

ENGLISH 192

Intermediate Poetry Writing

FALL QUARTER
MON & WED 1:30 – 3:20 PM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

*There is a place where words are born of silence,
A place where whispers of the heart arise.*
—Rumi

What gives a poem the power to move us, to haunt us, to leave itself burned in our brains? How can a handful of words create feeling? Are poets magicians, practitioners of dark sorcery? Or is there something more human, more commonly learned through a basic attention to craft? In this intermediate poetry class we'll be picking up where English 92 left off, delving into contemporary poetry and working to establish our own unique voices. In addition to workshop, we'll be discussing performance options, publication options, contemporary craft issues, and experimenting widely in a variety of styles. Anyone with a beating heart is welcome.

REQUIREMENTS

Attend every class
Complete assignments on time
3 poems for workshop
Attend 3 readings outside of class
Complete take-home journal assignments on time
Journal response to 1 poem per week (from assigned readings)
Final portfolio to be handed in at the end of the quarter

GRADES

You will be graded on your attendance, your participation in class, your journal assignments, and your eagerness to improve. I will grade your development as a writer and the extent to which you are engaging with the material. You will receive an unofficial midterm grade and a final grade for the course. Grades will be roughly imagined as follows:

40% homework / 10% final portfolio / 50% participation

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in class is mandatory. You are allowed to miss one day of class without it affecting your grade. I expect you to be on time and to complete the assigned readings. Three or more tardies will result in an unexcused absence. It is imperative that you attend all the days of class in which your work is being workshopped. Failure to do so may result in a failure of the class.

TEXTS

Course Packet (from Copy America)
All-American Poem—Matthew Dickman
Look—Solmaz Sharif
I Know Your Kind—William Brewer
Unaccompanied—Javier Zamora
Crush—Richard Siken
Blank Journal

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL:<http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae>).

HONOR CODE

The Honor Code is the University's statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work:

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;

2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
3. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
4. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

All work must adhere to the University's policies on academic integrity. Failure to cite work that is not your own constitutes plagiarism.

TIMELINE

September 25 **Why We Write:** Introduction

September 27 **Storytime** (bring snacks)

October 2 **Love in the Mouth:** Reading Poetry Out Loud

They Feed They Lion—Phillip Levine
 “What Do Women Want?”—Kim Addonizio
 America—Allen Ginsberg
 I Do Have a Seam—Jamaal May
 Tonight in Oakland—Danez Smith
Essay: The End of a Golden String—William Stafford

October 4 **Haunted Importantly:** Obsessions

Another Reason I Don't Keep a Gun in the House—Billy Collins
 From the Desire Field—Natalie Diaz
 My Religion—Anne Carson
 Daddy—Sylvia Plath
 Sailing to Byzantium—W.B. Yeats
Essay: Triggering Town—Richard Hugo

- October 9 **I Can See For Miles:** Developing a Personal Vision
- Sci-fi—Traci K Smith
 The Singing Knives—Frank Stanford
 Sonnet #3—James Franco
 The Forgotten Dialect of the Heart—Jack Gilbert
 The Colonel—Carolyn Forché
 DISCUSSION OF *ALL-AMERICAN POEM*
 MOCK WORKSHOP
- October 11 **Born in a Small Town:** Writing What You Know
- Kissing Hitler—Michael McGriff
 Brazilian Telephone—Miriam Bird Greenberg
 Someday I'll Love Ocean Vaughn—Ocean Vaughn
 Degrees of Gray in Phillipsburg—Richard Hugo
 WORKSHOP
- October 16 **Signs and Omens:** Image Sets
- Self-Improvement—Tony Hoagland
 The Song of Wandering Aengus—W.B. Yeats
 Laundry and Cigarettes—Dorianne Laux
 Thanks—Yusef Komunyakaa
 Topography—Sharon Olds
 WORKSHOP
- October 18 **While My Guitar Gently Weeps:** Using Sound
- Killing at the Neighbor's—Judy Jordan
 April Snow—Matthew Zapruder
 Three Kinds of Pleasure—Robert Bly
 Nothing Gold Can Stay—Robert Frost
 DISCUSSION OF *UNACCOMPANIED*
- October 23 **Songs of Devotion:** Poetry as Prayer
- The Secret—Denise Levertov
 Holy Sonnet 14—John Donne
 Let Evening Come—Jane Kenyon
 Famous—Naomi Shihab Nye
 WORKSHOP
- October 25 **Talking Heads:** Using Dialogue
- Cymothoa Exigua—Roger Reeves
 Choke—Eileen Myles
 I'm a Young Cowboy and Know I've Done Wrong—Catherine Pond
 Going Wrong—Jack Gilbert
 WORKSHOP

- October 30 **The Lives of Others:** Persona Poems
- Dream Song 14—John Berryman
 Herbert White—Frank Bidart
 Lighthouse’s Guide to the Galaxy—Terrance Hayes
 In the Reading Room of Hell—Roberto Bolano
 DISCUSSION OF *I KNOW YOUR KIND*
- Nov 1 **Those Images That Yet / Fresh Images Beget:** Ekphrastic Poems
- The Disquieting Muses—Sylvia Plath
 Voices From Another World—James Merrill
 The Great Figure—William Carlos Williams
 Musee des Beaux Arts—W.H. Auden
 GROUP WORKSHOP
- Nov 6 **Making it New:** Contemporary Forms
- “next to of course god america i”—e.e. cummings
 Station—Maria Hummel
 The Blue Terrance—Terrance Hayes
 Heat—Denis Johnson
Essay: Twenty-two Short Lectures
 GROUP WORKSHOP
- Nov 8 **Odes and Elegies:** Shaping Forms
- Litany—Billy Collins
 Elegy—Corey Van Landingham
 The Truth the Dead Know—Anne Sexton
 Sonnet XI—Pablo Neruda
 DISCUSSION OF *LOOK*
- Nov 13 **Bumper to Bumper:** Creating Tension in Lines
- Quarantine—Eavan Boland
 Scarecrow on Fire—Dean Young
 Home to Roost—Kay Ryan
 I Know a Man—Robert Creeley
 WORKSHOP
- Nov 15 **Sailing the Paper Seas:** White Space
- from Deepstep Come Shining—C.D. Wright
 The Charm of 5:30—David Berman
 Today a Rainstorm Caught Me—Matt Hart
 The Rape Joke—Patricia Lockwood
 WORKSHOP

Nov 20-22 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Nov 27 **Mashups of Epic Proportions:** Writing the Long Poem

Snow White and the Seven Dwarves—Anne Sexton
Sunday Morning—Wallace Stevens
Crossing Brooklyn Ferry—Walt Whitman
Perfection of Solitude—Larry Levis
WORKSHOP

Nov 29 **Shop Talk:** How to Publish Poetry
DISCUSSION OF *CRUSH*
WORKSHOP

Dec 4 **Class Reading**

JOURNALS DUE

Dec 6 **Pizza Party**

FINAL PORTFOLIOS DUE