

**University of Victoria**  
**WRITING 100 (Y01, Y02, Y03, Y04)**

**Poetry**

**Instructor:** Carla Funk-Hesketh  
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**Class Time:** Mon/Thurs: 10 – 11:20 a.m.  
**Office Hours:** Mon/Thurs: 11:30 – 12:45 p.m.  
Wed: 8:30 – 9:15 a.m.  
*(Please make an appointment to ensure a spot.)*

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** All students must take time to read through the information and FAQs on the Writing 100 website.

The only text required for this class is the Writing 100 Poetry coursepack available in the University bookstore. However, I strongly recommend that you read beyond our course content. Here is a (very) short list of anthologies to get you started:

- *15 Canadian Poets X 2* (or X 3 – the latest edition), Ed. Gary Geddes
- *Twentieth Century Poetry & Poetics*, Ed. Gary Geddes
- *The Norton Introduction to Poetry*, Ed. J. Paul Hunter
- *The Vintage Book of Contemporary World Poetry*
- *The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Poetry*
- *The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse*, Ed. Margaret Atwood
- *Breathing Fire: Canada's New Poets (volumes I and 2)*, Eds. Patrick Lance & Lorna Crozier
- *Hammer & Tongs: A Smoking Lung Anthology*, Ed. Brad Cran
- *Poetry 180*, Ed. Billy Collins
- *180 More*, Ed. Billy Collins
- *The New Canon*, Ed. Carmine Starnino

As well, I suggest you familiarize yourself with the UVic library's current literary journals, such as:

- *Grain; Event; Prism International; The Fiddlehead; The Antigonish Review; The Malahat Review, Descant, Poetry, etc.*

These journals are a fine resource when it comes to seeing what's currently being published in Canada and abroad.

Writing 100 is an introductory course designed to impart technique and give you some practical experience in the writing of non-fiction, fiction, drama and poetry. Its aim is to equip you with writing skills that will benefit you across the genres, no matter where you choose to focus as a writer. This particular section is an introduction to the craft of poetry, and consists of lectures and class discussions on such basic elements as the poetic line, figurative language, form, sound and meaning.

As class time allows, you will participate in in-class writing activities. Your active and enthusiastic involvement in all of the above, as well as your **consistent and punctual class attendance**, will count toward the **10% participation component** of the overall course mark.

Poems will be studied in depth and discussed from the point of view of a writer rather than a critic or literary historian. The focus will be on how poems are constructed and how they achieve their effects. Any poem studied in class will be eligible for inclusion on the final examination. Please bring your poetry text to every class in order to make your involvement in our discussions more successful.

You will be required to write two poems, as well as participate in writing activities during class time. Your grade for written work will be based upon how well you have met the specific requirements of the assignments and how well you perform in such areas as imaginative content, the use of figurative language, diction, form, the poem's overall cohesion, etc. **Grammar, spelling and punctuation misadventures will result in docked marks.**

### **EMAIL POLICY**

Please be aware that **I do not accept assignments or discuss marks via e-mail.** You may, however, e-mail me for an appointment, or to ask questions about assignment guidelines, due dates, class readings, etc. If you have any questions about written comments on your work, please come and speak to me in person. As well, you may email me or the T.A. for an appointment to discuss a poem prior to its due date. Be aware, though, that we will not discuss an assignment on the same day that it is due.

**Students are responsible to inform instructors of any special needs that might have an influence on their learning in the classroom. Proper documentation must be provided (please consult with the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability); the instructor will work with the Centre and the student to respond appropriately to special needs requests.**

## **Department of Writing Policies**

### **Attendance**

So that the Department may solidify its class lists as soon as possible for the benefit of students, at the start of each term you must be present at the first two classes or workshop sessions. This rule includes students on the waitlist. Students will be dropped from the course if they are absent from the second class.

Attendance in workshops is mandatory. In the event of personal or family illness during the term, students must provide written documentation (such as a doctor's letter) and consult with the instructor concerning missed classes. Penalties for students who are late may include their being denied access to the class. The missed class will then be counted as an absence. Students are responsible for fulfilling all work quotas and examination requirements as stipulated by the instructor.

### **Special Needs**

Students are asked to inform instructors of any special needs that might have an influence on their learning in the classroom. Proper documentation must be provided (please consult with the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability), and the instructor will work with the Centre and the student to respond appropriately to special needs' requests.

### **Email**

Email is to be used to set up appointments with the instructor, not to discuss classroom issues and grades. As well, I do not provide editorial comments on poems sent by email. If you would like to speak about feedback on poems, a mark, or anything else pertaining to the course, please contact me to arrange a meeting and I will do my best to find a mutually acceptable time to discuss your questions or concerns.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students with lapses in academic integrity will be duly and appropriately dealt with. Consult the University calendar for the University's policy on plagiarism. To assist students with the writing of their papers, instructors recommend that students submit their material to 'turn-it-in.com' to ensure originality. Instructors will make use of this tool in classes where they deem it useful.

### **Exam Schedule**

Students must be prepared to write their final exams during the examination period as set by Record Services. Examinations cannot be rescheduled. The term does not end until the last day of exams is over. (Please consult the Calendar for official final date.)

## **Grades**

The range of grades for the Department of Writing is as follows:

A+	90 - 100
A	85 - 89
A-	80 - 84
B+	75 - 79
B	70 - 74
B-	65 - 69
C+	60 - 64
C	55 - 59
D	50 - 54
F	0 - 49

See the attached grading grid for a qualitative description of each level.

**University of Victoria**  
**WRITING 100**  
**Poetry Assignments**

**Submission Guidelines**

- All assignments *must* be **typed, legible (no smaller than the equivalent of Times New Roman 12 point font), and double-spaced**. I will not mark hand-written poems.
- Please justify the poem to the left margin (unless you want to take a risk with creative spacing).
- **Title your poem!**
- The name, student number, and assignment number must be typed in the upper right-hand corner of the page.
- Submit the appropriate number of copies for each assignment: one copy will be returned to you with a mark and written comments; the second copy stays on file for one year as per Dept. of Writing guidelines.
- Material must be handed in on the due date **at the start of class**.
- Late assignments, **including those handed in after class has begun or at the end of class**, will not receive written comments.
- Poems that do not adhere to assignment guidelines (not properly formatted; exceeding length limitations, etc.) will not receive written comments.
- For every element missing from the final portfolio, 5% will be docked from your final grade. In other words, if you do not complete the “working grade” draft of your poem on time, you will lose 5% off the portfolio mark.
- If you wish to discuss your work before its due date, please make an appointment with me or the T.A. or drop by during office hours. Come with specific questions about your work. While I am happy to discuss assignment poems prior to them being handed in for marking, I will not “workshop” your poem on the same day that it is due.

**NOTE: Late assignments *must* be accompanied by proper medical documentation.**

**COURSE BREAKDOWN:**

<b>Attendance &amp; Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>In-class Exam</b>	<b>30%</b>

## Poem 1: Lyric

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### Due dates:

- Workshop copy (posted to Moodle): September 21 by 8 p.m.  
**NOTE:** *All workshop critiques must be posted by Wed., Sept. 23, 9 p.m.*
- First revision (two copies): September 28, start of class
- Portfolio version (one copy): October 22, start of class

\* **LINE LIMIT: 8-16 lines (not including stanza breaks)**

**Lyric:** originally, poetry sung to the lyre; now, a short poem of songlike quality  
a poem expressing the subjective feelings and personal emotions of the poet.

The work of the poet is to engage with life, to ask questions of the world, and to offer revelation and insight – however small or large – by way of language. For this section’s first assignment, you will write a poem that focuses its attention on a particular moment in time. You can also choose to focus on a particular detail or image within your chosen space and time.

Context is important for this poem. Where is the speaker? What’s important in this moment? What does the speaker see (touch, taste, hear, feel)? By creating a clear sense of where this speaker is and by writing the surrounding images clearly, the emotion will rise naturally to the surface.

Don’t force the symbolism of this poem, but do choose your concrete details and diction with precision. Remember – you’re *not* telling a story in this poem; instead, you’re locating a moment that’s rich in emotional resonance.

Use inventive diction that steers clear of clichés and sentimentality. Don’t over-emotionalize. Be clear and avoid the kind of abstract language that can so easily lose the reader in a haze of obscurity. Favour concrete, specific, and informal diction. Your style and voice is built from your own experiences and way of looking at the world. Let the poem sound like you.

Here is a list of some of the lyric poems found in your coursepack:

- Clear Night (Charles Wright, 8)
- Dark Pines Under Water (Gwendolyn MacEwen, 17)
- A Blessing (James Wright, 18)
- Lying in a Hammock . . . (James Wright, 19)
- This Moment (Eavan Boland, 25)
- Meditation on Blue (McKay, 35)
- The Weather (John Newlove, 48)
- The Stray Dog by the Summerhouse (Donald Justice, 56)
- I Think You’re Wonderful (Thomas Lux, 58)
- Butcher Shop (Charles Simic, 59)
- Surrender (Sue Sinclair, 70)
- Travel (David O’Meara, 71)

## Poem 2: Narrative

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### Due dates:

- Moodle copy (posted to forum for your workshop group): Oct. 1 by 8 p.m.  
**NOTE:** *All workshop critiques must be posted by Sunday, Oct. 4, 9 p.m.*
- First revision (two copies): Oct. 8, start of class
- Portfolio version (two copies): Oct. 22, start of class

\* **LINE LIMIT: max. 22 lines (not including stanza breaks)**

Write a poem about an experience based on a powerful, personal memory – one that happened to you, one told to you, or one that you witnessed. The more distance you have from the memory, the better; time yields objectivity. In other words, don't try to write about something that happened four days ago; rather, go back to childhood, or early adolescence. Try to dredge up something otherwise neglected or forgotten, something with special retrospective significance.

Think about what triggers the memory, about what's at stake in the experience, about what's lost (and found) in the writing of your poem, about what Samuel Beckett calls "that double-headed monster of damnation and salvation – Time."

Let your poem appeal to the senses – smell, touch, taste, hearing, and sight. Rely on concrete language vs. abstractions, specific diction vs. generalizations, and informality vs. formality. Use understatement instead of sentimentality to convey the emotion inherent in this memory. Be succinct, precise and careful in your choice of words; avoid over-indulging in adjectives and adverbs. In order to make this personal narrative meaningful to the reader, it's important to maintain literal clarity in the poem.

For this poem, you will work with narrative, but in poetry you have the freedom to experiment with the traditional elements of a good story. What you want to aim for, though, is epiphany. What does the recollection of this memory reveal? What's the revelation that time yields?

For inspiration, read over the memory poems in your coursepack. The following are just some of the fine examples you'll find:

- The pennycandystore beyond the El (Lawrence Ferlinghetti, 4)
- Adolescence I and II (Rita Dove, 5-6)
- Mid-Term Break (Seamus Heaney, 9)
- Paper Matches (Paulette Jiles, 10)
- The Leap (James Dickey, 11 )
- Dobbin (George Bowering, 15)
- Bike Ride with Older Boys (Laura Kasischke, 26)
- Belle Isle, 1949 (Philip Levine, 30)
- Fear of Snakes (Lorna Crozier, 46)
- Oranges (Gary Soto, 28)

**Final Portfolio (60%): Due October 22 at the start of class**

**What to include:**

- Original copies of both Poem 1 (lyric) and Poem 2 (narrative) that contain my comments and the working grades.
- One double-spaced copy of the final revised lyric poem.
- One double-spaced copy of the final revised narrative poem.
- A short reflection (double-spaced and typed) on each of your own revisions. One paragraph per poem will do. Include a bit about how the poems changed from the initial idea to the first drafts and through the revision process. The reflection portion of the portfolio will be given a mark out of 3, and will be scored accordingly:
  - Short, rushed, trite = 1
  - Satisfactory = 2
  - Creative, thoughtful = 3

**Guidelines:**

- All poems must be typed and double-spaced.
- Late portfolios will not be marked.
- You can either staple all your portfolio elements together, or enclose them in a file folder or simple report cover (no duotangs, please!).
- Portfolios will not be returned, but you will receive a note with general feedback and a final grade for the assignment.

**Grading:**

- The portfolio is worth 60% of your poetry mark, and will be marked according to the Dept. of Writing grading grid for Writing 100.
- **NOTE:** For each missing component of the portfolio, 5% will be docked from your grade.

*(Sample Assignment Poem Layout)*

**Student Name**  
**Student #**  
**Assignment #**  
**Date**  
**Course/Section**

**Poem Title Goes Here**

Notice how the text of this poem  
is justified to the left margin,  
rather than centered, and how  
the text is double-spaced. Double-space  
so that I have space in which to  
write my comments. Also, be  
sure to hand in two copies of  
your double-spaced poem.

Heed line limitations.

Staple together poems of more  
than one page (before class – I do not  
carry a stapler with me),  
and include your name on each page.

Please follow these guidelines.

If you have any questions  
regarding these matters, speak to me  
prior to the assignment due  
date, to avoid any confusion.

