

HONS 220

Poetry & Geology

Spring 2016

Syllabus & Schedule

Class Meetings: Monday and Wednesday, 3:00pm – 4:15pm

Room: WSB-22

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Dr. Kate Pound

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Office Hours: M, W, Th, F 9-10 am, and by apt.

Textbooks: Course materials available on D2L; please bring printed copies to each class, as your in-class assignments will require you to have paper copies of reading materials.

Course Description: This is an integrated, interdisciplinary course in which we will examine poetry in its geological context. The poetry will feature poetic voices representing a wide variety of forms and traditions, and will be selected from geologically distinct regions. We will examine the geological foundations for the landscapes within which or from the poetic voices evolved.

Course Context: This course fulfills the following goal areas:

- Goal Area 2: Critical Thinking
- Goal Area 6: The Humanities and Fine Arts
- Goal Area 10: People and the Environment

Course Philosophy: The aim of this class is to experience and read a variety of poetic forms, as well as learn about the personal, cultural, social, religious and political context within which the poetry was written. We will also focus on the geological context within which the landscape that the poetry was inspired by of created within, as well as the geographic setting. We view all of these factors as being incorporated in the evolution of the poetic voice.

Course Structure: Poetry selections are tied to broader geological and earth science concepts. Each course meeting includes interactive discussions and activities, poetry readings, analytical or creative work, and science lab work. Each student will take responsibility for one colloquium, which includes a directed discussion based on an epic poem and a thematic analysis that draws on geological understandings. The final exam is comprehensive and drawn from the essential understandings and essential questions that frame the course.

In-Class work / Assignments: Graded assignments will be completed during each class period. These cannot be made up if you miss class, but the lowest two participation grades will be dropped.

Written assignments must use an appropriate style sheet (MLA is recommended). Please consult with the Write Place on written assignments to assure that style is consistent.

Grading: Your final grade will be assigned as follows:

In-class work	30%
Assignments	15%
Colloquia Paper	15%
Colloquia Presentation	15%
Mid-Semester Exam	10%
Final Exam	15%

Grades will be assigned as follows:

	A = 92.5 – 100 %	A- = 90 – 92.4%
B+ = 87.5 – 89.9%	B = 82.5 – 87.4%	B- = 80 – 82.4%
C+ = 77.5 – 79.9%	C = 72.5 – 77.4%	C- = 70 – 72.4%
D+ = 67.5 – 69.9%	D = 62.5 – 67.4%	D- = 60 – 62.4%

Use of D2L Brightspace: Course information, course packet materials, links, reminders, and any lecture slides are all posted on the D2L site. The URL for the D2L Brightspace site is: <http://huskynet.stcloudstate.edu/instructional/d2l/default.asp>.

Preparation for Class: Assigned course readings must be completed ahead of class. Each reading should be annotated, and students should be prepared to share from their annotations.

In-Class Work: Annotated poems, and your in-class work.

Other Assignments: A variety of shorter assignments in and out of class.

Colloquia: Your colloquium will be based on an analysis of an epic poem and a reflection on its geological context. The colloquium style includes a prepared, resourced, and informed leader who is able to guide the other participants in a meaningful discussion on a particular topic using prompts, discussion guides, and visual aids.

Colloquium Paper: The essay should be a thoroughly researched analysis of an epic poem, including a contextual analysis that explores the role of geology in the shaping of the work. 7,000-10,000 words with at least five sources in MLA format.

Exams: There will be a take-home mid-semester exam and a comprehensive final exam in this class which will draw on your understanding of the geologic processes responsible for landscape development, and the variety of poetic forms we have investigated, as well historical, social and political background and geographic and cultural context of the varied poetic voices we have investigated. You may use our list of enduring understandings (in this syllabus) and essential questions (in D2L) as a study guide.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating and Plagiarism are not tolerated in any form, and will be dealt with according to SCSU guidelines (<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/studenthandbook/policies/cheating.asp>).

