With over a dozen faculty working in poetry and poetics, Northwestern’s literary studies programs and departments offer superb training in the study of poetry and the long and diverse tradition named by ‘poetics’ across a wide range of historical periods from classical antiquity to the current moment. Our distinguished faculty work closely with students who are interested in generating theoretically innovative, advanced scholarship in the poetries of the near and distant past, as well as of marginalized communities in the U.S. and abroad.

Graduate study in poetry and poetics is undergirded by two primary components: a doctoral track in Poetry and Poetics and the Poetry and the Poetics Colloquium (poetry.northwestern.edu). The doctoral track allows students in English and Comparative Literary Studies to specialize in Poetry and Poetics as a scholarly subfield. The Poetry and Poetics Colloquium is an interdisciplinary cluster of writers and scholars from across the university who share an interest in studying the genre and its various permutations. Every year, PPC hosts a lively series of workshops, reading groups, symposia, poets and critics. Recent visitors include poets Rosa Alcalá, Christian Bök, Keorapetse Kgotsitsile, Harryette Mullen, Mark Nowak, Craig Santos Perez, M. NourbeSe Philip, Ed Roberson, Cecilia Vicuña, Adam Zagajewski, and Raul Zurita, as well as leading scholars such as Christopher Nealon, Marjorie Perloff, Yopie Prins, Jahan Ramazani and Avital Ronnell.

Curricular and programmatic offerings in the field are augmented by the Poetry and Poetics Graduate Cluster, The Futures of Poetics Reading Group, the Comparative Modernisms Workshop, and the initiatives of our digital platform Open Door Archive.

Chicago enjoys a lively poetry scene. The Poetry Center of Chicago, the Guild Complex, The Chicago Poetry Project, The Poetry Foundation, Danny’s and Sector 2337 are only a few of the venues that sponsor readings and events in the area.

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Reginald Gibbons (Ph.D. Stanford) has published over thirty volumes, including poems; translations from ancient Greek and Spanish; fiction; edited volumes of contemporary fiction and poetry and of twentieth-century poets; and editions of modern fiction. He was the editor of TriQuarterly magazine from 1981 to 1997, was a cofounder of the Humanities Institute workshop on Poetry and Poetics, is jointly appointed in Classics and in Spanish and Portuguese, and is Director of the Center for the Writing Arts and the graduate writing program in Northwestern’s School of Professional Studies. His research interests include the history of poetic practice, translation, and all aspects of the art and situation of poetry. He is a member of the Planning Team and the Advisory Council of the American Writers Museum, which is building a national museum of American literature, to open in Chicago in early 2017, and is an officer of The Guild Complex, a Chicago literary presenting organization, and in 2013 a co-founder of the annual (Gwendolyn) "BrooksDay." His critical book on poetry, How Poems Think, was published in September 2015 by University of Chicago Press, and his new book of poems, Last Lake, will be published (also by University of Chicago Press) in late 2016. He has won a Guggenheim fellowship, the Folger Shakespeare Library Professorship of English Renaissance Drama, the Faculty Award for Service in 2014 for her distinguished work as a graduate teacher and mentor.


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Christine Froula (Ph.D. Chicago) specializes in American, British, and European modernist literature, visual art, and culture; feminist and gender theory; and editorial theory and practice. Books include Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: Modernism’s Body, Sex, Culture, and Joyce; To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Ezra Pound’s Cantos; and A Guide to Ezra Pound’s Selected Poems. Articles on poetry and poetics include “When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy” (Critical Inquiry), “Browning’s Sordello and the Parables of Modernist Poetics” (ELH), “Eliot’s Grill Quest, or, The Lover, the