

Global Poetics

Prof. Ama Bemba Adwetewa-Badu, PhD | Email: AmaBemba@wustl.edu | Office: 220 Duncker Hall |
Time: T/TH 2:30-3:20 | Location: Lopata Hall 201 | Spring 2023 | Student Hours: By Appointment [\[Link\]](#)



COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class sets course through 21st century poetry written and translated into English, focusing entirely on how poets write across cultures. Certain topics will seem particularly modern: eco-poetics, #BlackLivesMatter, and social media. Other topics will raise important and enduring questions: How do poets influence other poets? How do poems speak to one another? What can poetry learn from other arts? And what is a poem anyways? This course will introduce students to the practice of reading and writing about contemporary works of poetry in order to gain a keen understanding of how our own social, political, and cultural locations influence our readings of texts, and how diverse voices and experiences resonate cross-culturally. We'll discuss the boundaries and borders of poetry, what it means to think of poetry as a representation of our society and of our world, and how poetry reflects and speaks to our current political, economic, and social realities. We will also analyze the forms and modes that define contemporary poetry, and how these forms and modes are changed and adapted by poets of different races, genders, sexualities, nationalities, backgrounds, lineages, and traditions. In the first half of the semester, we will work on a small-scale version of the primary prose genre of contemporary poetry criticism-the book review. In the second half of the semester, our writing will culminate in a final paper dealing with poetry and various aspects of globalization.

Learning Objectives

1. Analyze poetry written in English and in translation as well as develop a vocabulary for thinking about language and social structures as presented in poetry and which shapes poetry.
2. To consider the ways in which translation influences our reading and understanding of poetry.
3. Evaluate how formal and stylistic conventions, as well as shifting sociohistorical and socio-political circumstances, have shaped conceptions of poetry within different cultural spheres.
4. Practice research skills for critically engaging with, assessing, and intervening in theoretical arguments and scholarship for both academic and public audiences.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- *IRL* by Tommy Pico (Discussion Leader: Kelly)
- *this is no longer entertainment* by Christodoulos Makris (Discussion Leader: Aja)
- *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin* by Terrance Hayes (Discussion Leader: Katie)
- *Commonplace* by Hugo García Manríquez (Discussion Leader: Katie)
- *Moonlight Rests on My Left Palm: Poems and Essays* by Yu Xiuhua (Discussion Leader: Erika)
- *Bless the Daughter Raised by a Voice in Her Head* by Warsan Shire (Discussion Leader: Aja)
- *Habitat Threshold* by Craig Santos Perez (Discussion Leader: Kelly)
- *Deaf Republic: Poems* by Ilya Kaminsky (Discussion Leader: Erika)

Assignments and Grading

All assignments should be submitted on time. If you need an extension, please reach out. If you hand in late work, your final grade will drop by a third of a letter grade for each day it is late. Please speak with me if you believe that you will have an issue meeting a deadline.

Discussion Leader: 15%

Handout: 25%

Presentation: 75%

Book Review: 15%

1-1 Discussion w/ Prof. Adwetewa-Badu: 5%

Review Workshop: 10%

Review: 80%

Canvas Posts: 10 %

Contributions: 50%

Edits: 50%

Global Poetics Digital Exhibit (group assignment): 20%

Attendance at Workshop: 15%

Project: 85%

Final Paper: 40%

Paper: 75%

Presentation: 25%

Grading Scale:

97-100	A+
94-96	A
90-93	A
87-90	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B
75-79	C+
70-74	C
60-69	D
59-Below	F

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

This is a conversation class, which means a major part of the work of the class comes from our discussions. Attendance at all sessions is important! I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences, but you are permitted four absences. Any absences beyond that will lower your participation grade by a third of a grade point (i.e., a B+ becomes a B, a B- becomes a C+). If you are not in the classroom within 15 minutes of start-time, you will be considered tardy. Being tardy three times will count as one absence. It is good to be in class on time. If that's not possible on any particular day, it is better to be late than to not show up at all. If you are ill or need to quarantine, please stay at home and rest. Please make sure to email me so that I know you're ok and will be missing class. If you miss part/all of a lecture, assume that you have missed "important" information. Please get notes from a classmate. Afterwards, if you still have questions, by all means come see me.

Gizmos and Gadgets

Technology in the classroom has the tremendous potential to draw us deeper into a state of engagement by providing a way to efficiently take notes or look up information that can supplement the discussion. Technology can also, however, disrupt our engagement. You may use technology in the classroom to read assignments and to bring in your work, but please ask yourself if the technology is drawing you into class or pulling you away (i.e. with distractions such as checking your email, social media, or reading for another class). Please be judicious and conscientious in your use of technology.

