

ENG205W (001): Poemutations

Date, Time, Location: TuTh 1:00pm-2:15pm Callaway Center S104

Instructor: Christina M. Colvin

Contact: cmcolvi@emory.edu

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 1:00pm-2:00pm

Office Location: Callaway Center N212-A

Course Website: www.ColvinCourses.com

Course Topic and Description

The poem
feeds upon thought, feeling, impulse,
to breed itself,
a spiritual urgency at the dark ladders leaping.
-Robert Duncan, "Poetry, a Natural Thing"

It's mostly someone
long dead who gets curious
all over again, who once told
a book, the book
picked clean to glow
on a website now, an address
with double slashes in it.
-Marianne Boruch, "Book and Screen"

Is poetry alive or dead? Can a poem evolve, or must it maintain an essential, timeless character? What is the relationship between nature, culture, history, technology, and poetry? This course will train you to read and write critically about poetic art through the close study of poetry as a literary text and material object. We will consider how writers, thinkers, and artists receive, disseminate, and engage modern and contemporary poetry. We will investigate how poets, readers, publishers, and archives both digital and physical influence the production, reception, mutation, and resilience of poetry.

This course will involve frequent informal and formal writing assignments, creative exercises, oral presentations, and collaborative work. This course also participates in the Domain of One's Own Program. You will build and maintain a personal website and compose with a variety of digital tools.

Course Outcomes

Close reading and analysis. You will ask meaningful questions about poetry and recognize a range of ways poets use language, structure, and form to create meaning. You will use these observations to provide critical and creative interpretations of poetry.

Writing, argumentation, and communication. You will develop and articulate your interpretations of poems through oral discussion and by composing print, digital, and multimodal texts. You will use writing as a critical thinking tool. You will form arguments about poems in conversation with other thinkers and writers.

Rhetorical composition. In your compositions, you will use and adapt generic conventions, including organization, development, and style. You will exercise the most appropriate tone, style, and grammatical conventions for each of the texts you produce.

Familiarity with contemporary poetry in English. You will display a working knowledge of poetry as a literary genre. You will identify and describe how poetry can address a range of social, ethical, artistic, and cultural concerns. You will study the relationship between historical contexts, digital technologies, the dissemination of texts, and the shifting cultural meanings and relevance of poetry.

Required Texts

Native Guard by Natasha Trethewey (ISBN 9780618872657)

Lucky Fish by Aimee Nezhukumatathil (ISBN 9781932195583)

Early Occult Memory Systems of the Lower Midwest by B.H. Fairchild (ISBN 9780393325669)

Citizen by Claudia Rankine (ISBN 9781555976903)

The Cloud Corporation by Timothy Donnelly (ISBN 9781933517476)

Autobiography of Red by Anne Carson (ISBN 9780375701290)

Crisis of Infinite Worlds by Dana Ward (ISBN 9780982279885)

All other required texts will be made available through our course website or Course Reserves.

Description of Course Assignments and Grade Weights

Reading Response Blog (15%)

Every week you will post an entry of 250-350 words to your course website's blog. Writing blog posts will allow you to develop your public writing voice; you should anticipate that these posts will be read not only by me, but by a larger audience that includes your peers. You may even choose to continue writing in your blog after the conclusion of the course! Oftentimes, your blog entries will be used to generate class discussion, so keep in mind as you write that you may be called on in class to discuss the content of your posts. Further, writing blog posts will allow you to engage and explore the readings, topics, and writing strategies brought up during class more thoroughly than our class exercises and discussion may allow.

With a few exceptions (noted on the schedule below), blog posts are due every Thursday at 9:00am. You are allowed to skip *one* posting without penalty. You are also allowed to skip a blog post during the week you lead class discussion. This means that you should have a total of *seven* entries at the end of the semester. Late blog entries (ie., those posted after 9:00am on Thursday) will earn a "zero."