The Vocabulary of Geology and Literary Analysis: Learning about geology and literary theory is a bit like learning new languages. There will be a lot of new terminology. We will minimize the use of excessive terminology, but you will need to learn how to communicate in both of these fields. Above all, we want you to open yourself to both experiencing poetry, and considering the natural landscape that gave form to the poetic voice.

RefWorks: We will schedule a library session on how to use refworks.

Classroom Etiquette: Be on time for class, do not leave before class has ended. Late arrivals and early departures disturb other students – and the Professor, especially in a small class. **Turn cell phones off for the class period; please take notes on paper rather than on laptops.**

Part of a Larger Research Project: This course is part of a larger research project on integrating teaching across disciplines; for this reason we will have a 'Data collection' TA present during most classes to give us feedback on our teaching, what works and what does not work. We will be asking for your feedback on how effective the integration across disciplines is for your learning. We will ask you for permission to collect this data, which will have no impact on your grade – see the separate 'Informed Consent' form.

Tentative Schedule with Outcomes, Questions and Readings: HONS 220 Poetry in its Geological Context

Date	Learning Outcomes	Essential Questions	Readings
Mon Jan 11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth's seasons result from the tilt of the earth, and the earth's rotation around the sun • Context matters in poetry How do Science and art inform one another? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we have seasons? • How do science and art inform one another? What is the optimal relationship? What is your experience with various disciplines and their inter-relatedness or their oppositional stances? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to understand the relationship between art and science. Rosenblatt, p. 127-131 • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Jan 13th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth's seasons result from the tilt of the earth, and the earth's rotation around the sun • Poetry is built on certain elements that should be known to readers and writers of poetry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the tilt of the earth and the rotation of the earth around the sun 'drive' seasonality? • What does it mean to be a poet? To create poetry? To write? To engage with the human condition and the physical context in which you live? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of poetry, using Heather Sellers, <i>The Practice of Creative Writing</i> • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Jan 18th	Martin Luther King Day – No Classes		
Weds Jan 20th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth has a dynamic 4.5 billion year history • The sonnet is a form of poetry that has endured for many generations and still appeals to many readers and writers of poetry. Mathematicians have tried to explain this appeal because the form corresponds to the golden ratio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has planet earth changed and evolved over time? What do we know about earth's early history? • Why has the sonnet form such lasting appeal? Do you believe the sonnet can be explained by other disciplines (such as mathematics)? Are there other ways to explain the appeal of this particular form? Do you agree with Geoff Page when he writes: "The sonnet is the dish to make your mark in," meaning that a poet must establish a reputation as a writer of sonnets before becoming free to write in other forms? Whether or not you agree, why does Geoff Page make this claim? (Hirsch, Boland, p. 71) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Hirsch / Boland, <i>Making of a Sonnet</i>. Read selectively from the introduction and share sonnets from the collection (as marked) • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Jan 25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fossils provide us with a record of plant and animal evolution, provide us with evidence for changes in environment • Gadamer explores the relationship between nature, things, ideas, and language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are fossils? How do fossils get preserved? How do fossils tell us about changing environments? • To what extent is Gadamer right about the relationships between things and language? How does Gadamer use the history of philosophical thought to create a relationship with the reader and make his 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read "The Nature of Things and the Language of Things," from <i>Philosophical Hermeneutics</i>, by Hans-Georg Gadamer • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L