Submissions

Submit a digital version of everything (.docx or .doc, not .pdf, .pages or google docs links) through email: amabemma@wustl.edu. Write our class number and the name of the assignment in the subject line. Bring short assignments to our meetings, either printed out or on a device, in case you want to share your writing with the class. In many courses, longer papers are also due in class, or the day of. The results, in my opinion, are bad: we all come to class having read the readings or written the writing— never both. So: the midterm paper and final annotated bibliography are due by 5pm on Friday of the week they're due. Late assignments will be docked one third of a letter grade per day.

Extensions

During the semester, I will not accept work that is late by more than three days. In the case of the essay deadlines for the mid-semester or longer essays, this will not directly affect your grade because of the portfolio system; you simply lose that opportunity for me to read your work in draft form and provide you with feedback. So, it's always better to hand in something. For short, two-day extensions, ask before the day of.

Academic Integrity, Honesty, Collaboration, and Citation

All learning is inherently collaborative and interactive. We all discover our thoughts and refine our perspectives by coming into intimate contact with others' thoughts and perspectives. Because of this proximity with others' language and ideas, it is important that we all act consistently with the principles of academic honor. Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas or writing without giving them proper credit. Please know that plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will

be understood as very serious offenses that may result in an F for the assignment. All suspected instances of academic dishonesty will be investigated and will result in a failing grade for the course. For more on the University policy on academic integrity, see ucollege.wustl.edu/faculty/academic_integrity

The Public Domain

All of the work that you produce for this class may be read by myself and anyone else in the class. I expect all students to treat every other student's written and spoken work with respect.

Email

I respond to emails on weekdays between 10am-6pm. Please allow 72 hours for response. See <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/636/01/> for a guide on email etiquette. Please make sure to include the name of our class in the email messages. However, if your email implies a very long answer, please come and see me during office hours. I am typically also available in the classroom right before/after the lectures.

Student Hours

Some people may know this as “office hours.” I use the term “student hours” for purposes of equity, diversity, and inclusion. You can read more about this rationale here https://twitter.com/amy_nusbaum/status/1100440431500775424?s=20&t=CjBnoIYVsvsaTsCAnmL60A and here https://twitter.com/hormiga/status/1101161420916441088?ref_src=twsrc%5Eetfw%7Ctwcamp%5Eetweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1101161420916441088%7Ctwgr%5E020f179338f91d8ad50b136a18165e10873b416b%7Ctwcon%5Es1_c10&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fblogs.agu.org%2Fgeoedtrek%2F2020%2F07%2F30%2Foffice-hours%2F. I also use the term “student hours” for the simple fact that I don’t always host these in an office (I might host via Zoom, outside, at a café, etc), but no matter the location, it’s an hour for my students aka you! Please use the appointment form to sign up to meet with me [\[link\]](#). Email me if you would like to set up an appointment for a different time. If you have any questions or problems, it is important to see me as soon as possible so we can appropriately address your questions. I am also available via e- mail, but I do not respond on evenings and weekends. n.b. Many issues are much better dealt with in person and I encourage you to come discuss with me directly. 5 points of your grade are determined by you visiting student hours at least once during the semester. I have this policy because I believe that it is important for students to get to know their professors and vice versa, I need to get to know you, too!

Accommodations for Disabilities

If you have a disability or health concern that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require adjustments or accommodations, please visit Disability Services at students.wustl.edu/disabilityresources/. Accommodations may require early planning. Please contact them as soon as possible.

As a classroom community, our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognizing one another's presence.

- bell hooks

*Schedule and readings are subject to modification as the semester proceeds. Our course website will always have the most up to date readings. Please refer to that over the course of the semester.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Theories of World Poetry (no presentations)

1/17: Welcome to the course

1/19: Poetry Packet (on my website)

Assignment:

In about 500 words, draw out one similarity and one difference between two poems using concrete examples from at least one short and one long poem (or two stylistically different poems). How would you characterize their style, regardless of poem length or origin? Due Friday by 5pm.

Week 2: Theories of World Poetry cont... (no presentations)

1/24: "For a Global Poetics," Walt Hunter [\[Link\]](#)

"World Poetry: Commonplaces of an Idea," Harris Feinsod [\[Link\]](#)

1/26: "A Transnational Poetics," Jahan Ramazani [\[Link\]](#)

"The Local Poem in a Global Age," Jahan Ramazani [\[Link\]](#)

"Ramazani's Global Vocabulary for Poetry," Janet Neigh [\[Link\]](#)

Assignment:

Have your get-to-know-you meeting with Prof. Adwetewa-Badu; come with ideas of books for your book review (due week 7).

