

ENGL 5420-001
GRADUATE POETRY WORKSHOP
FALL 2018

Professor: Jehanne Dubrow	Meeting Time: M 6:30 – 9:20 pm
Office: Auditorium Building 216	Classroom: Auditorium Building 217
Email: Jehanne.Dubrow@unt.edu	Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00 – 6:00 pm & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION—

Welcome to English 5420! In this course, you will workshop newly-drafted poems, critique the work of your peers, and practice the role of the poet-critic. This can also be a good forum for practicing your own pedagogy in the creative writing classroom. Over the course of this semester, you will work toward the construction of a linked sequence of poems, reading collections that focus on hybridity and writing poems that emulate or engage with these adventurous, wide-ranging texts.

REQUIRED TEXTS—

- *Darkling*, Anna Rabinowitz (2001)
- *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, Claudia Rankine (2004)
- *Jane, A Murder*, Maggie Nelson (2005)
- *Fort Red Border*, Kiki Petrosino (2009)
- *Red Doc>*, Anne Carson (2014)
- *Moon: Letters, Maps, Poems*, Jennifer S. Cheng (2018)
- *Deaf Republic*, Ilya Kaminsky (2019)

A Note About the Assigned Readings— Some of the course materials deal with what might be considered triggering topics. If you think reading any of these texts will induce in you a severely negative emotional or physical response, please exercise awareness and self-care, as all students are required to read all assigned texts. Of course, we will approach each book with sensitivity, empathy, and a deep intellectual concern for the relationship between form and content.

EVALUATIONS—

Your final grade will be calculated using these percentages:

Written Materials: 60%

- 1 Close Reading (same poem that you will teach to class) = 10%
- Final portfolio (self-reflective introduction of 1250 words minimum, seven polished poems) = 50%

Class Participation: 40%

- Workshop = 15%
- Book Discussions = 15%
- Mini Teaching Demonstration = 5%
- Attendance = 5%

ATTENDANCE—

A workshop is a community; its success is dependent on the participation and commitment of each person in the group. You are permitted one absence without penalty. Any student who misses more than 3 classes (which is equivalent to three weeks of class) may fail this course.

Attendance is 5% of your final grade. Throughout the semester, you can determine what your attendance score will be, using this information:

- Up to **1 absence**: 100 points
- **2 absences**: 85 points
- **3 absences**: 65 points
- More than **3 absences**: possible failure of this course

CLASS PARTICIPATION—

I understand that some of you may find public speaking difficult. Please keep in mind, however, that learning is not supposed to be an entirely painless process. To give you an idea of my assessment of class participation:

- If you say **almost nothing** on most days: F-level
- If you make **1 helpful contribution** on most days: D-level
- If you make **2 helpful contributions** on most days: C-level
- If you make **4 helpful contributions** on most days: B-level
- If you make **countless helpful contributions** every day: A-level

Good participation is a matter both of quantity and quality.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS—

Close Reading / Final Portfolio:

Your main writing assignment for the semester is divided into two parts:

- (1) Each student will lead the class in a discussion of a poem. In tandem with this teaching demonstration, you will submit a close reading of this poem. The close reading should run at least **1000 words** (minimum word count).
- (2) At the end of the course, you will submit a final portfolio (comprised of **seven poems**) accompanied by an introduction of at least **1250 words** (minimum word count).

Mini Teaching Demonstration:

Each member of the course will give a **brief teaching demonstration** (no more than ten minutes—I will time you and cut you off at the ten-minute mark) on a poem published in the past 50 years. Think of this as an opportunity to practice your pedagogy. In your teaching of the poem, please, focus on elements of craft, leading the class through the poem in a methodical, clear manner. As part of the demonstration, you should provide a handout that includes a copy of the poem as well as key observations about the text, important terminology, and other information that students might find useful.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS—

I read and assess all assignments electronically. Assignments should be uploaded to Canvas by the start of class on their due dates.

WORKSHOP—

Workshop will function as an important element of most class sessions. Near the start of the semester, I will provide a timetable so that students will know when their poetry is scheduled for workshop.

No later than 24 hours prior to your workshop, you will be required to post a copy of your poem to the appropriate Discussions page on Canvas; your poem should be posted as a Word document attachment (**no PDFs, please**), so that everyone can easily download the poem and print it out for class. Discussions of your poetry cannot take place *unless* everyone has received and read your work ahead of time.