		argument both sound and clear?	
Weds Jan 27th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement of Earth's lithospheric plates drives the building of mountains, the formation of ocean basins, and all earth processes and features • There is a relationship between art and science that can be fruitful, although many practitioners consider the relationship to be oppositional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we have mountains, ocean basins, and deep ocean trenches? How does plate tectonics work? • How do science and art inform one another? What is the optimal relationship? What is your experience with various disciplines and their inter-relatedness or their oppositional stances? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read "From Science to Literature" in Barthes, <i>The Rustle of Language</i>, 3-10 • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Feb 1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All earth materials (magma, igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rock, and sediments) are naturally recycled. These processes are encapsulated in the rock cycle. • Gadamer explores the relationship between nature, things, ideas, and language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are rocks formed? How does earth do its own recycling? • How does Nazim Hikmet give us the physical world through both the form and content of his work? Sample ten poems of his. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barthes "The War of Languages," in <i>The Rustle of Language</i> (106-110) • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Feb 3rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountain ranges are built by complex geological forces (plate tectonics) over time, and are eventually worn down by the processes of erosion • Form and perception are controlling factors in how we experience the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are mountain ranges 'built'? Why are some areas flat? • How do form and perception create a unique human experience for each person? If our perceptions of form are vastly different, how is it possible to compare human experience or consider it in the aggregate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read "The Nature of Things and the Language of Things," from <i>Philosophical Hermeneutics</i>, by Hans-Georg Gadamer • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Feb 8th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earthquakes are the release of energy that has built up in rocks due to plate movement. Earthquake damage depends on proximity to epicenter and nature of substrate. • Haiku is a highly expressive, economical art form that asks the reader to make a leap in consciousness. Renga is a conversation between poets that uses Haiku principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens during an earthquake? What controls the amount of damage associated with an earthquake? • By modeling upon Haiku master work, can we create a Haiku that expresses a disruptive event (weather event or otherwise)? Can we respond to one another using Renga methods? Is responsive writing (collaborative writing) more or less difficult for you as a writer? Does the call to respond add pressure or relieve it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Paul Janeczko's book, <i>How to Write Haiku</i>, as a resource for exploring Haiku, both as reader and writer • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Feb 10th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volcanic activity varies from 'passive' to 'violent'. The type of volcanic activity, and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do volcanic eruptions vary? Why are some volcanic eruptions 'violent', and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to read a poem in context. Look at Rosenblatt, p. 105-109 • Poetry selections from D2L

	<p>volcanic structures produced varies relative to plate boundaries, and depends on the chemistry of the magma.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poetry cannot be read in a vacuum. The relationships between reader, writer, and subject are transactional. 	<p>'passive' or 'quiet'? How does type of volcanic eruption relate to plate tectonic boundary type?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is your unique perspective as a reader? How do you interact with writers and their subjects? How does your context affect you as a reader? What is your responsibility as a reader? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geology Readings in D2L
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Mon Feb 15th	Presidents Day Holiday – No Classes		
Weds Feb 17th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rocks are made up of minerals; most minerals are combinations of a variety of elements. The smallest possible subdivision of an element is an atom. Language shapes human attitudes toward the natural world, but also, the natural world shapes how our language develops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is a mineral? How do we identify minerals? How does language create the world? How does the world create language? How do humans use language to appropriate their power over the natural world? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gem-hunter as poet: Read Ralph Fletcher's essay on the poet in the natural world (Fletcher, p. 161) Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L

Mon Feb 22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gemstones are minerals. Gemstones form naturally in metamorphic, igneous, and sedimentary rocks, and in sediments. Poetry is deeply rhythmic no matter its formal or informal construction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are gemstones? How do gemstones form? What are the factors that provide rhythm for poetry? Why does rhythm matter? How can rhythm be disguised? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heather Seller's book, <i>The Practice of Creative Writing</i>: Dylan Thomas, villanelle, p. 340-343; John Yau villanelle, p. 362 Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Feb 24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continental ice sheets and alpine glaciers have built up and melted many times through earth history. Robert Bly's theories about poetry are physical, visceral, and evocative. To explore these concepts about inspiration, let's compare what Bly says about poetry with the poems he provides in <i>Leaping Poetry</i> (group work to jigsaw the chapters). Bly articulates various concepts of poetry: "the psychic woods," "riding on dragons," "leaps," "wild association," "Duende," "steady light," problems with narrative poetry, association, the three brains (reptilian, mammalian, new), surrealism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do ice sheets or valley glaciers form? How do we know that they have built up, advanced and retreated multiple times through earth history? What about poetry can be defined? What cannot? Does Bly come close to providing definition to the ephemeral nature of poetry? How do Bly's theories compare with Sellers' chapter on insight (Ch. 7)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bly, <i>Leaping Poetry</i> (jigsaw) Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L