Week 3: An Internet Poem, Part 1

1/31: *IRL*, Tommy Pico

2/2: *IRL*, Tommy Pico

Assignment:

On any Social Media platform—feel free to make a new account; do not feel obliged to use your personal account—follow at least 25 poets, critics, news sources, publications, presses, poetry bots, etc. Produce as much poetry or criticism or self-promotion or literature gossip as you want. Be prepared to show the class what you've done, and to show us what you've learn about how poetry *lives* on the web.

Week 4: An Internet Poem, Part 2

2/7: *this is no longer entertainment*, Christodoulos Makris

2/9: *this is no longer entertainment*, Christodoulos Makris

Assignment:

In about 750 words, write a review of this book of poetry. What stands out to you? What is done particularly well in the collection? Who do you think would be a good audience for this collection? Who is the intended audience? What is the project of this collection and what might it be sharing with readers? Compare and contrast this in relation to the book of poetry from week 3.

Due 2/10 by 5 pm

Week 5: Thinking about Form

2/14: *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin*, Terrance Hayes

2/16: *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin*, Terrance Hayes

Assignment:

Write a parody or imitation (or something in-between) of a poet, poem, or style we've encountered thus far (you could choose the sonnet form). (Or, if you'd like, parody or imitate a poet, poem, or style later on our syllabus, or another American poet entirely. But be warned: fewer of your classmates might recognize.)

Due 2/17 by 5 pm

Week 6: Book Review Week (no presentations)

2/21: Book Review Workshop

2/23: (No Class; Prof. Adwetewa-Badu will be away).

Assignment:

1. Book review (4-5 pp.). Also include screenshots/ the text of three poems—at least one you mention in your review, at least one you don't—for the rest of the class to read. Upload everything to our class Box by 2/18 at 5:00pm.
2. Come to class with extensive notes, comments, corrections, advice etc for your peers. Be prepared to openly discuss their book review.

Week 7: Translation as Practice

2/28: *Commonplace*, Hugo García Manríquez

3/2: *Commonplace*, Hugo García Manríquez

Assignment:

Book Review is Due 3/3 at 11:59 pm.

The subject line should be: Final book Review_ Global Poetics Class

Week 8: Translation as Practice Cont...

3/7: *Moonlight Rests on My Left Palm: Poems and Essays*, Yu Xiuhua

3/9: *Moonlight Rests on My Left Palm: Poems and Essays*, Yu Xiuhua

Assignment:

In 500 words, compare and contrast the translator's prefaces in the two collections we read in weeks 7 and 8. What do they consider to be the practice of translation? How does translation impact a poem? What was their process in translating these collections?

Week 9: Rest. Rest. Rest. (no presentations)

3/14 (no class)

3/16(no class)

Week 10— Research and Poetry Exhibit Week (no presentations)

3/21: Library Poetry Research Day: Question: What is/are Global Poetics?

Location: Instruction Room#1 (on Level A)

3/23: Global Poetics Poetry Exhibit Workshop

Location: Instruction Room#1 (on Level A)

Assignment:

Have at least 5 books, articles, etc that you might use for the Global Poetics wiki.

Week 11: Gender, Family, and Migrations

3/28: *Bless the Daughter Raised by a Voice in Her Head*, Warsan Shire

3/30: *Bless the Daughter Raised by a Voice in Her Head*, Warsan Shire

Assignment:

Prepare 3-5 questions you would ask the poet if you were to have a conversation with them.

Week 12: Eco-Poetics

4/4: *Habitat Threshold*, Craig Santos Perez

4/6: *Habitat Threshold*, Craig Santos Perez

Assignment:

Hopefully the weather is better at this point. Take a walk around your neighborhood or any part of St. Louis you are particularly fond of. Write a poem about the ecology of your community. How do people interact with nature? How are *you* interacting with nature? What are the political, social, artistic, communal etc. aspects you might include in your eco-poem?

Week 13—1-1 Meetings and Poetry Exhibit Week (no presentations)

4/11: Global Poetics Poetry Exhibit Workshop (classroom TBD)

4/13: 1-1 Meetings about your final paper

Assignment:

1-1 meetings.

Week 14: Dis/ability

4/18: *Deaf Republic: Poems*, Ilya Kaminsky

4/20: *Deaf Republic: Poems*, Ilya Kaminsky

Assignment:

Finalize GPP project by 4/21 at 11:59 pm.

Week 15: Final Paper Roundtable Week

4/25: Final paper roundtable

4/27: Final paper roundtable

Assignment:

Prepare a presentation about your final paper. This is a formal presentation, so have comments written and a PowerPoint. You should talk for about 5 minutes, and we will follow with Q&A about your paper.

Assignment:

Final Paper Due May 10th, 2023, at 11:59 pm.

**“Read critically. Write consciously.
Speak clearly. Tell your truth.”**

-Clint Smith III