



Course Name:

Reading and Writing Verse: A Poetry Workshop

Course Code:

LH-E-756

Course Credits:

4

Course Length:

15 Weeks

Course Instructor:

Professor (Dr) Maaz Bin Bilal

is a poet, translator, and critic. His poetry collection, *Ghazalnama: Poems from Delhi, Belfast, and Urdu* (Yoda Press, 2019), was shortlisted for the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar and favourably reviewed internationally in publications such as *World Literature Today* and *Wasafiri* magazine. Bilal's poems have also been published in prestigious journals such as *Rattle*, *Lyrikline*, *Indiana Review*, *Indian Literature*, *Ego*, *Indian Quarterly*, *Himal Southasian*, *Vayavya*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, and *Poetry at Sangam* among others, and in anthologies from Penguin, Harper Collins, Pippa Rann Books etc. His poetry has been translated into Bangla, Hindi, Irish, German, and Urdu. Bilal has also translated Mirza Ghalib's Persian long poem into English, *Temple Lamp* (Penguin 2022), which was an *Asian Age* bestseller and was critically noted and widely reviewed. He has reviewed poetry and prose for various national and international publications.

Course Description:

Reading and Writing Verse: A Poetry Workshop aims to read poetry regularly in class to understand poetic craft so that students may write their own poems on given themes, moods and/or genres. It seeks to inculcate a healthy poetry reading habit and develop poetry appreciation among students so their own poetry writing may benefit from their expertise. The poems students write will be collectively workshopped in class with feedback from other students and the course instructor. The course will also help students understand what makes a good poem. Students will complete the course with a journal of their original lyric and narrative poetry, a journal of practical criticism of others' poetry, and an understanding of poetic craft, genre, and the publication process.

COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OBJECTIVES (AIMS):

Course Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessments/ Activities
Familiarity with different genres of poetry	In-Class reading and discussions, in-class writing, homework Reading and writing,	Class workshops, creative writing journal submission
Understanding poetic craft, writing criticism	Class discussions, workshops , homework reflective writing assignments and peer review workshopping.	Poetry reflections journal and Peer reviews
Creative writing (poetry) skills, Redraftinf and revision skills.	Reading and writing poetry, workshopping poetry.	Creative writing journal, workshopping.
Understanding of journal publication and its importance	Class discussion	Not graded. Students are recommended to submit to <i>Needle</i> and other journals.

Grading:

Grade	Percentage	Grade points

O	80% & above	8
A+	75-79.5	7.5
A	70-74.5	7
A-	65-69.5	6
B+	60-64.5	5
B	55-59.5	4
B-	50-54.5	3
P1	45-49.5	2
P2	40-44.5	1
F	Below 40	0

Course Evaluations (Continuous Assessment):

As this is a workshop course with continuous assessment no resit exam may be possible.

Class participation:	10 marks
Reflective journal	30 marks
Creative writing journal	40 marks
<u>Workshopping/Peer reviews</u>	<u>20 marks</u>
Total:	100 marks

Class Participation and Attendance: In order to receive credit for the participation requirement for this class, you will need to be an active and attentive member of the class community. I expect you to participate fully in the class activities, to be ready with thoughtful answers when called upon, and to offer your informed opinions during our class discussions. This means, I expect you to come to class having worked on your reflective journal. I also expect you to be vocal inside the classroom space. At the same time, points will be deducted if you keep on talking for talking's sake. While I respect all kinds of opinions, so long as they are accompanied by clear evidence and reasons, I will not entertain uninformed bias. Also, this class will have zero tolerance towards racist, classist, casteist, sexist, homophobic, and Islamophobic commentary. **There is an absolute no-use phone/tablet policy for class. You may use laptops if and when allowed.**

Course Structure and Readings:

This is a tentative and illustrative course plan; class topics, units and readings are subject to change based on group performance:

Week 1

Introductions, explaining course expectations

In-class reading:

Ap Dijksterhuis, “The unconscious process that leads to creativity: how ‘incubation’ works”

<https://www.theguardian.com/wellness/2025/sep/10/creativity-unconscious-process-incubation>

Weeks 2

What is poetry? How to read a poem? Verse or Prose? Free Verse and Metrical Writing/Genre Poetry, Prosody

Vijay Nambisan “Madras Central”

Weeks 3

Lyric Poetry—Self writing

Sylvia Plath: *Daddy*

Week 4

Writing to a theme: Time

Louis MacNeice: “Meeting Point”

Philip Larkin: “Aubade”

Week 5

Editing Poetry and Giving Peer Feedback

Week 6

Writing in a genre: The Haiku

Week 7

Writing to a theme—Place

Week 8

Writing in a genre—Sonnet

Billy Collins

Week 9

Writing a mood: Humour

Wendy Cope, Ramanujan

Week 10

Writing in a genre: Ghazal

Agha Shahid Ali

Week 11

Imagist Poetry

Ezra Pound

Week 12

Prose Poetry

Week 13

Translating Poetry

Week 14

Reviewing Publication Conventions and preparing MS for submissions to journals

Recommended Texts:

Strand, Mark and Eavan Boland. *The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms*. Norton (April 2001) ISBN-10: 0393321789. ISBN-13: 978-0393321784

Recommended Websites:

www.poetryfoundation.org

www.poets.org

www.awpwriter.org

www.pw.org

www.lyrikline.org

Suggested Supplemental Resources:

Behn and Twichell, *The Practice of Poetry*

Roland Greene and Stephen Cushman. Ed. *The Princeton Handbook of Poetic Terms*