English 92: Reading and Writing Poetry
Spring 2014, M/W, 10-11:50am
Building 20, Room 21G
John W. Evans, wevbo@stanford.edu
Office: Margaret Jacks (Bldg 460), Room 211 * 650-723-2638
Office Hours: M 12:30-2:30pm.

Course Description: This section of English 92 will serve as an introduction to the practice of the major forms of poetry in English. You will read and write individual poems as the outcome of choices that reflect a specific intention, with an emphasis on craft. Creative work will be assigned in the form of poems, imitations, and revisions. Critical work will be assigned in the form of written analysis, a reading response, and critiques of poems written by your colleagues. You will organize mid-term and final materials, as well as attend at least one writing conference during the quarter. A variety of creative prompts, critical exercises, and assigned readings will foster your understanding and appreciation of poetry, as well as your growth as a creative writer. Writers at all levels of experience and comfort with poetry are welcome. Energetic, committed participation is a must.

Required Texts (will be supplemented with handouts):
Maria Hummel, House & Fire (APR, 2013); ISBN-10: 097189812X.

Course Requirements:
Class Participation (25%): A workshop succeeds when its participants are punctual, engaged, thoughtful, and intellectually invested in each other’s growth and success. Please arrive to each class meeting on time, in possession of the course materials, having completed the due assignments, and ready to make regular contributions to the conversation. I expect you to read the assigned readings carefully for discussion, and to read each other’s work carefully in preparation for workshop, writing thoughtful comments and endnotes (See The Poetry Workshop, p.11). The assigned readings will serve as a broad introduction to the week’s assigned topic(s). Therefore, you should expect to read more poems for homework than we will discuss in class. Starting in Week 2, I will partially quantify your class participation in the course by counting the number of times you speak in class. I will also make some brief continuing notes after each class, so as to have a qualitative basis for the evaluation of class participation. Please be thoughtful about sharing the discussion space in the workshop.

Writing Assignments (25%): You should expect to do in-class writing at the beginning of class; a notebook or journal might be helpful for organizing this writing. You will write a series of in-class and homework-based poems, organized around craft exercises and poet-specific imitation work, and shared during in-class workshops. You will develop and workshop materials for an individual conference during Week 5. We will meet individually, in small groups, and as a whole class, to discuss and workshop your writing throughout the quarter. You will write four (4) original poems during this course, and revise three (3) of them. Critiqued work will include specific recommendations for revision with an emphasis on line editing and formal structure, and will be returned to the writer as a resource for revision (See The Poetry Workshop, p.11).

Leading A Class Discussion (25%): During the quarter, you will either individually or in pairs lead a class discussion on the assigned texts for the day (See Calendar, p.9). You will select the poems to
emphasize during our discussion. You will organize your thoughts related to form and theme in the selected poems. You will lead the class discussion on those poems. You will distribute a supplemental handout related to your presentation. You do not need to turn in any written work to me for your discussion leading. Comprehensive guidelines are given in the Course Assignments portion of this syllabus (see p.5).

Recitation (10%): You will memorize and recite a poem of at least 20 lines.

End of Term Analysis (10%): You will speak to the class for about a minute regarding a poem from the assigned readings or in-class work that had a direct impact on your development as a writer during the quarter. No written work is required and you will not turn in anything.

Reading Response (5%): It is departmental policy that you attend three readings during the quarter. The quarterly readings are posted on the departmental website and I will announce them in class. You will write one brief response to an aspect of craft that you observed in these readings. As an alternative to one reading, you can substitute a visit to the Poet’s House, a visit to Writer’s Studio, or read one Paris Review interview (http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews).

Course Grading: The highest grade that you can earn in this class is an “A.” You are always welcome to check-in with me regarding your grade. As detailed above, your grade breaks down by the following percentages:

- Class Participation (25%)
- Writing Assignments (25%)
- Leading a Class Discussion (25%)
- Recitation (10%)
- End of Term Analysis (10%)
- Reading Response (5%)

Coursework Formatting: Please type all assignments in plain 12-point Times New Roman font. Single-space your poetry, unless you mean to indicate additional lineation. On each document, include your name, assignment title and the date. All poems must be titled. When submitting poems to the class, bring enough copies for each member of the class, and a couple of extra copies (~20, to be safe). Printers are notoriously unreliable machines; anticipate their failure and plan accordingly. Assignments may NOT be submitted or distributed via e-mail.

