In this course, we will read ten significant pre-modern poems by women. We have chosen each poem to give you a sense of its structure as a poem and its importance as a form in its time. But the course also seeks to reveal the roots each poem has in history, in slavery, in conventional thought and unorthodox opinion. Through the introductions to the poems, forum discussions with your fellow students, and conversations between Professor Boland and practicing poets and scholars, we will learn about how poet’s have fashioned life experience into verse, how to discuss poetry, and what poetry means for each of us today.

**How this Course Works**

*Ten Premodern Poems by Women* is a ten-week course. Each week on Tuesday we will release a new unit of the course. The units run roughly in chronological order, so that the poetry we study will move up from the mid 1600s to the early 1900s. Each unit of the course is focused on one key poem, and has materials arranged in this order: an introductory video, the poem itself, a video of historical background, a video by a contemporary poet speaking about the poem, further resources, and a writing response. In addition, there will be points for discussion at various points.

We hope you will participate in the course at whatever level works for you. You are welcome to simply tune in when you have time, look at what catches your interest, and weigh in on discussions as your inclination takes you. That said, we have designed the course so that the more you put in, the more you will get out of it and the better the course as a whole will be. Statements of Accomplishment will be awarded to those who complete the assignments and peer responses.

Each week of the course has a regular rhythm. The units are posted on Tuesday morning Pacific Standard Time. On Thursday the course team will make a regular push to respond to issues in the discussion forums, so if you can get in comments by Wednesday evening we will have the best chance of being able to respond to it. (We will, of course, be participating in forums throughout the course, but the main push will be on Thursdays.)
ASSIGNMENTS
Thee assignments for this course are short write-ups on the poems, and responses to peer write-ups. The write-up should be at least 250 words long, and not more than 1000 words. Responses to peers’ work should be several sentences, and two are required for each week. The write-up for the week is due within one week of the material launching. Your responses to your peers’ work are due by the beginning of the weekend following, at 7:00pm UTC. The logic of this is that you have one week to write each assignment, and then you and your peers have five days to respond to one another’s assignments. Thus, the Week 1 material goes live March 31st; your write-up to it is due April 7th; your responses to other’s write-ups (and their responses to yours) are due April 12th. Seven of the ten assignments are required to earn the Statement of Accomplishment.

POLICIES
There is only one cardinal policy, which is civility in all interactions with fellow students and with instructors. This course provides an opportunity for everyone involved to exchange thinking on poetry with peers from around the world, and an occasion and responsibility for making their experience in the course happy and rewarding.

SCHEDULE
Week 1 - March 31st
“The Author to Her Book” by Anne Bradstreet
Guest speaker: Maria Hummel
Write-up due: April 7th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: April 12th 7:00pm UTC

Week 2 - April 7th
“Epitaph” by Katherine Philips
Guest speaker: Rosalie Moffett
Write-up due: April 14th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: April 19th 7:00pm UTC

Week 3 - April 14th
“Saturday; The Small-Pox” by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu
Guest speaker: Ari Banias
Write-up due: April 21st 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: April 26th 7:00pm UTC

Week 4 - April 21st
“To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth” by Phillis Wheatley
Guest speaker: Solmaz Sharif
Write-up due: April 28th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: May 3rd 7:00pm UTC
Week 5 - April 28th
“Washing-Day” by Anna Laetitia Barbauld
Guest speaker: Allison Davis
Write-up due: May 5th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: May 10th 7:00pm UTC

Week 6 - May 5th
“How Do I Love Thee?” (Sonnet 43) by Elizabeth Barrett Browning
Guest speaker: Kai Carlson-Wee
Write-up due: May 12th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: May 17th 7:00pm UTC

Week 7 - May 12th
“When I am Dead, My Dearest” by Christina Rossetti
Guest speaker: Michael Shewmaker
Write-up due: May 19th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: May 24th 7:00pm UTC

Week 8 - May 19th
“The Battle Hymn of the Republic” by Julia Ward Howe
Guest speaker: Matthew Moser Miller
Write-up due: May 26th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: May 31st 7:00pm UTC

Week 9 - May 26th
“I Died for Beauty” by Emily Dickinson
Guest speaker: Corey Van Ladingham
Write-up due: June 2nd 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: June 7th 7:00pm UTC

Week 10 - June 2nd
“Recuerdo” by Edna St. Vincent Millay
Guest speaker: Greg Wrenn
Write-up due: June 9th 7:00pm UTC. Peer responses due: June 14th 7:00pm UTC

Textbook
No textbook required. All reading will be supplied through the course platform.

Learning Goals
Through this course, you should gain:

- An appreciation of how poetry has emerged from the different life stories of our ten poets
- A sense of both the similarities and differences between our own time and those of the poets
- Facility in discussing poetry with others
• Enjoyment of reading poetry!