Annotation Project (10%)

You will demonstrate your attention to detail and close reading ability by digitally annotating a poem using the Genius online annotation tool and embedding your annotation to your website. To receive full credit for this assignment, you must include the following components on your website:

- A poem of your choice, annotated by you, of no longer than 20 lines (or a selection of a longer poem no longer than 20 lines), embedded onto a Page on your website (see instructions below)
- At least seven, independently-clickable annotations, authored by you and written in grammatically-correct English
- At least two annotations that include relevant images with explanatory captions (that is, explain how the images help advance a reading and/or understanding of the poem). Source images from the Public Domain (refer to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Public_domain_image_resources for a list of Public Domain image resources).
- A brief, 250-300 word introduction to your annotations, explaining how your annotations provide unique insight into the poem and/or how someone might use your annotations to interpret the poem

To get started with your Annotation Project, read the following instructions:

1. Sign up for an account at lit.genius.com and upload a profile photo (you don't have to upload an actual photo of yourself if you'd prefer not to, but completing this step will allow you to upload your own poem to the Genius site).
2. Browse online poetry resources and select a poem you want to annotate. Good places to start include Project Gutenberg [<https://www.gutenberg.org/>] and search for "poetry" or a specific poet] and Poetry Foundation [<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/>].
3. Upload your poem to Poetry Genius. Click the "Add Song" link at the top of the Poetry Genius site, fill in the required fields, and copy/paste your poem, making sure that your poem maintains its original formatting (line breaks, italicizations, etc.).
4. Annotate! After you've successfully uploaded your poem to Poetry Genius, you can begin the annotation process. Simply highlight a selection of text and the annotation dialogue will appear to the right of your poem.
5. Embed your annotated poem to your website. Click the "Embed" button next to your annotated poem and select "Embed this text on your site." After copying the code, paste it into a new WordPress Page (from the main WordPress text-entry dialogue screen, switch from "Visual" to "Text" and then paste your code). For more about embedding codes from Genius, see <http://genius.com/Embed-genius-how-to-embed-text-and-annotations-annotated>.

You will present your Annotation Project on the date listed on the class schedule below.

If a poem you intended to annotate is already uploaded to Genius, you must fulfill all of the requirements above to receive full credit for this assignment (including the minimum number of annotations authored by you). For the purposes of this assignment, then, you might find it easiest to upload a poem not already annotated by Genius users.

Argument Essay (15%)

Using MLA citation rules, write a 1250-1500-word essay in which you make an argument about how one of the poems (or a couple of poems) read in this course can help think through, address, and/or complicate a contemporary issue of interest and relevance to the class. Your essay should answer the question: how does this poem advance, complicate, or otherwise contribute to an understanding of my issue, and how does the issue advance, complicate, or otherwise contribute to an understanding of the poem?

To receive full credit, your essay must include:

- A sustained, close analysis of key moments in the poem or poems of your choosing used to support and advance your argument
- A demonstrated understanding on the sentence and paragraph level of how the parts of your argument work together to form an unfolding, cohesive whole
- At least one relevant image to accompany your essay placed in an appropriate location (that is, with consideration to how it adds to your argument)
- An introduction or overview of your selected issue, as well as a thoughtful consideration of its stakes
- A link to a recent (that is, published within the last five years) news article covering the contemporary issue in question, hyperlinked and integrated into your text
- A summary of the main points of the above article as well as your account of any oversights/assumptions on the article's part

Your essay must be posted to your website on the date and time indicated on the course schedule.

Class Participation (20%)

Your successful completion of the following three components will determine your grade for the "Class Participation" category.

Daily participation. The success of this course depends on your active class participation. Be prepared to respond to the day's assigned readings during class discussion (both those discussions led by me and those led by your classmates) and with in-class writing. It should go without saying that you are required to have completed all of the assigned readings prior to the beginning of the session; you are also required to have the text we are discussing open to the proper page during class.