Absences and Missed Work: You are allowed two absences for the duration of the quarter. Thereafter, your grade will drop a full letter with each absence. If you are more than ten minutes late to class, or if you leave early, it will count as an absence. There are no such things as excused absences in this course—you are given two absences in case of unforeseen circumstances, and additional absences will be penalized regardless of the reason given. In coordination with a medical professional, I will work with you to best accommodate long-term illnesses or medical situations. If you miss class, for any reason, it is your responsibility to follow-up with a colleague regarding what you missed, to arrange any missed work, and to come prepared to participate fully in the next class. You will receive an automatic grade of ‘C’ for any assignment submitted after the due date, unless we have made other arrangements prior to the assignment’s deadline.
**Paperwork:** You will receive a lot of paper in this course, including handouts, student work, and critiques from your fellow students. Be prepared to get organized and consider purchasing a file folder or binder. Do not discard any of your work during the quarter.

**The Digital Age:** As a courtesy to your colleagues, do not use your laptop, phone, PDA, etc., during class. You will not need to use the internet, create electronic documents during this class, or send electronic messages during this class. Please keep your cell phones turned off and stowed away. An exception is made to this policy for the Week 5 Conferences and In-Class Writing Lab.

**Email Updates.** I will send out via email class summaries following each class, usually within 24 hours of our meeting. I cannot by Stanford policy distribute student emails for any reason. If you are uncomfortable sharing your email address with me, then you may opt out of the email summaries.

**Office Hours and Etiquette:** I will hold office hours each week on Monday 12:30-2:30pm. Feel free to drop by to talk about your work, the genre, your grade, etc. These office hours are for your benefit and use. If you have a question or concern about the course, please see me in office hours before you email me. I only check email once a day, and choose not to have an internet connection at home. Please help me in trying to cut down on the amount of email.

**Conferences:** As noted above, I will meet individually with every student at the mid-point of the quarter. I may request an additional conference with you if I think that it would benefit your work or progress.

**Criticism:** My primary goal as the instructor of this course is to cultivate an environment in which you feel comfortable managing the many vulnerabilities inherent in writing poetry and sharing it with strangers, while expanding your knowledge base of poetic craft and form. A secondary goal is to demonstrate a particular creative and critical faculty, as I have developed it. To this end, my feedback during workshops is generally positive and encouraging, while my written feedback can be more critical.

**English 92-192-292 vs. English 60/160:** English 92-192-292 is a poetry workshop sequence. It is not a comprehensive introduction to poetry in the English language. English 60/160 covers this subject matter, with a critical-literary emphasis. Creative writing instruction in the English department at Stanford University is the study of literature through the practice of craft.

**Readings:** Readings are selected to emphasize those formal and thematic elements that I think will help you to develop as readers and writers of creative nonfiction. I assign more readings than we can discuss in a given class, with the hope of offering many models for your writing. The student(s) leading the day’s discussion chooses the readings we’ll spend time with in class.

**Departmental Readings, Listserv, and Blog:** You will attend three campus readings during the quarter. I will announce them as they come up in class. A list of readings can be found at http://creativewriting.stanford.edu and http://events.stanford.edu. If you have not already done so, please also sign up for the Creative Writing Events Listserv by going to http://mailman.stanford.edu and joining “cw-undergrad”.

**Other Helpful Web Sites**
1. [www.poems.com](http://www.poems.com) (*Poetry Daily*. A new poem every day, plus links every week to poetry news)
2. www.poetryfoundation.org (The web site of Poetry magazine, includes many poems online)
3. www.poets.org (The Academy of American Poets)
4. www.loc.gov/poetry/180/ (Poetry 180, an online anthology of accessible, contemporary poetry)
5. www.versedaily.org (Verse Daily, similar to Poetry Daily, above)
6. www.newpages.com (New Pages, a guide to nearly every online and in-print literary magazine)
7. www.favoritepoem.org (The Favorite Poem Project, submitted by people from all walks of life)

**Academic Advising:** Please stop by the department to consult with an academic advisor, to learn more about the Creative Writing Program, and/or to ask questions and make suggestions.

