

MCS Selective

Astonished Harvest :: Becoming a Better Doctor Through Poetry

Through the study of poetry as it relates to the medical experience, we hope to foster a closer type of critical reading, an ability for a caregiver to understand and convey the needs of a patient, and an appreciation of the common concerns of the healing professions. This selective is designed for students interested in reflecting on their experience in medical school through the medium of poetry. It is open to students who have never written poetry, as well as to those who have pursued poetry in the past and wish to re-visit their Muse.

The selective is in the format of a continuing poetry workshop held at the medical school over several weeks. Participants bring a new poem to read and discuss at each session. There is also an opportunity to participate in the *Astonished Harvest* workshop, a loosely knit group of physicians, other health care professionals, and community poets who meet regularly to share and critique their poetry. This workshop focuses on themes of illness and healing.

Instructors

Jack Coulehan, MD

John.Coulehan@stonybrookmedicine.edu



Richard Bronson, MD

Richard.Bronson@stonybrookmedicine.edu



Educational Objectives:

At the conclusion of this selective you will have the ability to:

- 1 Describe how writing and careful listening to language can increase your ability to experience empathy and act compassionately.
- 2 Explain how reflecting on your personal experience through poetry can enhance your self-awareness.
- 3 Express and utilize basic forms of poetic expression and figurative language: allusion, image, simile, and metaphor.
- 4 Critically respond to your own and others' poems.

Requirements and Outline:

To complete and pass the selective, a student must:

- 1 Attend FOUR workshops to be held from Tuesday, April 1, 2025 through May 20, 2025. The workshops will take place on Week 1, Tuesday, 4/01/25, Week 2, Tuesday 4/22/2025, Week 3, Tuesday 5/06/2025, Week 4, Tuesday 5/20/2025, from 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 PM, at the Medical Center (room assignment pending). Poetry selective members are also invited (not required) to join our Monday *Astonished Harvest* workshop, which meets throughout the year on the 4th Monday of each month (4/28/25), from 5:30 -7:30 PM. This is held on *Zoom*, which requires audio and video capability on your computer.
- 2 Write four poems and present each one at a workshop.
- 3 Participate in critiquing and discussing poems of other participants in the workshops.

Last updated on: 3/5/2025

- 4 Read a small amount of assigned material on the craft and experience of writing poetry from Mary Oliver's *A Poetry Handbook*. This book may be obtained on *Amazon Books*, where inexpensive used copies are available.

Class Size

Minimum 6 Maximum 8: