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CRWR 411.01: Advanced Poetry Workshop

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CRWR 411: Advanced Poetry Workshop

Prof. Sandra Lim

Spring 2017

W, 3:00-5:50 pm, LA 233 (Hugo Room)

Liberal Arts 231

OH: T/W, 1:30 to 3pm

STORY & SOURCE

In this course, we will explore different meanings of “story” and source material in poetry, and how they may inform the expressive, and formal possibilities of poems. Our aim will be to investigate the art of writing poems by studying past masters, by reading contemporary writing, and by engaging in writing ourselves. You will write poems, open and lead discussion on assigned readings, and keep a reading and writing notebook.

Reading List

(books are all available at Shakespeare & Co.)

- *Backroads to Far Towns*, Basho (Trans. Corman, 2004)
- *Life Studies*, Robert Lowell (1959)
- *Human Wishes*, Robert Hass (1989)
- *Sonnets*, Bernadette Mayer (1989; 2014 anniversary version)
- *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid*, Michael Ondaatje (1996)

Handouts (provided in class)

Course Policies

Absences

Up to two excused absences are permitted without penalty. Because we meet only once a week, try to keep it to one absence, if you can help it. Arriving late to class creates an unwelcome distraction; excessive tardiness will lower your grade by one step, e.g., an A becomes an A-.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted unless you have arranged for an extension. All assignments are due at the start of class on the assigned due date.

Grading

Grades are based on the quality of your 1) preparedness and active participation in class—this includes in-class writing exercises; 2) poems and revisions through the semester; 3) your student-led discussion session / presentation; 4) peer review—measured by your oral and written comments, including a peer-review letter; 5) critical annotations

In-Class Participation & Preparedness	25%
Poems & Revised Work	25%
Presentation & Peer Review	25%
Critical Annotations	25%

Technology

This class is low-tech! All you need is pen, paper, and books. Please turn off all electronic devices (computers, cell phones, tablets) before entering the classroom. I dislike the use of computers and phones in the classroom for readings or for writing notes. I have zero tolerance for cell phones—please check your text messages and emails during break.

Assignments & Expectations

Readings

Assigned readings appear on the schedule beneath the date by which it should be read. Additional readings may be announced (or handed out) in class; if you miss a class in which new work is announced or handed out, you are still responsible for it. The readings generally include more poems than we'll be able to cover in class. Usually, I'll try to indicate which poems we're likely to discuss in detail; you must read the entire assignment, however, and should refer when relevant to different poems.

Many class sessions will begin with time dedicated to group discussion of assigned reading. Your attendance, preparation, and participation are therefore essential, as are your collegiality and respect in engaging your peers.

Presentations & Critical Annotations

This course combines short lectures, workshops, and student-led discussion sessions. Each student will have his or her writing discussed by the class at least once during the semester. Many classes will entail a student-led discussion of assigned reading that is not more than 30 minutes. Four students will make up one discussion group, and these class discussion leaders should present a close reading of the assigned texts and bring substantial questions for the class to discuss. **Those not leading for the day will turn in critical annotations.**

Workshop

Please read each other's work carefully in preparation for workshop, writing comments on each person's poem before class; these annotated poems will be returned to the writer as a resource for revision.

Format

For the writer: on each poem, put your name and number of the poem in the **upper right-hand corner** of the page. Please keep track / a log of your work.

Schedule

Email poems to the class by noon of the Monday before Workshop Day; I've written the Monday dates next to the poems. Please print out all poems and annotate them before coming to Wednesday class. This gives writers roughly a week to generate a new poem.

So, for our first Workshop on 2/22, you'll email Poem 1 by noon on 2/20. For the Workshop on 3/1, you'll email Poem 2 by noon on 2/27, and so on.

CLASS SCHEDULE

January

- W 1/25** **Course Introduction**
 * I will give you: Figurative Language Handout; Hass Essay Handout; 2/1 Readings Handout

February

- W 2/1** **Figurative Language**
 “In a Station of the Metro,” Ezra Pound
 “Mirror,” Sylvia Plath
 “High Windows,” Philip Larkin
 “Of Mere Being,” Wallace Stevens
 Hass Essay
 * I will give you: 2/8 Readings Handout

- W 2/8** **Form, Structure, Tone**
 “The Colonel,” Carolyn Forché
 “In Memory of W.B. Yeats,” W.H. Auden
 “IX” from *Midsummer*, Derek Walcott
 Longenbach Essay:
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/articles/detail/70173>
 * I will give you: 2/15 Prosody Handout

- W 2/15** **Prosody & Workshop Prep**

- W 2/22** **Image as Story**
Backroads to Far Towns, Basho & **Workshop** (Poem 1) (20th)

March

- W 3/1** **Workshop**
 (Poem 2) (2/27th)

- W 3/8** **Memory as Story**
Life Studies, Lowell & **Workshop** (Poem 3) (6th)

- W 3/15** **Workshop**
(Poem 4) (13th)
- W 3/22** **** Spring Break ****
- W 3/29** Individual Conferences

April

- W 4/5** **Archetype as Story**
The Collected Works of Billy the Kid, Ondaatje & Workshop (Poem 5) (3rd)
- W 4/12** **Workshop**
(Poem 6) (10th)
- W 4/19** **Form as Story**
Sonnets, Mayer & Workshop (Poem 7) (17th)
- W 4/26** **Workshop**
(Poem 8) (24th)

May

- W 5/3** **Course Conclusion**
Closure, or Ways of Ending
(Revision of 2 Poems) (1st)