Two Presentations. You will give two in-class presentations during the semester: a presentation of your Annotation Project and a presentation of your final project.

- **Annotation Project presentation.** You will guide the class through your Annotation Project. You will introduce your poem, explain why you chose it, and show the class what choices you made as an annotator of the poem. You will also suggest what possibilities for poetic interpretation your annotations open up for visitors to your site as well as what you learned about the poem, about annotating, about the poet, and/or about your own reading practices by undertaking the Annotation Project. Plan to spend four minutes guiding the class through your annotations.
- **Final Project presentation.** You will introduce the class to your Final Project. You should focus on your interest in your topic, your reasons for choosing the theme or research question you did, as well as what you have learned and/or concluded by researching, writing, and thinking through your project. Plan to spend ten minutes introducing the class to your final project. You are welcome to supplement your presentation with visual or other learning aids.

Discussion-leading session. With your team, you will spend one class session guiding the class in a discussion of a poem or a set of poems selected from that week's book of poetry. At the beginning of the semester, you will sign up to present on a certain day, so coordinate with your team well in advance.

Discussion leaders will practice analyzing poetry by using their own observations and questions to help the class explore features and pursue unique interpretations of the poems. You and your team should be very familiar with the poems to which you want to direct the class's attention and you should coordinate with one another to structure your discussion with questions, observations, and/or activities. Your goal as a discussion leader is not to "know" everything about your set of poems, but to familiarize yourself with the poems thoroughly so as to feel comfortable asking guided questions about them (as well as answering or working toward answers to questions that you receive). While I will be present to support you as you lead discussion, consider yourself and your team the day's "experts" on the poems, the primary leaders of the session, and the main resources for students who have questions.

Guidelines and tips for instruction leaders:

- Prepare to lead discussion for at least 45 minutes.
- Introduce yourselves at the beginning of your session, even if you lead discussion toward the end of the semester when we all know one another.
- Read (in full) each new poem you discuss at length, or select a student volunteer to read it for you. If you cover a long poem, read relevant selections.
- Consider delivering a short lecture to begin your discussion to acquaint others with your thought process and approach to the poem.
- Make connections between your discussion of the poem(s) and previous discussions held in class or through blog entries.
- Prepare questions to lead the class to a deeper understanding of the poem(s), or ask questions about parts of the poem that are challenging or difficult to interpret.
- Be creative! Provide visual and/or audio support for your discussion and explain how they help understand the poem(s) in question. Design and distribute a handout, set of questions, illustration, or notes. Stage a dramatization involving the class (or just yourselves). Contextualize your poems by explaining historical contexts, literary influences, and/or artistic movements.

You are not required to post a blog entry the week you lead the class in discussion. In the place of your blog entry, you and your team should post on each of your websites at least three "discussion goals," or a list of what you want the class to learn via your discussion. You and your teammates can post the same list to both of your websites.

Final Project (20%)

Your Final Project for this class is comprised of two components, a topic declaration and your choice of a research essay or anthology of poetry.

Topic Declaration. On your website, post your 150-200 word research essay or poetry anthology topic declaration. If you are writing a research essay, at least one of your sentences should take the form of a research question. If you are assembling a poetry anthology, you should name at least three poems you intend to include. While I encourage your ideas to change as you research and think, you should use the topic you establish here as a rough guide for your work as you delve fully into the research process.

Research Essay OR Poetry Anthology.

You will either compose a 1750-1800 word research essay in MLA style or assemble a poetry anthology comprised of at least ten poems and/or items from special or digital collections (five poems should come from our course readings and five poems or other items should be selected by you and not read in the course) organized according to a theme you select. I will release additional particulars for these two options later in the semester.

Digital Portfolio (20%)

This course proudly participates in the Emory Writing Program's Domain of One's Own initiative. To get started, visit and follow the instructions at emorydomains.org. Domain registration costs \$12.00.

After registering your domain on emorydomains.org, install WordPress:

http://docs.emorydomains.org/getting_started/install_wordpress

Then, take some time to customize your site via WordPress! Customization will help make your site reflect your interests and personality.

Throughout the semester you will each curate a WordPress-based website to showcase several of the assignments produced in this course. No prior experience with web design or digital authoring is required for successful completion of course assignments. Your work will be published to the web and available to audiences beyond the class and university. Additionally, while you are required to include the items listed below, you are encouraged to add more content (including additional course assignments and exercises) to your website. You are also encouraged to customize your site.

To receive full credit, your course website *must* include the following items:

- At least seven blog entries*
- Annotation Project*
- Discussion goals from your discussion leader session*
- Argument essay*
- Research essay or poetry anthology topic declaration*
- Final project*
- 200-350 word Personal or Welcome Statement
- 500 word Reflective Portfolio Letter
- Final project presentation content (optional)
- External Links Page (optional)

*You will produce these pieces as part of the progression of the course; I describe them more fully above.

Create blog entries using the "Posts" link on your WordPress dashboard. Create all other items as static "Pages" directly accessible from your site's landing page. For instructions on how to create both "Posts" and "Pages" in WordPress, as well as how to customize your site, refer to the following tutorials:

1. To add pages, make your "About" page the first page your user sees, reassign the post page, and manage themes:

http://docs.emorydomains.org/getting_started/configure_wordpress_on_your_domain

2. To build custom menus in WP:

[http://docs.emorydomains.org/wordpress/working_with_custom_menus?s\[\]=menu](http://docs.emorydomains.org/wordpress/working_with_custom_menus?s[]=menu)

3. To customize your site using widgets and plugins:

http://docs.emorydomains.org/wordpress/wordpress_widgets and

http://docs.emorydomains.org/wordpress/wordpress_plugins

Grading Scale and Rubric

This class is graded on the scale described below:

Grade/Scale	Description
A 4.0, A- 3.7	Extremely high quality work, effort, and performance beyond minimum requirements. Excellent attendance and substantial contributions to discussions.
B+ 3.3, B 3.0, B- 2.7	Well-written work that continues to improve. A level of effort and performance beyond minimum requirements. Good attendance and contributions to discussions.
C+ 2.3, C 2.0, C-1.7	Generally competent work and a level of effort that meets course requirements. Regular attendance and contributions to discussions.
D+ 1.3, D 1.0	Work that is uneven in quality or suggests incompetence. Minimal contributions to discussions.
F 0.0	Incomplete or unacceptable work. No real effort to participate in class discussions. Four or more absences.

Attendance

You are expected to attend all class sessions. You are, however, permitted two absences without penalty. If you exceed two absences from class, your final grade will drop by 1/3 of a letter (ie. a final grade of a "B" will become a "B-"). Your grade will continue to drop 1/3 of a letter for every additional absence thereafter. Missing seven or more classes will result in an "F." I take attendance every day.

You are expected to come to class on time. Every three late arrivals to class will count as an absence. In short, three tardies equal one absence. Such an absence will count towards your total number of missed classes.

Contact/Communication

Email is the best way to contact me if you have questions or concerns. Generally, I will respond to all student email within 24 hours (although on weekends and holidays, it may take a little longer). Likewise, there may be instances when I will need to contact you by email. It is your responsibility to check your Emory-based email account at least once every 24 hours.

Late Work

All assignments must be turned in on the date and time indicated. Work submitted after the due date will earn a "zero."

Electronics

Since we are composing multimodally throughout the course, you are encouraged to bring to class and operate laptops, tablets, and smart phones. I encourage you to develop best practices for negotiating among virtual communities and the real time of the classroom. What choices can you make to remain attentive to your peers and me, while at the same time engaging with digital resources?

Public Nature of the Course

Please consider all writing for this class to be "public." Part of becoming an effective writer is learning to appreciate the ideas and feedback of others. In this course, our purpose is to come together as a writing community. Avoid writing about topics that you wish to keep private or that you feel so strongly about that you are unwilling to listen to the perspectives of others.