Mon Feb 29th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continental ice sheet have sculpted the landscape of the upper midwest through processes of erosion and deposition over the past 2.5 million years There are poets for whom the physical world is key to their work, both in form and content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What landforms get produced in front of and beneath an advancing ice sheet? What are the landscape features formed and preserved? What happens when an ice sheet melts? How does Nazim Hikmet give us the physical world through both the form and content of his work? Sample ten poems of his. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read "Poetic form: A personal encounter" by Eavan Boland in The Making of a Poem Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Mar 2nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deserts cover about one fifth of earth's land surface. They are areas that receive less than 50 cm of precipitation per year, and range from hot rocky deserts, to hot sandy deserts, polar deserts, coastal deserts and semi-arid deserts. Darkness and light are core metaphors for poetry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is a desert? What earth processes and landforms are characteristic of deserts? How does Gilgamesh, like early foundational literatures, imagine the natural world? What is the place of the desert, caves, and water sources in that imagination? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 10 " The Phenomenology of Roundness," in Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L

March 7th – March 11th	Spring Break
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March 14th – March 18th	Colloquia Preparation
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Mon Mar 21st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The phases of the moon (new, full, first quarter, last quarter etc.) are a consequence of the moons' orbit around the earth and reflection of sunlight from the moon surface. Poetry is deeply rhythmic no matter its formal or informal construction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the 'phases of the moon'? What drives/controls the 'phases of the moon'? What are the basic (necessary, immutable) elements of poetry? What are the fluid elements that can be part of a poet's "toolkit"? (Consider Sellers, Ch 6 & Ch 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read "On becoming a poet by Mark Strand" in The Making of a Poem Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Mar 23rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refraction and absorption of different wavelengths of visible light are the primary cause for colorful sunrise and sunset. Darkness and light are core metaphors for poetry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What causes the coloration of the sky during a sunrise or sunset? What are the characteristics of visible light? What is darkness? What is light? Why are these metaphors so useful to writers? What effect to the words have upon readers in various contexts? Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Chapter 3, "Metaphor," in Poetry an introduction and anthology by Charles S. Felver and Martin K. Nurmi Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L

Mon Mar 28th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The water cycle is a series of processes (evaporation, condensation, precipitation, runoff, infiltration, and transpiration) that explains the movement of water between oceans, atmosphere, cryosphere, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where is water stored on and in planet earth? How does water move between these 'repositories'? What are the basic (necessary, immutable) elements of poetry? What are the fluid elements that can be part of a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements of poetry, using Heather Sellers, The Practice of Creative Writing Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L
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	<p>groundwater, plants, surface streams and lakes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poetry is built on certain elements that should be known to readers and writers of poetry. 	<p>poet's "toolkit"? (Consider Sellers, Ch 6 & Ch 8)</p>	
Weds Mar 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streams carry water and their sediment load from source to sink and range from braided to meandering. Stream discharge can be calculated, and is used in flood prediction. There are poets for whom the physical world is key to their work, both in form and content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do streams do? What different types of stream are there? Why? How do we quantify the amount of water in a stream? What is a flood? How do we predict floods? What about poetry can be defined? What cannot? Does Bly come close to providing definition to the ephemeral nature of poetry? How do Bly's theories compare with Sellers' chapter on insight (Ch. 7)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Chapter 3, "Metaphor," in Poetry an introduction and anthology by Charles S. Felver and Martin K. Nurmi Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Apr 4th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steepness of a coastal area impacts how ocean waves break. Longshore currents move sediment along a coastline by the process of longshore drift. Bly articulates various concepts of poetry: "the psychic woods," "riding on dragons," "leaps," "wild association," "Duende," "steady light," problems with narrative poetry, association, the three brains (reptilian, mammalian, new), surrealism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are waves? What happens at a coastline? How do beaches form? What is darkness? What is light? Why are these metaphors so useful to writers? What effect do the words have upon readers in various contexts? Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Natalie Goldberg's chapter "Darkness and Light" from Writing down the Bones Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Apr 6th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hurricanes (also called typhoons or cyclones) are tropical cyclones driven by rising warm moist air in the Atlantic or Eastern Pacific Oceans. The rising air rotates, drawing in moisture; hurricanes weaken as they move over land. Poetry, like the natural world, is often shaped by disruptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do hurricanes form? What controls the geographic distribution of hurricanes? What are the factors that provide rhythm for poetry? Why does rhythm matter? How can rhythm be disguised? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Chapter 3, "Poetry has inner rhythm," by Maureen Applegate in When the Teacher Says Write a Poem Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Apr 11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water that infiltrates the ground will be stored as groundwater within aquifers, which may be deeply buried or close to the surface. There is a relationship between art and science that can be fruitful, although many practitioners consider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is groundwater? How does groundwater move? What is an aquifer? How does language create the world? How does the world create language? How do humans use language to appropriate their power over the natural world? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read article about how language asserts human dominance over animals Poetry selections from D2L Geology Readings in D2L

