



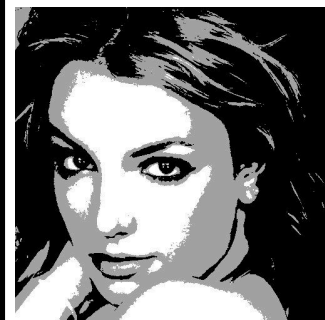
## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Is Beyoncé a poet? Does Arnold Schwarzenegger deserve an Ode? What would *The Lion King* read like in verse? While the vast lineage of poetry consistently engages popular culture (and vice versa), this course will examine the craft of 21<sup>st</sup> century American poets who are noted for employing pop culture in their work. Specifically, we will look at poets whose work explores issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and class by engaging contemporary American pop culture as a poetic device. Assuming no previous experience with poetics or popular culture studies, this course welcomes students from all majors. Instead of approaching poetry with predefined theories, the goal of this course will be reverse engineering contemporary poetry, that examines and reconstructs popular culture, toward understanding the relevance of poetic craft in contemporary life.

Instructor: Dr. John Andrews  
Time: TR 3:00pm to 4:15pm  
Location: 304 Morrill Hall  
Office: Old Central 001  
Office Hours: M 3 - 4, T 1:30-2:30  
W 1 - 3, & appt.  
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## BOOK LIST

- *Brit Lit* - D. Gilson (Digital Copy on Canvas)
- *American Radiance* - Luisa Muradyan
- *The Perfect Bastard* - Quinn Carver Johnson
- *There Are More Beautiful Things Than Beyonce* - Morgan Parker
- *Black Movie* - Danez Smith



## DIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION DESIGNATION

This course features the “D” (Diversity) General Education Designation. This section of the syllabus explains what this designation means and entails, and how this course will meet the criteria and goals of a D course. Text in bold is excerpted from university policies concerning general education courses.

- I. **Purpose: Courses designated “D” prepare students for engaged citizenship in the diverse, multicultural society of the United States**

TO BE CONTINUED.. .

## DIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION DESIGNATION CONT.

### II. Requirements:

- A. **Students will reflect on identity through the examination of one or more underrepresented groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, social class, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation) in present day United States.** Employing intersectional theory, this course will examine the work of contemporary living poets who engage popular culture to construct artistic representations of underrepresented identities through the “Poetic I” or speaking voice.
- B. **Students will examine the ways underrepresented groups define and express themselves and the context in which these definitions are constructed.** We will read the work of numerous poets, all from underrepresented groups, that engage popular culture as part of their poetic craft. Throughout the semester we will analyze the poetic device of employing popular culture in poetry as a vehicle for representing, reclaiming, and creating spaces for underrepresented voices in contemporary American society.
- C. **Students will critically analyze theories and systems of cultural, societal, political, or economic power.** This course is framed in intersectional pop culture theories and frameworks to clearly define the systems of cultural, societal, political, and economic power that influence the construction and classification of the poetry covered in the course. Readings, class discussions, and assignments will require students to actively apply these theories and frameworks throughout the semester to the poetic works covered in the course.
- D. **Students will demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills.**
- A. **Writing assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignment (i.e., writing assignments are worth a minimum 10% of the overall grade).** There will be ten 250–400-word poetic analysis assignments students will write during the semester worth 50% of the course grade. For further details as to how your final grade will be calculated, see “Assessment,” below.
- B. **Writing assignments must be tied to the purpose/requirements of the “D” designation.** All ten required 250–400-word poetic analysis assignments require explicit engagement with diversity issues. Students will select 10 poems from the course across all the of the assigned poetry readings and critically analyze the relationship between underrepresented voices and larger pop culture by interrogating the use of the “Poetic I”.
- C. **The minimum required number of pages may be encompassed in one or multiple assignment/s. Informal writing assignments (like journals or class notes) and group projects will not count toward writing minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative page minimum.** The minimum required number of pages will be spread across multiple assignments in this course. For each of the ten poetic analyses students will select a poem of their choosing from the course readings and analyze the work through both intersectional gender and race theories and poetic craft theory. Fulfillment of the cumulative page minimum does not include writing done in the context of journals, class notes, group projects, or resubmissions of earlier work.
- D. **Lower-division courses must include at least five pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays.** Students will do 2500-4000 words of academic writing over the course of ten required writing assignments.
- E. **In courses worth three or more credit hours, at least one-half of the course materials must relate to one or more underrepresented groups. A detailed class schedule should be included on the course syllabus to confirm content minimum has clearly been met.** Over 50% of our assigned readings relate to underrepresented groups.