Cooling-Off Period

When I return a graded assignment to you, I request that you read my comments about your work carefully and wait 24 hours before coming to speak with me about your grade. I have found that asking for this "cooling-off" period results in more productive discussions about graded work.

Resources for Students

Emory Writing Center. The Emory Writing Center offers 45-minute individual conferences to Emory College and Laney Graduate School students. It is a great place to bring any project—from traditional papers to websites—at any stage in your composing process. Writing Center tutors take a discussion- and workshop-based approach that enables writers of all levels to see their writing with fresh eyes. Tutors can talk with you about your purpose, organization, audience, design choices, or use of sources. They can also work with you on sentence-level concerns (including grammar and word choice), but they will not proofread for you. Instead, they will discuss strategies and resources you can use to become a better editor of your own work. The Writing Center is located in Callaway N-212. Visit writingcenter.emory.edu for more information and to make appointments.

Tutoring for Multilingual Students. If English is not your first language, you may benefit from working with specially trained ESL Tutors. The tutors are undergraduates who will support the development of your English language skills. Like Writing Center tutors, ESL tutors will not proofread your work. Language is best learned through interactive dialogue, so when you come to an ESL tutoring session, be ready to collaborate! ESL tutors will meet with you in designated locations across campus (visit ASST to view the list), and they will help you at any stage of the process of developing your essay or presentation. You may bring your work on a laptop or on paper. Each regular appointment lasts 50-55 minutes. Each student may only schedule two ESL tutoring appointments per week. Additional walk-in hours without appointment will be offered on five Sundays at the end of the semester: on November 8, 15, 22, 29, and on December 6. On these days, walk-in hours will be held from 4-6pm in Math & Science E301A. You may have less time to work with a tutor if other students are waiting, but you can briefly discuss an assignment and some of your concerns. For more information, go to the website (see below) or contact Dr. Levin Arnsperger:

larnspe@emory.edu. Visit the website of the Office for Undergraduate Education (<http://college.emory.edu/oue/>) and select "Student Support" and then "ESL Program" to schedule a regular appointment via ASST, to read the tutoring policies, and to view the offerings of the ESL Program. Here is the direct link to ESL Tutoring: <http://college.emory.edu/oue/student-support/esl-program/esl-tutoring.html>. We look forward to working with you.

Access and Disability Resources. I strive to create an inclusive learning environment for all. I am invested in your success in this class and at Emory, so please let me know if anything is standing in the way of your doing your best work. This can include your own learning strengths, any classroom dynamics that you find uncomfortable, ESL issues, disability or chronic illness, and/or personal issues that impact your work. I will hold such conversations in strict confidence.

Students with medical/health conditions that might impact academic success should visit Access, Disability Services and Resources (<http://www.ods.emory.edu/index.html>) to determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Students who receive accommodations must present the Accommodation Letter from ADSR to your professor at the beginning of the semester, or when the letter is received.

Academic Advising Office. For medical, personal, or other concerns that may affect your academic life, the Academic Advising Office may be of use to you. The Academic Advising Office respects your confidentiality. To learn more, go to <http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/advising/advising.html>.

Emory Counseling Services. The Emory Student Counseling Center provides free and confidential counseling for students. To learn more, call (404) 727-7450 or go to <http://studenthealth.emory.edu/cs>.

Academic Integrity. We will follow the Emory College Honor Code, available at http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policy/honor_code.html. I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty seriously. Should I suspect that you engage in academic dishonesty in this course, I will refer the case to Emory's Honor Council. You may also receive an F on the assignment(s) in question.

Schedule of Classes, Readings, and Assignments

Schedule Changes. Please be aware that this schedule is tentative and may change as the course progresses.

Exam Period. Class will not meet during the College's scheduled exam period.

