Like an abstract: in short
we will have four modules but before
that: copyright; the picture at the end of
this outline shows a cricket singing and writing
under piles of snow. Please cite him if you wish to quote her.

Eleven Ei Em to one Pi Em on Tuesdays: office hours. Room: PAS 1285
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2. Aphorism (1 class) as an independent form Oct 3 [it’s ok to be slightly abstract. Poets do that but do it well].
3. And then aphorism as one-liners or short pithy writings incorporated into the poems you have written or want to write. (1 class), Oct 10.
4. (iterative) translation of poetry. (2.5 classes), Oct 24 (a panel of three poets discussing and editing your work), Oct 31, Nov 7.
5. Creative nonfiction and/or mixed genre, incorporating poetry, aphorism and possibly your (iterative) translations (3 weeks).
6. Final class, submission of portfolios and a reading event; feel free to invite friends, (1 class), Nov 28. (subject to change)
Instead of an intro:

Hello, how’re you? My name’s Morteza.

If you want to know where I’m from: I’m an earthling, maybe my background is China, or Siberia, but I opened my eyes to date palm trees and marshlands and rivers and rolling hills. Then I grew up by mountains because one night a monster attacked my hometown, when people were fast asleep; in human language that monster is a species called war and it is still alive and at work.

In short,

“If someone asks me what my background is
I will say saudade” (that’s a line from a poem I wrote this summer.)
And this is my story plot.

But I’d like to know your story and I’m excited to read yours. We are all story-tellers whether we write poetry, make a painting, take a photo, or speak with friends, mom, dad.

We also write stories through walking and as we walk, as we live.

Any movement from point a to point b is a story.

A line is a nile; a story.

A few introductory notes:

we are in this course to write, honestly, courageously, passionately. Don’t keep the creative energy inside you restrained; let it flow and roar; I’m here to shape and guide it with your help and with the support of your fellow classmates. We produce our own work while we read the work written by other writers/poets (from different Geographies and eras). We come to class prepared to discuss them. However, we read as writers and not as critics. We become familiar with a set of formal elements and get immersed in the rudiments of composing poetry, that is, we become familiar with such elements as imagery and sound, verse forms, lineation and punctuation, rhyme and rhythm, yes! Poems can rhyme even today without sounding old-fashioned or song lyrics. We will also read each other’s work. We offer both written and oral feedback to the written works. We will begin with writing poems and then will focus on writing pithy aphoristic lines which you can incorporate into your poems. This will in turn be followed by a little work on (iterative) translations. We will look at translation from a broad perspective, rendering a text from one language into another but we will also look at translation as re-iteration of another poem or work of art. The main focus, however, will be how a text can be recreated differently at different iterations.

We will finally compose longer pieces which can incorporate all the shorter work you have produced.

Your weekly posts are at good practice towards the writing of nonfiction.

One central premise in this course is experimentation with different forms. I cherish the existing forms (of poetry, drama, fiction etc.) but I think we all need to be wary of the ways these forms may be limiting to our creativity.

Please note

while we stick to this outline, things are not set in stone; there is always a degree of spontaneity in courses like this.
Texts we’ll be working with

include

Oliver, Mary. *A Poetry Handbook*. Available at the Bookstore.

We’ll be working with these two textbooks as working platforms, which will take us to many, many more texts. Please purchase and read word for word.

All other poems and prose on poetry can be found on the Learn site.
Most of these poems are in public domain or on free Websites.

Please be ready to read poetry and prose not listed here
but posted to Learn later throughout the term as I see them helpful.

And please read with pleasure.
Assignments (if this is the right word)

Please keep in mind, you want to produce your creative work with passion, so this is as a way of giving structure to our efforts to write creatively and share with excitement.

I.

Poems

5 poems as part of your portfolio. (one poem per week in the first few weeks of the term. No particular length but keep short please; but keep in mind that this is not a directive, only a guide.) (20% for writing the poems, posting them to Learn, and bringing them to class for peer feedback and finally submitting them as part of your portfolios, at the end of the term.)

25 one-liners, or aphorisms, as part of your portfolio (10%)

II.

Translation: (15%)

four iterations
of a haiku; one poem
from another tongue.

these are not haikus,
although a 5.7.5
pattern can be seen

We will discuss the craft of translation, asking if translation of poetry is governed by the same set of rules that dominates poetry writing. Submit as part of your portfolio.

III.

Mixed genre work

One long mixed-genre work preferably reflecting all the readings of the term; this long work should reflect nonfiction, poems, aphorism, brief visual experimentations, possibly reiterations, and any other experimentation. (20%)
IV. Weekly throughout the term, by Wednesday 11:59pm

Weekly posts (Please submit to the Learn Dropbox. These posts should be your reflections on weekly readings listed below; please write as a poet/writer; this is a piece of nonfiction. Engage in a personal conversation with the work, focus on any aspect of the piece you want and be creative. This is a practice in creative nonfiction writing. (15 % for writing and posting 9 posts. You lose 5% for missing one; and if you miss 2 posts, then you will get a zero on this component of the course.)