**Students with Documented Disabilities:** Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).

**The Honor Code:** The Honor Code is the University’s statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work. The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

1. That they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
2. That they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code;
3. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code;
4. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

**Emergency Numbers:** Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): 650-723-3785; The Bridge Peer Counseling: 650-723-3392.

*Finally—I will do everything in my power to make this an enjoyable and valuable learning experience for you. I will do all that I can to make this your favorite class!*
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

(please note the due dates for these assignments are listed on the Calendar, p. 9.
I may choose to modify or omit the following, as our progress permits)

Your Poems (Weeks 2, 4, 6, and 8). You will compose and present for workshop discussion a poem four times this quarter. On page 8 of the syllabus (Writing Assignment Prompts), you will see several writing prompts to follow individually. These prompts allow for a broad range of aesthetic interests and formal preferences related to poetry and writing. You may not repeat a prompt for multiple due dates. When you turn in the poem for workshop, be sure to label the heading of the poem with both a title (e.g., “Poem for a Sibling”) and the option number and name (e.g., “Option #4—Angry Poem.”)

Leading A Class Discussion (Weeks 2-10). During the quarter, you will either lead or co-lead a class discussion on the day’s assigned texts (see Calendar, p.9). You will create a handout to complement your discussion leading. However, you do not need to turn in any written work to me for the presentation itself. Below are guidelines. Please modify your approach to these guidelines to play to your strengths as a presenter, teacher, and learner (really!).

1. Choose among the assigned poems 1-3 individual poems that illustrate a thematic or formal concern that interests you. Generate 1-3 total questions that will initiate a discussion of these poems as a group. Limit your discussion of subject matter to where it intersects with theme and form in the poems. Explain any significant references (e.g., place and proper names, obscure diction, etc.) that shape the poems you select. Remember that you are leading a discussion, not composing a lecture; your goal is to start the conversation.

2. One class meeting before you lead your discussion, announce to the class the poems around which you will focus our discussion. Be prepared to do so at the beginning of the class period. Remember that we will read more poems for homework than we will have time to discuss in class.

3. Introduce the poets and poems to the class (1 minute). Your goal should be to summarize, and to refresh those formal or thematic concerns that interest you in the minds of those who have already read the individual poems closely for homework. Be prepared to read the poems out-loud to the class on the day we discuss them.

4. Create a 1-page supplemental handout. The handout should complement, rather than summarize, some aspect of your curiosity and understanding related to the poems. The handout may take any format. You may adapt other media into your handout. You have a lot of latitude for your work here. Bring copies for all of your colleagues, and for me.

I will most likely jump in at some point to emphasize a particular point or idea from my own reading of the text. I will look to follow your lead, and to complement, rather than commandeer, your discussion.

Revision and Process Note (Week 5). Revise either Poem #1 or Poem #2. Then, write a 200-300 word process note that explains how you approached revising your poem. Do not write an introductory or concluding paragraph. Include in the note at least two (2) separate examples of feedback you received and how you used that feedback to make a change in the poem. Also, discuss how your poem changed in the draft process.
Quarter Contract (Week 5). Write a ten-point (10) bulleted list in response to the prompt, “I would earn an A in English 92 this quarter if I walk out of class able to do the following five (5) things AND having at least tried to take at least three (3) of the following five (5) creative, critical or personal risks.”

In-Class Writing Lab and Individual Conferences (Week 5). During Week 5, we will meet individually in the hallway outside of the classroom to discuss your Revision, Process Note, and Quarter Contract. When you are not meeting in conference, you will use the class time as an in-class writing lab, to work collaboratively or individually. Electronic devices are allowed in-class during Week 5.

Process Letter & OPTIONAL Revision (Week 10). In lieu of a final exam, you will write a process letter. The purpose of the process letter is to give you the space and time to reflect on your work from the quarter within the more traditional framework of a self-evaluation statement. Additionally, you have the OPTION to revise 1-2 poems you’ve worked on this quarter, to seek specific feedback. The deadline for both is no later than 5pm on TH 12/12 by email to me at wevbo@stanford.edu.

A Process Letter (REQUIRED)
Write a 1-2 page letter (bulleted or traditional letter format) to me that:

• Explains how you approached revising one poem from the quarter. I am interested to hear how the writing process worked for you across drafts, with some discussion of when and why you think you did your best work.