Week One, Aug. 26-Aug. 28

THURS. *In class:* Introductions; syllabus review; reader and writer's autobiography

Week Two, Aug. 31-Sept. 4

TUES. *Read:* Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself"

Due today: Domain setup: email your website address to cmcolvi@emory.edu

THURS. *Read:* Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps* (1865)

<http://www.whitmanarchive.org/published/other/DrumTaps.html>

Due today: First blog entry, posted to your website by 9:00am

Week Three, Sept. 7-Sept. 11

TUES. *Read:* Whitman, *Drum-Taps* continued

THURS. *Read:*

- Hart Crane, "Cape Hatteras" <http://www.poetrynook.com/poem/4-cape-hatteras>
- Allen Ginsberg, "A Supermarket in California" <http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/supermarket-california>
- Sherman Alexie, "Defending Walt Whitman" http://www.bpj.org/poems/alexie_whitman.html

Due today: Second blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Four, Sept. 14-Sept. 18

TUES. *In class:* Meet in the Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library (Woodruff Library, 10th floor)

THURS. *Read:* "From Whitman to Walmart" by CAConrad and selections from *Ecodeviance* (Course Reserves)

Due today: Third blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Five, Sept. 21-Sept. 25

TUES. *Read:* Aimee Nezhukumatathil, *Lucky Fish*

THURS. *Read:* Nezhukumatathil, *Lucky Fish* continued

In class: Discussion led by _____

Due today: Fourth blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Six, Sept. 28-Oct. 2

TUES. *Read:* TBA

THURS. *In class:* Annotation Project presentations

Due today: Annotation Projects, completed and posted to your website
(no blog entry due this week)

Week Seven, Oct. 5-Oct. 9

TUES. *In class:* Annotation Project presentations continued

THURS. *Read:* Natasha Trethewey, *Native Guard*

In class: Discussion led by _____

Due today: Fifth blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Eight, Oct. 12-Oct. 16

TUES. No class; Fall Break

THURS. *Read:* Trethewey, *Native Guard* continued

(no blog entry due this week)

Week Nine, Oct. 19-Oct. 23

TUES. *In class:* Writing workshop

Due today: Argument essay draft

THURS. *Read:* Dana Ward, *Crisis of Infinite Worlds*

In class: Discussion led by _____

Due today: Sixth blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Ten, Oct. 26-Oct. 30

TUES. Ward, *Crisis of Infinite Worlds* continued
Due today: Argument essay, posted to your website

THURS. *Read:* B. H. Fairchild, *Early Occult Memory Systems of the Lower Midwest* (selections)
Due today: Seventh blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Eleven, Nov. 2-Nov. 6

TUES. *Read:* Timothy Donnelly, *The Cloud Corporation*

THURS. *Read:* Donnelly, *The Cloud Corporation* continued
In-class: Discussion led by _____
Due today: Eighth blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Twelve, Nov. 9-Nov. 13

TUES. *Read:* Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*

THURS. *Read:* Rankine, *Citizen* continued
In-class: Discussion led by _____
Due today: Ninth blog entry, posted to your course website by 9:00am

Week Thirteen, Nov. 16-Nov. 20

TUES. *Read:* Anne Carson, *Autobiography of Red*
Due today: Topic declaration, posted to your course website

THURS. *Read:* Carson, *Autobiography* continued
(no blog entry due this week)

Week Fourteen Nov. 23-Nov. 27

TUES. *In class:* Meet in the Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library (Woodruff Library, 10th floor)

THURS. No class; Thanksgiving break
(no blog entry due this week)

Week Fifteen, Nov. 30-Dec. 4

TUES. Final project presentations

THURS. Final project presentations
(no blog entry due this week)

Week Sixteen, Dec. 8

TUES. Reader and writer's autobiography, course evaluations, closing remarks

****December 14, 2015 by 5:00pm: Final Project due to your website, and all Digital Portfolio elements finalized for review**