

ENGLISH 3382

INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING: POETRY

Fall 2017
3:30 PM – 4:50 PM, MW
Evans 315

Dr. Olivia Clare
Office: Evans 211
E-mail: olivia.clare@shsu.edu
Phone: 936.294.3156

Office Hours: MW 11 AM – 12:30 PM
& by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

You will be reading work by a variety of writers, and you will be writing your own original poems. Together as a community of writers we will discuss the techniques employed in assigned readings, share writing exercises and drafts of poems, and respect and encourage each other's passion for writing. We will treat writing as a complex practice, much like musicians treat music. Please be willing to practice as such—with discipline, full engagement, willingness, and persistence. We'll discuss more about what I mean by this term: *practice*.

Craft topics will include: the line, the image, music, meter, specific forms (including the sonnet, villanelle, sestina, and ghazal), ekphrasis, and revision. Class sessions will be organized around craft topics and assigned readings. You will have weekly exercises that address the craft topics.

As part of a workshop, you will critique one another's poems. Since this is an introductory course, we'll talk a good deal about the elements of a workshop in class. In the first part of the semester, several of your weekly exercises will be workshopped in small groups. In the second part of the semester, your poems will be workshopped by the class. You will also meet with me one-on-one before you revise.

TEXTS/COURSE MATERIALS

Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft, Fourth Edition, Janet Burroway
The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Poetry, edited by J.D. McClatchy

Handouts to be distributed in class

Poems by: Claudia Rankine, Li-Young Lee, Emmy Pérez, Tracy K. Smith, Carl Phillips, Yannick Murphy, A.R. Ammons, Theodore Roethke, Jean Valentine, Harryette Mullen, Jorie Graham, Robert Creeley, Barbara Guest, James Tate, John Ashbery

Copies of your poems to distribute for workshop

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Participation (15%)

Attendance. Attendance is not only required, but it's imperative for doing well in this course. If you have more than three absences you will have your final course grade lowered by a letter grade. For each subsequent absence, your grade will be lowered by an additional letter grade. Since I do not distinguish between "excused" or "unexcused" absences, there is no need to show me doctor's notes. Regular attendance also means coming to class on time and not leaving early. Please note that three late arrivals or early departures equal one absence.

If an ongoing emergency or issue is affecting your attendance or work, you should explain the situation to me and submit documentation to the Dean of Students office: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/documents/AbsenceRequest.pdf>.

If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed from a classmate.

Important: When you come to class, be sure to turn off your phone.

Participation. Because of the nature of the workshop, I cannot stress to you enough how important it is that you attend class. Please be alert and ready to engage. I will expect you to act with respect and tolerance towards your peers, and to offer disagreement and criticism constructively.

LAPTOP POLICY: You are welcome to use your laptop for in-class writing, unless the exercise necessitates writing by hand. However, unless we are doing an in-class writing assignment, your laptops should be off your desk during all other discussions, workshops, and activities.

Poems for Workshop (20%)

You will turn in 6-10 poems for workshop. After your workshop, you will also be required to meet with me one-on-one before you revise.

Your packets of poems need to be photocopied. You will turn these in the week before your workshop. (Workshop schedule TBA.)

Please plan for this well in advance! Remember that laptops, printers, and photocopiers are not always reliable. Give yourself plenty of time to prepare your printed copies for workshop.

Assigned Readings and Writing Exercises (25%)

For your assigned readings, I'm going to ask that you write a weekly reading response. You will turn these in on Blackboard. We'll talk more about my expectations for these reading responses in class.

Each week, you will complete an exercise practicing the element of craft we are discussing that week. You will receive the exercise assignments the week before the exercise is due, so you will have a full week to complete each exercise. Exercises must be typed and turned in on the day they are due to receive credit. You will also turn these in on Blackboard. If you're up for the full class workshop that week, you will not have an exercise due.

Workshop Critiques (15%)

You will write up your peer review for each workshop. In class, you will turn in a hard copy to me on the day of workshop. **You will post your review on Blackboard after class, but no later than midnight of the following day.**

Your peer reviews will be evaluated based on the effort you put in. We'll talk much more about my expectations for these.