**Writing 100 – Introduction to Poetry**  
**Reading Timetable**  
**Instructor: Carla Funk/Hesketh**

*\*All poems in Writing 100 Poetry Coursepack, available at the bookstore. Page numbers correspond to the numeral in the upper right-hand corner of the page. The reading schedule is subject to change with notice.*

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<b>September 10</b>	<b>Introduction to Writing 100</b> All sections meet in Phoenix Building, Room 103 (Bishop Theatre) -- 10 a.m. sharp!
<b>September 14</b>	<b>Creation/ Revision + Lyric &amp; Narrative Poems</b> Oranges (Soto, 28) Lying in a Hammock . . . (J. Wright, 19) The Stray Dog by the Summerhouse (Justice, 56) The Book of Knowledge (Lane, 20) Belle Isle, 1949 (Levine, 30) Dobbin (Bowering, 15)
<b>September 17</b>	<b>Imagination / Image</b> “The Good and Not So Good” essay (Dunn, 77-85) Ode to the Onion (Neruda, 36) Valentine (Duffy, 45) Adolescence – I & Adolescence – II (Dove, 5 & 6) Memory from Childhood (Machado, 57)
<b>September 21</b>	<b><u>Post Lyric Poem to Moodle Forum (by 8 p.m.)</u></b> <b>Language / Diction</b> Game After Supper (Atwood, 186) Detail (Lane, 51) Snow (Berman, 21) Classic Water (Berman, 64) The Cinnamon Peeler (Ondaatje, 23-24) The Swan (Oliver, 52)
<b>September 24</b>	<b>Emotion / Restraint</b> Fear of Snakes (Crozier, 46) Prodigy (Simic, 60) I Think You’re Wonderful (Lux, 58) White Apples (Hall, 49) Women Bathing at Bergen-Belsen (Shomer, 44) The Lifting (Olds, 63)

September 28

**ASSIGNMENT #1 – Lyric Poem Due Today!**

**Figurative / Literal**

The pennycandystore beyond the El	(Ferlinghetti, 4)
Butcher Shop	(Simic, 59)
Marks	(Pastan, 14)
Topography	(Olds, 50)
Watermelons	(Simic, 31)
In a Nursing Home	(Kenyon, 62)

October 1

**Post Narrative Poems on Moodle Forum by 8 p.m.!**

**Figurative / Literal part 2 + Creation/Revision tools**

The Starry Night	(Sexton, 40)
Pest Song	(Solie, 61)
The Bull Moose	(Nowlan, 14)
Dark Pines Under Water	(MacEwen, 17)
A Blessing	(Wright, 18)

October 5

**All Moodle forum feedback due by 10 a.m.!**

**Sound/Music**

The Otter	(Seamus Heaney, 68)
Planet Earth	(Page, 65)
Zoo Keeper	(Moritz, 76)
Punishment	(Heaney, 32)
Bee Music	(Zwicky, 54)
Bone Song	(Zwicky, 55)
The Powwow at the End of the World	(Alexie, 43)
Beginning	(Nowlan, 34)
As the Mist Leaves No Scar	(Cohen, 3)

October 8

**ASSIGNMENT #2 – Narrative Poem Due Today!**

TBA

October 12

**Happy Thanksgiving !**

October 15

**Content / Form: Unity & the Whole Poem**

Mid-Term Break	(Heaney, 9)
In the Well	(Hudgins, 39)
Treblinka Gas Chamber	(Webb, 2)
The Child Who Walks Backwards	(Crozier, 7)
Praying Drunk	(Hudgins, 41)
Paper Matches	(Jiles, 10)

October 19

**EXAM REVIEW + CLASS READING**

October 22

**PORTFOLIOS DUE & IN-CLASS POETRY EXAM**

**Please read portfolio guidelines carefully.**

## **Assignment #1: Lyric Poem Moodle Workshop**

**Step 1:** On **September 21**, post your Assignment #1 poem (lyric poem) to your Moodle forum **no later than 8 p.m.!** Any poems posted after 8 p.m. will not be given feedback by your peers!

**Step 2:** Read poems posted by your peers, and then offer feedback using the following questions:

1. Who is the speaker of this poem? (for e.g., someone who is mourning a loss)
2. Where does this poem locate itself?
3. What are the primary images or actions in this poem?
4. What does this poem make you feel / think about?
5. What are you left wondering about? Are there any areas of confusion?
6. Which words need “sharpening”?
7. What will you remember most about this poem?

**NOTE: All forum feedback must be posted by 9 p.m. on Sunday, September 23.**

**Step 3:** Read the feedback on your own poem. Take your colleagues’ thoughts into consideration when you revise your lyric poem. **You do not need to follow every piece of advice they give you.** However, use their questions and feedback to gauge where your poem is not succeeding as well it could. For example, if none of your group members understands what is literally and/or figuratively happening in the poem, then most likely, the poem needs more clarity.

**Step 4:** On **September 28**, hand in two copies, double-spaced of your revised lyric poem.

### **A few more thoughts on the process:**

- Participation in this workshop assignment is mandatory. Your written feedback will be factored in to your overall participation mark.
- It is unacceptable to dash off a rushed poem, post it to your forum and then expect your workshop colleagues to spend their valuable time crafting a thoughtful critique of your work.
- Please start your work early and give yourself as much creative room as possible so that you aren’t faced with the eleventh-hour blank page. Writing is tough enough without this kind of pressure.