• Evaluates the extent to which you pursued the risks and goals you articulated during Week 5. Give specific examples. The goal of this part of the assignment is not to show your success, but rather to demonstrate your thoughtful engagement with the risks and goals you chose to pursue in the writing you did after Week 5 (Poem #3, Poem #4, revisions, in-class writing).

• Revisits one assigned reading, which you found particularly helpful to look at again as you conducted your revision. Perhaps it was a model for your writing, or you found the tone or voice relevant, or the subject matter was inspirational, etc. You might very well have your own idiosyncratic reasons for revisiting the poem. Regardless, articulate them. Write thoughtfully and organically about how that poem was purposeful for you as a writer and reader, in revision.

A Full Revision of 1-2 Poems (OPTIONAL)
Email a complete and clean copy of BOTH the revised draft and the workshop draft of each poem. Please name the files to indicate the distinction. The revision should reflect your best work at the end of the quarter. The emphasis should be quality, rather than quantity (e.g., one excellent and thoughtful revision beats five or six minor ones), but the revision itself should seem significantly different from the workshop draft. Include 1-3 questions to which I can respond specifically in my feedback. Give a line # as reference to focus each question.

I will have limited availability to meet to discuss your final portfolio during finals week. Send me an email and we can figure out a time to meet. Otherwise, I will send a follow-up email with comments during the break. I will not be able to review incomplete submissions that do not follow all of the guidelines above.

Reading Response (Week 10). It is departmental policy that you attend three readings during the quarter. For your Reading Response assignment, please write one (1) brief statement of 250 words that responds to an aspect of craft that you observed in one or more of the readings. The mode of your
statement may be observational or evaluative, but be sure to discuss relevant formal elements as they inform your understanding of craft. As an alternative to one reading, you may substitute a visit to Poet’s House, Writer’s Studio, or Art of Writing; or read in entirety a Paris Review interview online (http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews). The Reading Response is due to my office no later than Fri 12/7 at 3pm (you can bring it to class or office hours earlier, if you’d like).

Recitations (Week 10). You will select, memorize, and recite a published poem of at least 20 lines. If you feel uncomfortable reciting a poem in class, you are welcome to recite it during my office hours.

End of Term Analysis (Week 10). You will speak to the class for about a minute regarding a poem from the assigned readings or in-class work that had a direct impact on your development as a writer during the quarter. No written work is required and you will not turn in anything. Speak naturally about the poem, and consider it a chance to both review the readings from the quarter and also to preview some of your thinking for the final Process Letter.

Written Feedback on Colleagues’ Poems [see Workshop, “Comments,” p. 11 of syllabus].

Discussion Buddies. This syllabus should be a reliable guide for your work in the class. However, it will probably be helpful for you to have a contact in the class. Please take a moment and exchange your contact information (as you are comfortable) with at least two other colleagues, so that you have someone to contact in the class regarding due work, readings, etc.

Colleague Contact #1:  Colleague Contact #2:

Snack Schedule (Optional). Our class meets during an especially undernourished moment in the day. As you are able to do so, please consider signing up to bring snacks—healthy, homemade, or otherwise—to share during the term. Even a few bags of chips or cookies go a long way toward satiating the hearts, minds, and stomachs of your colleagues.

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WRITING ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS

Option #1—Descriptive Quatrains. Write a 300-word prose draft, followed by a poem of a minimum four stanzas rhyming either abab or abcb. The theme of the poem should be someone or something seen through a window (you can be looking in or out). Keep a maximum of one adjective per quatrain. Use only literal images—images literally presented in the scene, though chosen for their ability to hint at meanings beyond themselves. Staple the prose draft as the last page of the poem.

Option #2—Couplet Narrative. Write a minimum of ten heroic (iambic pentameter) couplets (twenty lines rhyming aa bb cc, etc.), in a retelling of or a sequel to a famous tale from the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Anderson, Greek mythology, or the Bible. You may organize these couplets as you wish. At least half the rhyme-pairs should be made up of different parts of speech (that is, nouns cannot be rhymed with nouns, or verbs with verbs; but a noun with a verb or a verb with an adj. is fine).