Weekly posts should incorporate the assigned poems and prose, and should be done in a creative way

and should not be written as an academic essay.

If you take some time thinking about it, you’ll find a way about doing it. I have no prescription but I have some pointers which can guide you through that. I’ll show you some samples. Be innovative with these posts;

V. Workshop discussions, contributions including peer feedback

Workshop participation including discussions and collaborative/pair work and your writing exercises. I’ll collect your works of art and will return them to you with feedback. You can, [but don't need to] develop these writing exercises into the five poems you are required to submit. I do my best to create a comfortable atmosphere when we meet on Thursdays so you can speak even if you are a bit shy. I'm shy too, sometimes. But please do your best to comment, critique, agree, disagree, and care! Come to class prepared for discussions and workshopping. The life of the workshop depends on you and your excitement about, your engagement with the course. Please be kind and gracious as you comment and criticize (in the technical sense of the word. You put on your critic’s hat as you read your classmates' work).

We are entitled to artistic expression and we are allowed to express our opinions honestly. We may also speak and write about sensitive topics. Please be tolerant if you don’t like an idea. Try to offer your own opinions rather than quote from others. Go beyond “I like” or “I didn’t like.” Of course, you can always praise or dismiss a work but they should be followed by your critical words; comments which are made to help us improve our work. Having no comment means you haven’t read you classmate’s work well. If you don’t respect your peers by spending time on their writings, how can you expect your work to be read well and critically and thoroughly? We are here because we love reading and producing literature; don’t squander your time.

Feel free to eat and/or drink at class times (and for a long night class like this I recommend that you do,) but can you please do it in a way that is not distracting? And is it possible for you to be punctual? Being late can be distracting and you may also miss an important part of the workshop.
And remember attendance is essential in this course. See what the university regulations are about absences with medical documentation. Each week two or three of you give oral feedback to your friends. This will be done completely randomly at the end of the pair work, that is, after you discuss the poems with your discussion partner, I’ll ask two/three of you to critique what you have read. You are also required to send a written feedback to your classmate whose work you have critiqued 5 days after the oral feedback at the workshop. (20%)
**Poetry**

T. S. Eliot: “I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter… Shantih”

**Week 1, class 1 (Sep 5)**

Discussion of creative writing. Why do you write? What is poetry? (even Seamus Heaney says he is not sure). How arts are connected. How one art can help with the creation of another. Getting ready.

How to write weekly posts [with samples]. How to do peer feedback. How I will give feedback in class.

Discussion of poems. A little poem by bpNichol, Hass’s “Meditation at Lagunitas”

**In class activities:**

- **collaborative word play.** Collaborative description of a landscape/in-escape.
- A game of alphabets. [we invoke Seamus Heaney, Mark Strand, bpNichol]
- pair work; destroy and re-build
- writing individually; with prompts


**The joy of writing:** write a poem. Post to Learn. Bring a copy to class.

**To do:**

- A list of plants; (used for making metaphor and simile).
- A list of animals: (used for making metaphor and simile).

**And don’t forget your weekly reflection.**

**Week 2, class 2 (Sep 12)**

Discussion of readings, craft

Discussion of assigned poems
My feedback on your writing from last week.

**In class activity:**

description (plants, animals, gemstones, geological features, objects, nature and landscape) without the use of simile and metaphor, let’s be concrete and detailed; how well do you observe or how detailed can you imagine? (may give prompt)

pair work; peer feedback on your poem

Writing individually; with prompts


**The joy of Writing:** write a poem. Post to Learn. Bring a copy to class.

To do:

A list of bodies of water rivers, lakes, seas, puddles, etc., (metaphor and simile), a list of colours, a list of gemstones

And don’t forget your weekly reflection.

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**Week 3, class 3 (Sep 19)**

Discussion of readings, craft.

Discussion of assigned poems

My feedback on your writing from last week

**In class activity:**

collaborative exercise in simile and metaphor, allusion. We are still being concrete. (let’s try and see if the lists from previous classes can be used)

pair work; peer feedback

writing individually, with prompts

The joy of writing: write a poem. Post to Learn. Bring a copy to class.

To do:

find aphoristic lines in the poems you read

And don’t forget your weekly reflection.

**Week 4, class 4 (Sep 26)**

Discussion of readings, craft

Discussion of assigned poems

My feedback on your writing from last week

**In class activity:**

**collaborative form poem (Sonnet, Haiku, Cinquain, etc.)**

**pair work; peer feedback**

**writing individually…**


The joy of writing: write a poem. Post to Learn. Bring a copy to class.

To do:

find abstract lines, aphoristic parts in the assigned poems.

Try writing a few.

And don’t forget your weekly reflection.

