. ISBN 978-1-990293-09-2 (\$19.95)

Course Requirements

Term Work	Grade Value	Due Date
Image Poem (20-30 lines)	10%	Week 3
Midterm Portfolio (2 polished poems, 40-60 lines total)	15%	Week 6
Chapbook Pitch Presentation	10%	Weeks 8, 9, 10
Final Chapbook Project (includes 10 pages of polished poetry and a self-reflection)	45%	Week 12
'Forensic' Poem Responses (5 in OWL Forums)	20%	ongoing

Assignment Format

All assignments must be typed in Times New Roman 12pt font; make sure that prose assignments are double-spaced and that poetry assignments are single-spaced. All assignments must have your name, course name, section number, and the instructor's name on the first page. Whenever using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA style.

Submitting Assignments

Assignments are due on the date specified in their corresponding guidelines. **Late assignments will be penalized 5 points per day unless I have granted you an extension.** You must request extensions ahead of the due date; they are not automatic, nor will they be granted retroactively.

In this course, you will submit the final version of all written assignments electronically (**Word docx files only**), through OWL, to Turnitin.com. No print copies are necessary. However, be aware that you are responsible for keeping backup copies of all assignments submitted.

Attendance Policies

Attendance at class is required to improve as a writer. Here is the Writing Studies attendance policy in this class:

If you miss nine unexcused hours of class (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10 marks (e.g., an earned final grade of 80% will be reduced to a final grade of 70%; a grade of 70% will be reduced to 60%).

If you miss a total of more than nine unexcused hours of class (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15 marks (e.g., an earned final grade of 80% will be reduced to a final grade of 65; a final grade of 70 will be reduced to 55).

This policy will be waived only if you have either undocumented or documented academic consideration. You may only use the undocumented consideration option once each term. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you must discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, and submit documentation to support your request for academic consideration. (See Academic Consideration policy below.)

Attendance also extends to tardiness. If you are more than 20 minutes late, you will be penalized an hour of attendance. Please make every effort to be on time as late entry can disrupt the flow of discussion in our class. Early departures from class, which have not been previously arranged with the instructor, will also be counted as an absence. If you leave during the break, you will be docked an hour of attendance.

Note: A class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course **will** count as non-attendance, and **will** attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario **shall not require** a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is **your** choice; your absence will not be excused.