"The only freedom's in departure." - Robert Frost

This course focuses on the foundations and dynamics of poetry as a writer's process. It will cover a brief history of poetry and examine metric and syllabic measures of writing. Poems from the past and present will serve as points of departure for discussions of craft. Selections include examples of Anglo-Saxon verse, the lymeric, haiku, the sonnet, the sestina, the villanelle, and the more unusual forms such as the sapphic.

Course Objectives:
1. Writers will have a clear grasp of the two frequencies of language and an elemental sense of how they inter-relate.
2. Writers will have a clear understanding and trust working from their own direct observations. Opinions will be clearly differentiated from observations. Students will then be expected to share the work and feedback that transpires with their colleagues in a professional, respectful, and civil manner.
3. Writers will explore and demonstrate their ability to work in a variety of received forms.
4. Writers will sustain 14 weeks of writing prolifically.
5. Each writer will be confident in the practice of re-writing. And have some sense of the emergence and differentiation of Style.

I. WRITING

Assignments include formal exercises in Anglo-Saxon, metrics, and syllabics; and later, short weekly responses to colleagues' poems. You may also be required to submit one brief book report.

No class Friday, March 20. Spring Recess.

The final assignment will be the submission of eight typed, double spaced pages of poems. Due. Friday, May 1. No submissions will be taken after the close of that Friday class. Last day of Class is Friday, May 8. That class is required. Failing to submit a portfolio or not attending the final class will
automatically cause a full letter grade deduction. NO EXCEPTIONS.

No final exam.

II. READING

Required:

Miguel Murphy  A Book Called Rats
Vievee Francis  Horse in the Dark  Northwestern
Steve Fellner  The Weary World Rejoices  Marsh Hawk Press

Other Titles You Should Read:

The Poetics of Space  Gaston Bachelard

Language and Myth, Ernst Cassirer (Dover)

Suggested Ancillary Texts:

Triggering Town, Richard Hugo

Fortino Sámano, Cynthia Hogue (a combination of short poems and philosophy)

W. H. Auden:
The Dyer's Hand, Vintage, Random House
(not the whole book, just the opening chapters).
Forewords and Afterwords – “The Christian Mystic”

Recommended Books of Poetry:

Elizabeth Bishop, Complete Poetry

Theocritus – The Idylls (Robert Wells translation, Penguin Classics)

Deborah Bogen – Landscape with Silos, Let Me Open You a Swan
Catherine Bowman – Rock Farm, Notarikon
James Cihlar -- Rancho Nostalgia
Peter Covino – The Right Place to Jump
Stephen Cramer – Shiva’s Drum, Tongue and Groove
Mark Doty -- Sweet Machine
Kathy Fagan – The Charm
III. LISTENING

Besides in class listening -- which is one of the primary skills this class develops -- from time to time, to garner with your ears, you may be asked to spend an evening or two being festive and social. Life is hard!

IV. CLASS RULES

Due to the nature of this specific class, attendance is mandatory. Clear all absences in advance with S. If you foresee missing more than two classes, drop this class NOW. You might also want to note: I am an orderly teacher. I loathe tardiness. EVERY Class beyond the two excused you will AUTOMATICALLY FORFEIT ONE LETTER GRADE per class missed.

Last two days of class : Friday May 1 and Friday May 8 are REQUIRED. Schedule the close of your semester accordingly. If you elect to miss one of these classes, you AUTOMATICALLY will forfeit one full letter grade per class not attended.

No telephoning, surfing, or texting during class. This class is about the shape of one’s attention. It is not about “retrieving information” or about Technology beyond the human Sentence.

Due to the close of semester frenzy, I am not available for meetings the last two weeks of class. If you have end of the semester issues or need any letters of recommendation, please ask for them in a timely advance; not during the last two weeks of class.

Knowing what is going on or has gone on in class is not the responsibility of the instructor. It is the student’s job to stay current. Missing one class and then turning around and coming unprepared to the next is a big No No. Consult your colleagues. Stay current.
Always be prepared, at least alert, to talk intelligently when asked for your observation.

The ability to see clearly and express elegantly is the writer's goal. To See and to Express.

School’s Student Integrity Policies:
http://www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html