We will not use Canvas as a place for written critique or peer review. Instead, you should provide a full paragraph of feedback about each of the poems, which will you then return to your classmates at the end of each discussion.

Please, note: I reserve the right to pull any submission for workshop from discussion, if I deem the draft to be unsuitable (either because of subject matter, insufficient evidence of work, or lack of compliance with the course's expectations and guidelines).

FEEDBACK, CRITIQUE, & CONFERENCES—

My pedagogy is to provide ample verbal feedback during our class discussions of your poem experiments; I will also provide written feedback when you submit assignments to me for graded assessment.

I *will not* provide written critiques as part of our weekly workshops. If you wish to receive additional, line-by-line responses to or edits of your work, please, make regular, even weekly use of my office hours.

I encourage you to meet with me in conference throughout the semester. Whenever you wish to schedule an appointment, come put your name on my office hours sign-up sheet; you may schedule appointments as far in advance as you would like. Please, come to conferences prepared, bringing hard copies of work that you would like to discuss. Individual conferences will function as an important part of your writing process and can help to improve your participation grade if you are someone who does not speak frequently in workshop.

ADA STATEMENT —

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940-565-4323.

PLEASE NOTE:

This syllabus is subject to change.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week One (1/13)

- Introduction, Syllabus, Workshop Schedule, Sign-Up for Mini Teaching Presentations of Poems.
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Week Two (1/20) – *NO CLASS, MLK*

Week Three (1/27)

- Spotlight on Professionalism/Professionalization: How to Approach the Graduate-Level Workshop (i.e. Beginning from a Place of Modesty and Curiosity, Practicing Pedagogy)
 - Read for class: *Darkling*
 - Workshop: Poem #1 (inspired by *Darkling*)
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Week Four (2/3)

- Two Mini Teaching Demonstrations
 - Workshop: Poem #1 (inspired by *Darkling*)
-

Week Five (2/10)

- Spotlight on Professionalism/Professionalization: Written and Verbal Communication with Faculty (Forming Your Committee, Dealing with Problems that Arise, Asking for References/Favors/Etc.)
 - Read for class: *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*
 - Workshop: Poem #2 (inspired by *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*)
-

Week Six (2/17)

- Two Mini Teaching Demonstrations
 - Workshop: Poem #2 (inspired by *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*)
-

Week Seven (2/24)

- Spotlight on Professionalism/Professionalization: Working Smart (i.e. Classroom Assignments, Comprehensive Exams, Panels/Conferences)
 - Read for class: *Jane, a Murder*
 - Workshop: Poem #3 (inspired by *Jane, a Murder*)
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Week Eight (3/2)

- Two Mini Teaching Demonstrations
 - Workshop: Poem #3 (inspired by *Jane, a Murder*)
-

Week Nine (3/9) – NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

Week Ten (3/16)

- Spotlight on Professionalism/Professionalization: Diversifying Your C.V. (Teaching, Scholarship, and Service)
 - Read for class: *Fort Red Border*
 - Workshop: Poem #4 (inspired by *Fort Red Border*)
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Week Eleven (3/23)

- Two Mini Teaching Demonstrations
 - Workshop: Poem #4 (inspired by *Fort Red Border*)
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Week Twelve (3/30)

- Spotlight on Professionalism/Professionalization: Taking Advantage of Professional Opportunities (Books Reviews, Interviewing Writers, Introducing Visiting Authors)
 - Read for class: *Red Doc>*
 - Workshop: Poem #5 (inspired by *Red Doc>*)
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Week Thirteen (4/6)

- Two Mini Teaching Demonstrations
 - Workshop: Poem #5 (inspired by *Red Doc>*)
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Week Fourteen (4/13)

- Spotlight on Professionalism/Professionalization: Teaching as an Extension of Your Writing, Writing as an Extension of Your Teaching
 - Read for class: *Moon: Letters, Maps, Poems*
 - Workshop: Poem #6 (inspired by *Moon: Letters, Maps, Poems*)
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Week Fifteen (4/20)

- Two Mini Teaching Demonstrations
 - Workshop: Poem #6 (inspired by *Moon: Letters, Maps, Poems*)
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Week Sixteen (4/27)

- Read for class: *Deaf Republic*
 - Workshop: Poem #7, all students will be workshopped (inspired by *Deaf Republic*)
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Week Seventeen (5/4) – Finals Week, NO CLASS

- HW Due: Upload Final Portfolio to Canvas by Monday, May 4 @ 6:30 p.m.