Public Readings (10%)

You are required to attend two public readings over the course of the semester. I will also ask for a one-page response from each reading. The reading may be in poetry, fiction, or nonfiction. We'll talk more in class about all the opportunities you'll have to attend readings this semester.

Final Portfolio (15%)

The final portfolio will consist of a revision of your workshopped poems as well as four of your exercises. You will also write an essay that reflects on your progress over the course of the semester. Final portfolios will be due on the last day of class.

ADDITIONALLY

Late Work

All work is due in class. Any late work will be penalized one full grade for each class period it is late. For example, if the assignment is due on Monday and it is submitted to me at the beginning of the next class session, the grade will be reduced one full letter grade. **Note: Because of the demands of distribution, poems for workshop will not be accepted late.** Failure to submit your poems in class on the date they are due will result in a zero for your workshop. Extensions will be granted only in advance and only in cases of emergency.

Formatting

Everything you turn in should be typed. The font should be legible: Times New Roman, Garamond, and Perpetua are all acceptable. Please title your poems. In the upper right-hand corner, type your name. **Don't forget to staple your pages.**

Religious Holidays

Students are allowed to miss class and other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students remain responsible for all work. See Student Syllabus Guidelines (<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>).

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course instructor. See Student Syllabus Guidelines (<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>).

Disabilities Policy

Also note: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. See Student Syllabus Guidelines (<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>)

Visitors in the Classroom

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

The Writing Center

Sam Houston Writing Center, located in Farrington 111, is open from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Friday, and 2 - 7 p.m. on Sunday. Writing tutors will work with you one-on-one at any stage of the writing process (brainstorming, generating a draft, organizing a draft, or revising a draft) for any written assignment. The Writing Center operates on an appointment system, so please call (936) 294-3680 to schedule a session with a writing tutor. In addition to offering one-to-one writing conferences, the Center also offers a computer lab, handouts, style manuals, dictionaries, thesauruses, and handbooks for client use.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

(subject to change)

Week 1 (8/23)

8/23: Introductions. Observation. The Senses.

Week 2 (8/28, 8/30)

8/28: More on Observation. The Senses. Reading from *Imaginative Writing*.

8/30: The Line. Reading from *Imaginative Writing*.

Due 8/30: Writing Exercise 1

Week 3 (9/4, 9/6)

9/4: NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

9/6: The Line. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. In-Class Writing.

Due 9/6: Writing Exercise 2

Week 4 (9/11, 9/13)

9/11: The Line. The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*.

9/13: The Line. The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*.

Due 9/13: Writing Exercise 3

Week 5 (9/18, 9/20)

9/18: The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*.

9/20: The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Small Group Workshop.

Due 9/20: Writing Exercise 4

Week 6 (9/25, 9/27)

9/25: The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. In-Class Writing.

9/27: Music. Small Group Workshop.

Due 9/27: Writing Exercise 5

Week 7 (10/2, 10/4)

10/2: Music. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*.

10/4: Meter. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Small Group Workshop.

Due 10/4: Writing Exercise 6

Week 8 (10/9, 10/11)

10/9: Meter. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*.

10/11: Brief Summary of Takeaways. In-Class Writing.

Due 10/11: Writing Exercise 7

Week 9 (10/16, 10/18)

10/16: Readings from *VBCAP*.

10/18: Class Workshop.

Due 10/18: Writing Exercise 8

Week 10 (10/23, 10/25)

10/23: In-Class Writing.

10/25: Class Workshop.

Due 10/25: Writing Exercise 9

Week 11 (10/30, 11/1)

10/30: Specific Forms (Sonnet, Villanelle, Sestina, Ghazal). Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Class Workshop.

11/1: In-Class Writing. Class Workshop.

Due 11/1: Writing Exercise 10

Week 12 (11/6, 11/8)

11/6: Ekphrasis. In-Class Writing.

11/8: Class Workshop.

Due 11/8: Writing Exercise 11

Week 13 (11/13, 11/15)

11/13: Erasure Poems. Found Poems. List Poems. Prose Poems. Class Workshop.

11/15: Class Workshop.

Due 11/15: Writing Exercise 12

Week 14 (11/20)

11/20: Revision.

11/22: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 15 (11/27, 11/29)

11/27: Revision.

11/29: Reflection.

Due 11/29: FINAL PORTFOLIOS DUE