**Course Title:** Poetry: The Essentials  
**Course Code:** POET 184 W  
**Instructor:** Chanda Feldman

**Course Summary:**
We will approach writing and reading poetry by working with the nuts and bolts of craft and technique—including image and metaphor, sound and meter, and tone—to compose evocative and graceful poems. We will explore strategies for sustaining a writing habit, overcoming writer’s block, and identifying sources of inspiration. This course is designed for those already writing poetry, as well as for those just beginning.

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.*

**Grade Options and Requirements:**
- **No Grade Requested (NGR)**
  - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- **Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)**
  - Score will be determined by student participation.
- **Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)**
  - Posting of Weekly Poems 50%
  - Posting of Feedback 25%
  - Discussion Participation 25%

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.*

**Weekly Poems**
Each week you will submit a poem in response to a writing assignment. To earn full credit, you must submit to seven (7) of the workshops; in other words, you can opt out of submitting your work three (3) times. I will offer you extended feedback on four (4) of your poems; for the others I’ll offer you brief, targeted advice for improving your work.

**Workshop**
Each week each student will upload a poem to the forum for workshop. I’ll be moderating our discussion, posting comments on poems as they appear. A paragraph of specific feedback from you should suffice for each poem in your assigned workshop group.
Chat/Office Hours
Each week I will hold a live chat discussion session, via Zoom (a video conferencing platform), which is optional and recorded in case you cannot attend. It’s an opportunity for me to answer any of your questions and to broaden our forum discussion for the week. It is our live virtual writing community, so your engaged, constructive, spirited presence is most welcome. If you can’t come, you may also email me questions beforehand that I can address during the Zoom session, so that you can see me answer them on the video.

**Tentative Weekly Outline:**

**Week 1: June 20**  
What to Write About: Finding Your Subjects  
Reading: *The Poet’s Companion (TPC)*, Frank Bidart (“Self Portrait, 1969”), Margaret Atwood (“This is a Photograph of Me”), Elizabeth Bishop (“In the Waiting Room”)  
☞ Writing Assignment: Self-portrait poem/List of subject ideas

**Week 2: June 27**  
Voice: A Poet’s Tone  
Reading: *TPC*, Randall Jarrell (“Next Day”), Frank O’Hara (“The Day Lady Died”), Mary Jo Bang (“You Were You Are Elegy” and “The Role of Elegy”)  
☞ Writing Assignment: POV/Elegy

**Week 3: July 4**  
Image: The Matter of Metaphors and Similes  
Reading: *TPC*, William Carlos Williams (“Nantucket”), Phillip Levine (“They Feed They Lion”), Lucille Clifton (“Sorrows”)  
☞ Writing Assignment: List poem/Jargon poem

**Week 4: July 11**  
Lines and Stanzas: Poetic Contour  
Reading: *TPC*, Gwendolyn Brooks (“We Real Cool”), James Dickey (“In the Marble Quarry”), Li-Young Lee (“Persimmons”)  
☞ Writing Assignment: Stanza/Enjambment

**Week 5: July 18**  
Sound: Meter and Rhyme  
Reading: *TPC*, Phillip Larkin, Marianne Moore (“The Fish”), Christian Wiman (“Sitting Down to Breakfast Alone”), Natasha Trethewey (“Flounder”)  
☞ Writing Assignment: Rhyme/Syllabics

**Week 6: July 25**
Formal Poetry
⇒ Writing Assignment: Formal poem

Week 7: August 1
Revision and Polish
Reading: TPC, Jorie Graham (“I Was Taught Three”), Walt Whitman, Thomas Hardy (“The Shadow on the Stone”)
⇒ Writing Assignment: Revision/Palinode

Week 8: August 8
Try Something New: Subjects
Reading: TPC, WH Auden (“Musee de Beaux Arts”), Alice Fulton (“Aviation”), Paisley Rekdal (“Dear Lacuna, Dear Lard”)
⇒ Writing Assignment: Ekphrasis/Humor

Week 9: August 15
Try Something New: Form and Structure
Reading: John Hollander (“Swan and Shadow”), Lyrae Van Clief Stefanon (“Bop: Haunting”), Ruth Ellen Kocher
⇒ Writing Assignment: Concrete/New form

Week 10: August 22
The Poetry Market and Publishing
Reading: TPC; students share one poem that is meaningful to them with class
⇒ Writing Assignment: Submission preparation/Reflection poem