	the relationship to be oppositional.		
Weds Apr 13th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caves typically form in limestone due to dissolution of the rock by weakly acidic groundwater to ultimately produce karst landscapes. New minerals precipitate in caves over time to produce a variety of cave formations. • Context matters in poetry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a Karst landscape? How does a Karst landscape form? • How does Gilgamesh, like early foundational literatures, imagine the natural world? What is the place of the desert, caves, and water sources in that imagination? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bly, Leaping Poetry • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Apr 18th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate at any location is controlled by insolation, latitude, elevation, nearby water, ocean currents, topography, vegetation, and prevailing winds. • Language shapes human attitudes toward the natural world, but also, the natural world shapes how our language develops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Climate? What controls climate? How is climate different to weather? • How does the Popul Vuh, like early foundational literatures, imagine the natural world? What is the place of the hurricane in that imagination? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Anne Lamott's conclusion in Bird by Bird to examine the writer's consciousness • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Weds Apr 20th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate can be changed naturally by solar activity, orbital changes, volcanic eruptions, plate tectonics, feedback loops associated with increases or decreases in albedo. Humans can induce climate change through emission of greenhouse gasses and fine particulate matter into the atmosphere. • The sonnet is a form of poetry that has endured for many generations and still appeals to many readers and writers of poetry. Mathematicians have tried to explain this appeal because the form corresponds to the golden ratio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What natural earth processes influence changes in climate? What human activities influence changes in climate? How do we discern the role played by natural vs. human-induced changes? • Why has the sonnet form such lasting appeal? Do you believe the sonnet can be explained by other disciplines (such as mathematics)? Are there other ways to explain the appeal of this particular form? Do you agree with Geoff Page when he writes: "The sonnet is the dish to make your mark in," meaning that a poet must establish a reputation as a writer of sonnets before becoming free to write in other forms? Whether or not you agree, why does Geoff Page make this claim? (Hirsch, Boland, p. 71) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Ch. 10 " The Phenomenology of Roundness," in Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L
Mon Apr 25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tsunami are produced as a result of earthquakes. Tsunami are long-wavelength waves that can travel rapidly across an entire ocean. • Poetry, like the natural world, is often shaped by disruptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are Tsunami, and how are they generated? • What are significant disruptions in music and poetry, and how are they related? Why are they useful to poets and musicians? To what extent do they mirror the disruptions of the natural world? Are these mirrorings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read "The Music of Poetry" and work out the exercises before class. From The Real Imagination by Admont Gulick Clark • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L

		intentional, accidental, or completely unrelated?	
Weds Apr 27th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tsunami can produce catastrophic damage. Sedimentary records provide evidence for historic tsunami in circum-pacific regions. • Haiku is a highly expressive, economical art form that asks the reader to make a leap in consciousness. Renga is a conversation between poets that uses Haiku principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we know there have been catastrophic tsunami in the circum-pacific region in historic times? • By circling back to your earlier work in Haiku, can you take another leap forward in your own writing? Can Haiku lead to other Haiku or to other forms of poetry? By responding to one another in a Renga poem, does collaboration become more or less inspiring? More or less generative? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Paul Janeczko's book, How to Write Haiku, as a resource for exploring Haiku, both as reader and writer • Poetry selections from D2L • Geology Readings in D2L

FINAL EXAM: Monday May 2nd 2:45 pm – 5 pm, WSB-22