Option #3—Dialogue in Nonce Stanzas. Invent your own stanza of at least five lines and write five or more stanzas in this form; one line should be iambic pentameter, one trimeter, and the others a mix of trimeter, tetrameter, and pentameter. A minimum of three lines in each stanza should rhyme, including the last line of each stanza. The theme of this poem should be dialogue between opposing principles (mind vs. soul, brain vs. body, etc.) in the guise of creatures or things (frog and lilypad, aspen and spring, pen and paper, clapper and bell). You may define these thematic pairs as widely as you would like, though their opposition should be somewhat obvious to the reader.

Option #4—Angry Poem, Open Form. Write a poem of address in which the speaker expresses anger. You may not manipulate the appearance of your text in any way (italics, bold, underline, WordArt, CAPS, changed font, etc.). You may not use exclamation points. Your speaker may not use profanity that inherently expresses pointed bias regarding gender, ethnicity, or class. You might consider unusual or common targets of angry address. Otherwise, this poem is wide-open regarding its execution.

Option #5—Prose Poem, Open Subject. Write a poem with no line breaks, organized into a single block of prose. Use techniques common to poetry—fragmentation, compression, repetition, rhyme, syntactical variation, meter—to achieve a poetic quality that you admire.

Option #6—Villanelle, Sonnet, or Sestina; Closed Form. Using The Making of a Poem as your point of reference, write a poem following one of the lineated forms above. Follow the rules of the form. Be very limited in how you exercise variation, if any, on them.

Option #7—The Erotic Everyday, Open Form. Choose an everyday activity—washing the dishes, chopping vegetables, mowing the lawn, going grocery shopping, etc.—and describe it in precise detail, focusing on every action it requires, especially all the little sensory moments involved. Take all of these details and images and use them to write a lyric poem in which you make some everyday experience sound erotic.

Option #8—Construction Exercise. Write a poem in which you literally build or take apart something for the reader. Describe each step of the process, incorporating technical terms and descriptions of materials. Create a lyric or narrative poem that “shows” the reader how it’s done.

Option #9—The “Endless” Sentence. Write a poem of about thirty lines that consists of a single sentence. Experiment with clauses and phrases and parallel structure. Try to keep the sentence moving forward, breaking it across lines in different ways, while ensuring it is grammatically correct.

Option #10—First Lines. Take one line from a poem of your own that is unfinished, or from a poem that you admire. It does not matter where the line occurs in the poem, but you want to select the best line from the poem. Use this line as the first line of a new poem. Try to maintain the same quality of sound, language and thought that the first line presents.

Option #11—Field Guide. Read the descriptions in a book of natural history or a field guide, such as a guide to birds, mushrooms, or wildflowers. Write a poem about a plant, bird, rock, animal, or fish from the book. Incorporate information from the book to help the reader identify your subject. How clearly or obliquely you present the subject is up to you.

Option #12—Circular Poem. Write a short poem that begins and ends with the same line. The reader should feel differently about the line the second time around because of what has happened in the poem.
COURSE CALENDAR:
WORKSHOP SCHEDULE & DUE DATES
(subject to change, as our progress permits)

Week 1 (3/31): Course Introductions; Meter & Rhythm.
3/31—First Day.
4/2—NO CLASS (MAKE-UP TBD).

Week 2 (4/7): Narrative & Lyric Poetry.
4/9—Workshop Poem 1, Group #1

Week 3 (4/16): Closed/Lineated Forms (Pt. 1): The Sonnet and Ghazal.
4/16—Workshop Poem 1, Group #2


Revision and Process Note, and Quarter Contract, due at start of your individual conference.

Week 5 (4/28): In-Class Writing Lab & Conferences.
4/28—Mid-Term Portfolio Conferences (Group 1).
4/30—Mid-Term Portfolio Conferences (Group 2).

Week 6 (5/5): Open/Metonymic/Dictated Forms.
5/7—Workshop Poem 3, Group #2

Week 7 (5/12): Poetic Argument.
5/14—Workshop Poem 3, Group #1

Week 8 (5/19): Maria Hummel and Hugh Martin class visit.
5/19—Poem #4 due with copies for all. Maria Hummel and Hugh Martin class visit.
5/21—Workshop Poem 4 (small groups).
Week 9 (5/26): The (Short) Long Poem.
5/26—NO CLASS (MEMORIAL DAY).

