

ENGLISH 3382

ADVANCED CREATIVE WRITING: POETRY

Spring 2018
12:30 – 1:50 PM, TR
Evans 320

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Office Hours: Thursday: 2:30 – 5:30 PM,
& by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

In this class we will read challenging and experimental work by a variety of writers, with the aim of developing aesthetic sensibility and writing original poetry. Class sessions will be organized around craft topics and assigned readings, covering topics essential to an advanced understanding of poetry, such as: the line, the image, compression, the prose poem, music, sound, ekphrasis, and revision.

We will think about what it means to be members of a *community of writers*. Our community is our workshop—yes. But we'll also think about what it means to be members of the larger community of writers around the world.

Since this is an advanced workshop, I'll assume that you all have experience with critiquing one another's work. If this is not the case, or if you'd like to talk more about the workshop setting, please don't hesitate to ask, either in class or in office hours.

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
Life on Mars, Tracy K. Smith

Handouts to be distributed in class

Poems by: Li-Young Lee, Claudia Rankine, Carl Phillips, A.R. Ammons, Theodore Roethke, Jean Valentine, Harryette Mullen, 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 4-7 poems for each workshop, and your work will be workshopped twice.

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.

Every few weeks, you will complete an exercise practicing the element of craft we are discussing at that time. 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.

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 Thursday and it is submitted to me the following morning, the grade will be reduced by one letter grade. If I receive it in class that Tuesday, the penalty is the same. **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

1/18: Introductions.

Week 2

1/23: More on Observation. The Senses.

1/25: The Line. Reading from *Imaginative Writing*.

Week 3

1/30: The Line. Reading from *Imaginative Writing*.

2/1: NO CLASS – DR. CLARE OUT OF TOWN

Due 2/1: Writing Exercise 1

Week 4

2/6: The Line. The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*.

2/8: The Line. The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Mock Workshop.

Due 2/8: Writing Exercise 2

Week 5

2/13: The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Mock Workshop.

2/15: The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Workshop.

Week 6

2/20: The Image. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. In-Class Writing. Workshop.

2/22: Music. Workshop.

Week 7

2/27: Music. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*.

3/1: Meter. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Workshop.

Due 3/1: Writing Exercise 3

Week 8

3/6: Meter. Syntax. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Workshop.

3/8: NO CLASS – DR. CLARE OUT OF TOWN FOR A CONFERENCE

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 12 – MARCH 16

Week 9

3/20: *Life on Mars*. Workshop. Brief Summary of Takeaways.

3/22: *Life on Mars*. Workshop.

Due 3/22: Writing Exercise 4

Week 10

3/27: *Life on Mars*. Workshop.

3/29: Class Workshop.

Week 11

4/3: Compression. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Workshop.

4/5: In-Class Writing. Class Workshop.

Week 12

4/10: The Prose Poem. In-Class Writing.

4/12: Workshop.

Due 4/12: Writing Exercise 5

Week 13

4/17: Revision. Workshop.

4/19: Revision. Workshop.

Week 14

4/24: Revision. Readings from *Imaginative Writing* and *VBCAP*. Workshop.

4/26: Revision. Workshop.

Week 15

5/1: Revision.

5/3: Reflection.

Due 5/4: FINAL PORTFOLIOS DUE