## COURSE OBJECTIVES

In keeping with the objectives advocated by the National Collegiate Honors Council, this course will promote the goals of an elective course by offering students the opportunity to develop skills in the following areas:

### Written Communication

Students will submit ten critical analyses of self-selected poems from the course texts throughout the course and receive feedback for each analysis. Students will also write and revise their poems that engage popular culture further demonstrating their understanding of poetic craft through practical application. At the end of the semester students will submit a selection of poems accompanied by an artistic statement of their personal understanding of poetics and their relationship to contemporary pop culture.

### Oral Communication

Students will develop their oral communication skills through daily class discussion of the course materials, workshopping their creative work, and presenting their creative work to the class.

### Analysis, Synthesis, Understanding

Students will develop their analytical skills by utilizing poetics to define and describe poetry through class discussion and written critical analysis of 10 poems selected from the course texts to further understand the potential usages of poetic craft across disciplines and recognize the intersectional identities that inform the construction of a "Lyric I". In their analysis of poetry, students will synthesize across genres of film, music, art, to not only understand the contexts and references the course poems engage but further explore the potential of the poetic process in their own scholarly or artistic pursuits.

### Intellectual Independence: Critical and Creative Thinking

Utilizing the classroom discussions, workshops, and creative writing prompts, students will work independently to develop their own critical analysis and creative examples of contemporary poetry. Course readings and discussions will be utilized to spark both individual exploration into the definition of poetics and artistic inspiration to create poetry. Further, students will be encouraged to interrogate their relationship with their own personal pop culture icons through writing their own poetry.

### Interdisciplinarity

This course will take an interdisciplinary approach as we will discuss examples of poetry, and poetic craft, in relation to historical and contemporary popular culture through the lens of intersectional theory. Instead of defining poetry, this course asks students use their own diverse experiences and aesthetics to define poetry on their own terms.

# ASSESSMENT

**Participation (10%):** Students are expected to attend the course and actively participate through class discussions and engagement with the course readings. Students are also expected to engage through peer writing workshops in an effective, courteous manner.

**Workshops (15%):** Over the course of the semester students will actively participate in workshopping their own creative writing. Students will submit three of their own poems throughout the semester for peer workshop. Students will also be expected to apply their gained knowledge of poetics to constructive critique of their peer's work.

**Now That's What I Call Poetry (NTWICP): Poetic Analyses (50%):**

Throughout the semester you will make a "mixtape" of the poems from our course readings that stand out to you as not only strong examples of poetry that engage popular culture, but ultimately poems you would use to describe the relationship between poetry and popular culture. You will select 10 poems covered in the course and in a 250–400-word analysis, identify the formal poetic devices and pop culture the poem employs, how the poem's speaking persona or "lyric I" constructions and represents its own marginalized identity in the context of our discussions about diversity, and how the poem informs your personal definition of poetics. As you read, it's recommended to do this analysis when a poem really stands out to you in your readings and class examples. You will select a minimum of one poem from each of the 5 books (due after we complete reading/discussing the book in class). The remaining 5 poems can be any we cover throughout the course.

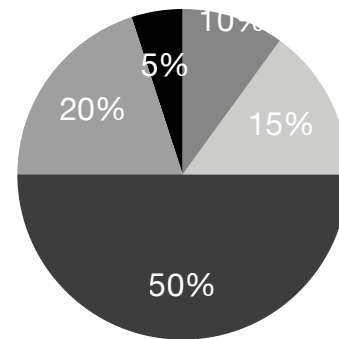
**Pop Poetics Project (20%):**

Throughout the semester we will have several poetry writing prompts based on the texts to inspire your own pop poetics. While you will not be required to use the poems you write for these prompts, they can be included in this project. By the end of the semester, you will select 10 poems that you wrote based on these prompts, or that you wrote on your own outside of class, that employ a popular culture figure, following, or fandom and compile them into a poetry collection with an introduction that situates your work within the discussion of popular culture.

**Final Exam (5%):**

Utilizing the poems compiled and analyzed in your "Now That's What I Call Poetry" portfolio, you will write a 250-word max reflection that answers "What is the definition, according to you, of poetry/poetics?" In this reflection you will consider the poems covered in the class, the way individual identities engage with/reclaim popular culture, and attempt to define contemporary poetics in your own words.

- Participation
- Analyses
- Final
- Workshops
- Project



# COURSE POLICIES

## **Add/Drop Information**

Classes begin **8/21**. The nonrestrictive drop/add deadline is **8/28**. The restrictive drop/add deadline is **9/1**. The instructor must sign your add card, so give yourself sufficient time to find the instructor prior to the deadline; however, the instructor is not required to allow you late entry into the course, nor does his or her signature guarantee you a seat. Composition courses are never over-enrolled, nor are seats held for individuals. The W drop/withdraw deadline is **11/10**. The W/F withdraw deadline is **12/1**. Class work ends **12/8**. For more information, see the academic calendar on the Registrar's Website.