Week 10 (6/2): The Ode; Poetic Elevation and Deflation.
6/4—Recitations and End of Term Analysis in-class; Reading Response due to me.

Process Letter & Optional Revision due by email to me no later than 5pm on TH 6/5.

PLEASE NOTE:

YOUR DATE FOR LEADING DISCUSSION IS ____________________.

YOUR DISCUSSION LEADING PARTNER(S): ____________________.

YOUR POEMS ARE DUE WITH (CIRCLE ONE) GROUP 1 OR GROUP 2.
THE POETRY WORKSHOP: AN INTRODUCTION

While we cannot anticipate every success and frustration, we can do our best to anticipate and avoid many of the most common workshop pitfalls. With that in mind, I propose some workshop guidelines for the quarter.

1. **Copies (Poems).** Your poems are due prior to the period during which they will be work-shopped. On the due date, please bring enough copies of your poem for everyone (I would recommend 20).

2. **Copies (Comments).** On the date that a poem is work-shopped, please bring a copy of your Comments (see below) to turn in both to the author and to me.

3. **Reading.** Read each poem at least 3 times before you come to class on the day that it is due to be work-shopped. Do not write Comments (see below) during the first read—you ideas about and understanding of the poem will most likely change with successive readings.

4. **Curiosity > Authority.** Read and write Comments from a place of curiosity rather than authority. Assume that every line, sentence, and word is chosen with intention and skill. Work to understand the choices that are made in the poem, rather than what you hoped the poem might be.

5. **Avoid Benign Neglect.** Do not decide to love everything in a poem, or all of the poems written by a poet. Choose your praise carefully and express it intelligently and concisely.

6. **Comments [Logistics].** Write both marginalia and endnotes on each of your colleagues’ poems. **Marginalia** is criticism written in the margins of the poem that express line-specific praise, questions, and wondering. **Endnotes** appear at the end of the poem to express whole-poem praise, questions, and wondering and appear at the end of the poem. A good rule of thumb is to write 3-7 marginalia notes per poem and a single endnote of 4-6 sentences.

7. **Comments [Quality].** Where appropriate, incorporate ideas from our class discussions and make reference to specific poetic elements. Consider your feedback an opportunity to practice and demonstrate your critical mastery. Write thoughtfully about how you perceive the poet’s stance toward reality, how the poem thinks, the object of the poet’s attention, and the positive and negative space in which the poem sets outs its ideas and images. When you ask questions, avoid yes/no phrasings. Remember that your comments will be a departure point for revision.

8. **Suggestions.** Offer suggestions for revision. When you do so, give a clear and concise context for the suggestion. Do not simply make a change to a word, phrase, line, sentence, stanza, etc. without explanation. The author should understand clearly why you have recommended a revision.

9. **Choose Your Reader.** Before it is work-shopped, every poem will be read out-loud. This will give all of us a chance to refresh our understanding and reception of the poem from our previously reading it. When your poem is work-shopped, you may either read the poem out-loud or ask someone else to read it out-loud. If asked, read the poem with care and attention.

10. **Prefaces and Questions.** Feel free to offer a brief preface to your poem before it is read to the class. There is no need to send prefatory comments via email or during the previous class period. After the end of your poem’s discussion, you will have the opportunity to clarify and/or respond.

11. **Keep It On The Page.** During discussion, locate your comments with references to specific moments in the poem that occur on the page. Do not infer intention or interpretation.

12. **Avoid Clustering.** There are many different kinds of poems and poets. No doubt, aesthetic preferences will converge and diverge as the quarter progresses. Consider these fluctuations an opportunity to understand better unfamiliar or unattractive ideas about poetry, reading, and writing. Do not read a poem exclusively through the lens of a single kind of interpretation or criticism (e.g., Marxism, New Criticism). Use criticism/ideology to clarify your understanding of a poem—not vice-versa.

13. **Easter Island and Authority.** While your poem is being work-shopped, listen carefully and with an open mind. Avoid making faces.

14. **Safe Space.** Respect the safe space we create as we work together. Seek me out if you feel it has been violated.

15. **Other.** What did I leave out?