## **Assignment #2: Narrative Poem Moodle Workshop**

**Step 1:** On **October 1** post your Assignment #2 poem (narrative poem) to your Moodle forum **no later than 8 p.m.!** Any poems posted after 8 p.m. will not be given feedback by your peers!

**Step 2:** Read poems posted by your peers, and then offer feedback, using the questions below to guide your commentary.

**1. STRENGTHS:** What is working in this poem? What are its strengths? What is this poem trying to become? What is its potential?

**2. CLARITY:** What is this poem about on a literal level? Can you follow the narrative and/or the poem's logic? Can you articulate what's going on?

**3. SPEAKER & EMOTION:** Do you have a sense of why this memory/narrative is important to the speaker? Where is the emotion most authentic? Does the poem need more restraint? If so, where?

**4. DICTION:** Where is the language fresh, original, and exciting, and where is it clichéd? Does the poet use figurative language and images to the poem's advantage? Does the poem work on more than one level?

**5. BEGINNING, MIDDLE, END:** Is the ending inevitable but not redundant, summative or message-laden? Throughout the poem, has the poet included too little information or too much? What about the opening and the title? Do they engage you? Could the first few lines go? Could the last?

**NOTE: All forum feedback must be posted by 9 p.m., Sunday, October 4.**

**Step 3:** Read the feedback on your own poem. Take your colleagues' thoughts into consideration when you revise your lyric poem. **You do not need to follow every piece of advice they give you.** However, use their questions and feedback to gauge where your poem is not succeeding as well it could. For example, if none of your group members understands what is literally and/or figuratively happening in the poem, then most likely, the poem needs more clarity.

**Step 4:** On **October 8**, hand in two copies (properly formatted!) of your revised Assignment #2 narrative poem.

**NOTE: Participation in this workshop assignment is mandatory. Your written feedback will be factored in to your overall participation mark.**

## WRITING 100 GRADING GRID

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>90-100 A+ Exceptional</b>	<b>80-89 A- to A Very Good</b>	<b>70-79 B to B+ Good</b>	<b>60-69 C+ to B- Satisfactory</b>	<b>50-59 C to D Barely Acceptable</b>	<b>0-49 F Unacceptable</b>
<b>Concept</b> of the project	Exceptionally ambitious and challenging creative work.	Ambitious and challenging in scope.	Often challenging and ambitious.	Minimally challenging and ambitious.	Very little challenge.	Unchallenging
<b>Content</b> of the project	Sophisticated, powerful and mature content.	Engaging and intelligent content.	Good, often engaging. A few details or elements feel overly familiar or undeveloped.	Satisfactory content. Some clichéd or stereotyped elements.	Underdeveloped and/or unsophisticated content. Feels like an early draft.	No discernable development of content. Unworthy of workshopping.
<b>Technical elements</b> Narrative, poetic and/or dramatic methods.	Sophisticated. A seamless mastery of techniques that supports and enhances content.	Techniques are understood and used intelligently.	Good technical application of basic narrative, poetic and/or dramatic skills.	Competent but otherwise unremarkable application of methods.	Minimal skill or understanding. Control of basic skills needs improvement.	Undeveloped. Fails to use or control range of basic methods.
<b>Language</b> <b>Diction, syntax, imagery, metaphor, voice.</b>	Every word is chosen toward a unified effect. A compelling voice. Details are vivid and surprising. Only minor and few grammatical errors and/or typos.	Strong verbs and nouns. Modifiers are used minimally. Sentence structure and/or dialogue is varied and carefully built. Strong details. Expert grasp of grammar.	Requires a thorough edit. Diction needs tightening and heightening for economy and force. Minor and minimal grammatical errors or typos.	Needs further attention to heightened language, strengthened verbs, and the avoidance of repetitive structures. A range of repeated grammatical errors; editing for economy needed.	Relies on clichés and suffers from inadequate attention to verbs. Too few specific details. Adverbs and adjectives are pervasive and cause redundancy. Serious and frequent grammatical and typographical errors.	Serious flaws in language use; filled with grammatical mistakes. No evidence of proofreading.
<b>Finished work</b> Intellectual, aesthetic and/or emotional strength.	Exceptional finished work. Powerful, professional and polished.	Strong and creative finished work. Minor editing needed.	Finished work demonstrates aesthetic, emotional and/or conceptual power.	Most qualities of the finished work are acceptable.	Qualities of the finished work are weak. Work is incomplete.	Work not finished.