## **Student Accessibility Services**

If you think you need special accommodations for this course, you should notify your instructor and request verification of eligibility for accommodations from the Office of Student Accessibility Services (155 UHS) as soon as possible. Accommodations cannot be made until the instructor receives a verification letter from the SAS office, and accommodations cannot be made retroactively for assignments already completed or absences already accrued. Call 405-744-7116 or go to [accessibility.okstate.edu](http://accessibility.okstate.edu) for further information.

## **Attendance**

You are expected to be present every day class meets, and parts of your grade require in class work and participation. That being said, the attendance policy is designed to make sure that if you are ill you are able to remain at home without penalty. If you are required to participate in university sponsored activities (not including Greek life or student organizations) or military training, please be sure to provide appropriate documentation so that these absences do not count against you. Since this course meets only twice per week the attendance policy breaks down as such: 5 absences with no penalty; 6 absences will result in a 100-point deduction from the final grade. 7 absences will result in a 200-point deduction from the final grade; 8 Absences will result in failure of the course.

## **Late Work**

Grades of work defined as "late" (coming in after established due date and time) will be reduced by 5% of the total points possible for the assignment each day it is late.

## **Electronics**

Because this course will primarily draw on discussion, laptops and tablets are not necessary during class, but you may utilize them for note taking or poetry writing if you choose. With this please be courteous of your fellow classmates when using electronic devices in the classroom so as to not disrupt or distract from other's learning. The instructor reserves the right to limit or bar the use of electronic devices if deemed necessary.

## **Plagiarism**

According to University Policy, plagiarism is "presenting the written, published or creative work of another as the student's own work. Whenever the student uses wording, arguments, data, design, etc., belonging to someone else in a paper, report, oral presentation, or other assignment, the student must make this fact explicitly clear by correctly citing the appropriate references or sources. The student must fully indicate the extent to which any part or parts of the project are attributed to others. The student must also provide citations for paraphrased materials." Plagiarism can result in failure of the course or suspension from the University. For more information, see the policies listed at <http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu/> .

# COURSE CALENDAR

\*Subject to change at instructor's discretion

Date	Activities in Class	Read/Do Before
8/20	- Course Introduction - Syllabus - Mapping The Poetic Universe - “What I learned from the Incredible Hulk” – Aimee Nezhukamatathil	
8/22	- Introduction to Pop Culture Studies	“The Myth of Mass Culture” (Canvas)
8/27	- Identity Construction/Representation and the Poetic “I”	“Race and Gender in the Shaping of The American Literary Canon” (Canvas)
8/29	“Framing Britney Spears” – The New York Times	
9/3	- Discussion of <i>Brit Lit</i>	<i>Brit Lit (All)</i>
9/5		<i>American Radiance (Part I) (1-34)</i> <b>NTWICP I Due</b>
9/10		<i>American Radiance (Part II) (37-65)</i>
9/12	Workshop	
9/17	Workshop	
9/19		“Wait, Is Taylor Swift Actually A ‘good’ Poet?” - The Ringer <b>NTWICP 2 Due</b>
9/24	No Class: Watch “A deep dive into the the tortured poet troupe (and whether Taylor Swift is one)”	
9/26	No Class: Watch/Read “Fortnite”	
10/1	No Class: Watch/Read “The Manuscript”	
10/3	Discussion: Is Taylor Swift a Poet, and who decides?	<b>NTWICP 3 Due</b>
10/8		Black Movie (Part I)
10/10		Black Movie (Part II)

## COURSE CALENDAR CONT.

Date	Activities in Class	Read/Do Before
10/15	Workshop	<b>NTWICP 4 Due</b>
10/17	Workshop	
10/22		The Perfect Bastard Act I
10/24		The Perfect Bastard Act II & III <b>NTWICP 5 Due</b>
10/29		The Perfect Bastard Act 4
10/31	NO CLASS NCHC	
11/5	Workshop	
11/7	Workshop	<b>NTWICP 6 Due</b>
11/12		There Are More Beautiful Things Than Beyonce (1-39)
11/14		There Are More Beautiful Things Than Beyonce (40-81)
11/19	“Morgan Parker on Why Beyonce is a Metaphor for Every Black Woman” – Tahirah Hairston	<b>NTWICP 7 Due</b>
11/21	Reflections and wrapping up	
11/26	NO CLASS FALL BREAK	
11/28	NO CLASS FALL BREAK	
12/3	Re-Mapping the Poetic Universe	<b>NTWICP 8,9,10 Due</b>
12/5	Class Reading	<b>Pop Poetics Project Due</b>