**Aphorism**

Kafka: “the cage went in search of the bird”

**Week 5, class 5 (Oct 3)**

Discussion of readings, craft

Discussion of a poem and aphorisms

My feedback on your writing from last week
In class activity
writing one-liners (aphorism),
pair work; peer feedback
writing individually

Reading pleasures: (Oliver 109-122), poems by Ann Michaels, Jan Zwicky, Robert Hass, Louise Gluck, Mary Oliver.

The joy of writing: write aphorisms. Post to Learn. Bring a copy to class.

To do:
find aphoristic lines in the assigned poems; A list of gnomic and aphoristic statements in the assigned poems.

And don’t forget your weekly reflection.

Week 6, class 6 (Oct 10):
incorporating abstraction into our poems
Discussion of readings;
Discussion of a poem
My feedback on your writing from last week

In class activity:
free verse (can you use aphorism in your work? Remember Oliver, Gluck, Hass and Michaels)
then: translate from a language you don’t know
pair work
writing individually; prompt

Reading pleasures: Creative Translation, we will read The Basho Variations by Steve McCaffery, Strand: “Translation” Adunis (from Arabic), Transtromer (from Swedish), Rilke (from German), Japanese Haiku, French poets, Bei Dao, (Chinese) Haiku by three Japanese masters translated by Hass, Cavafy (Greek), Sappho, Rumi’s Ghazals as translated by Barks (from Persian), Pablo Neruda (from Spanish)

The joy of crafting: iterations of a Basho Haiku, write as many as you can.

To do:
a poem from another language (the poem TBA); translate and bring to class
Week 7 (Oct 17 No class: happy reading)

No weekly posts.

Iterative translation

“ ”

Commentary: in between the quotation marks: the frog that never jumped into the pool that never was and this is the source of all creations.

Week 8, class 7 (Oct 24)

(instead of Feedback on your writing from last week):

Drafts ready for editing on the 24th of October; (we will be editing, the first half of the class, on the 24th with three poets. We work in separate groups to get as much editing as we can. We will project your poems on the screen).

Second half of the class will be peer editing of poetry; pairs working with each other.

In class activity:

Collaborative: translation from a language you don’t know

pair work; peer feedback

Individual writing; prompt

Reading pleasures: Creative Translation, we will read *The Basho Variations* by Steve McCaffery, Adunis (from Arabic), Transtromer (from Swedish), Rilke (from German), Japanese Haiku, French poets, Bei Dao, (Chinese) Haiku by three Japanese masters translated by Hass, Cavafy (Greek), Sappho, Rumi’s Ghazals as translated by Barks (from Persian), Pablo Neruda (from Spanish)

The joy of crafting: write as many iterations of a painting/poem as you can

To do:

continue editing the translated poem

And don’t forget your weekly reflection.

Week 9, class 8 (Oct 31)

Discussion of readings
Discussion of poems in translation

My feedback on your writing from last week

**In class activity:**

**Collaborative:** collaborative iteration of a haiku (translation), and we’ll continue our translation from another language

**pair work**

**writing individually**

**Reading pleasures:** Creative Translation, we will read *The Basho Variations* by Steve McCaffery, Adunis (from Arabic), Transtromer (from Swedish), Rilke (from German), Japanese Haiku, French poets, *Bei Dao, (Chinese) Haiku by three Japanese masters translated by Hass, Cavafy (Greek)*, Sappho, Rumi’s Ghazals as translated by Barks (from Persian), Pablo Neruda (from Spanish)

*The joy of crafting: choose four of the iterations and edit them*

**To do:**

continue editing the translated poem

**And don’t forget your weekly reflection.**

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**Week 10, class 9 (Nov 7)**

Discussion of readings

Discussion of poems

My feedback on your writing from last week

**In class activity:**

**Collaborative:** collaborative iteration of a haiku and further work on translation.

**pair work**

**writing individually; experimental, mixed genre**

**Reading pleasures:** readings (mixed genre) by John Berger, Ann Carson and others

*The joy of writing: write a poem: mix genres! Post to Learn. Bring a copy to class.*

**To do:** put together your portfolio

**And don’t forget your weekly reflection.**
Mixed-genre/nonfiction

Week 11, class 10 (Nov 14)
Discussion of readings
Discussion of a poem
My feedback on your writing from last week

In class activity:
work on a poem which incorporated different genres
pair work
writing individually

Reading pleasures: TBD

The joy of writing: write a poem. Mix genres! Post to Learn. Bring a copy to class.

To do: put together your portfolio
And don’t forget your weekly reflection.

Week 12, class 11 (Nov 21)
Discussion of readings and poems
Discussion of your portfolios
Pair work; feedback on your portfolio

Reading pleasures:

The joy of writing:

Week 13, class 12 (Nov 28)
Last class: submission of portfolios, poetry reading, open to all, invite friends
**Academic Integrity**
In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check the [Office of Academic Integrity website](http://example.com) for more information.

**Discipline**
A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity](http://example.com) for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](http://example.com). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](http://example.com).

**Grievance**
A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](http://example.com). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals**
A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](http://example.com) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](http://example.com) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](http://example.com).

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**
*Note for students with disabilities:* AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.