

Carleton University
Winter 2015
Department of English

ENGL 2901A: POETRY WORKSHOP

Mondays 2:35-5:25/ SA 409

Professor Nadia Bozak

Office Hours: Dunton Tower 1918, Monday 1-2 or by appointment

Email: nadia.bozak@carleton.ca

*This is a preliminary syllabus subject to change and further development.

**Enrollment in this workshop is limited to 18-20 students. Students must submit a poetry portfolio to the instructor by the stated deadline in order to be considered for the workshop. Acceptance is at the discretion of the instructor and is therefore not guaranteed.

Portfolio Submission Guidelines:

1. Please send a **brief biographical statement** (maximum 250-300 words) indicating:
 - a. A few of the poets you like to read/ who inspire you to write poetry
 - b. Why you want to take this workshop
 - c. Previous experience in creative writing workshops
 - d. Any previous creative writing publications
2. Please send **eight-ten poems** of varying lengths and/or styles but of **no more than ten double-spaced pages total**. Choose poems which demonstrate an aptitude for writing poetry. In other words, send your best, most polished work.
3. Include a cover page with your **full name, Carleton email and student ID number**
4. Please email this portfolio to Professor Nadia Bozak nadia.bozak@carleton.ca by **Friday, December 12th, 2014**.
5. Decisions will be sent to students by email on **Friday, December 19th**. As there is no guarantee a student will be accepted into this workshop, students are advised to make an alternate course selection.

Course Description:

The objective of this workshop is to introduce students to the fundamentals of poetry writing such as (imagery, symbolism, sound, rhythm, structure, form), to develop students' reading and editorial skills of poetic works (including of their own works, those of their peers, as well as of poetic "masters" mostly of the western English language canon).

Students are expected to have a sincere interest in writing poetry and a willingness to learn the fundamental elements of the craft. While the focus is on writing and workshopping the poetry produced for this workshop, emphasis is also placed on seminar-style discuss and analysis of exemplary texts by the established/ canonical poets such as Lorna Crozier, Allen Ginsberg, Anne Carson and George Elliot Clarke.

Workshop Logistics:

Each week a preselected group of writers (about three per group) will hand out their photocopied poetry manuscripts (about ten double-spaced pages) to everyone in the class as well as to the instructor. These manuscripts will be taken home, read, and edited for the following week, at which time these manuscripts will be "work-shopped." This means the entire class will discuss the manuscripts and offer constructive feedback on how writers can revise and thus improve the work. After each workshop writers will have two weeks to hand in to the instructor their revised manuscripts for grading.

Writers in this workshop can expect to experience the workshop process at least twice, each time with a different manuscript.

Students will emerge from this workshop with two polished poetry manuscripts (maximum ten poems/ ten pages each).

Writers will also prepare a mini-seminar on the work of an established poet, take part in sharing targeted writing prompts, perform close readings of poetic works, and attend/review poetry readings in Ottawa. Local poets will visit the workshop as guest lecturers as well.

Note well: The success of this class and your development as a poet depends upon attending each and every session, contributing to discussions, and fully engaging with in-class exercises and workshops. You must, therefore, be ready to circulate your poetry among your peers and have it openly discussed in class. As well as receiving and perhaps integrating the comments of others into your writing, you will offer your peers constructive, thoughtful and forthright critiques as well.

Required Reading: (on order at Haven Books; 43 Seneca at Sunnyside; 613-730-9888)

Kevin Clark, *The Mind's Eye: A Guide to Writing Poetry*. (Pearson Longman 2008)

Additional required readings will be made available in class or digitally on Ares at MacOdrum library. This reading will include poems by such poets as: Lorna Crozier, Anne Carson, George Elliot Clark, and Allen Ginsberg (to name a few).

Supplementary Reading: (on order at Haven Books; 43 Seneca at Sunnyside; 613-730-9888)

David Mason and John Frederick Nims, *Western Wind: An Introduction to Writing Poetry, Fifth Edition* (McGraw Hill, 2000).

Evaluation:

- 1) **40%:** Quality and originality of TWO poetry manuscripts (10 pages **maximum** each) submitted **a)** for workshops and **b)** to the instructor in a revised form within two-weeks of being workshopped.

Effort and creativity are taken into consideration when grading.

As the labour of revision/re-writing is the foundation of all creative writing, a 10% portion of the above mark includes submitting (to the instructor) a draft of your work revised in accordance with (or contrary to) the comments received in workshop.

This revised manuscript will include a separate **FORMAL** summary (1-2 pages) reflecting upon why or why not you have integrated comments received in the workshop and what it was like to experience the workshop process.

- 2) **20%:** Quality of editorial comments given to the work of others.

Each week students will read and comment upon four 8-10 page manuscripts submitted by fellow class members. These manuscripts will be returned to their respective writers, marked with respectful editorial commentary and a 3-4 sentence summary. The above grade also includes in-class comments offered to your fellow classmates about their manuscripts.

- 3) **20 %** Participation/ Weekly prompt

Participation is based on: attendance, the quality and frequency of students' contributions to discussions (including critiques, discussions about readings, and writing exercises), and preparedness. Students must come to class having a) read the textbook & assigned poems and b) prepared to speak about the manuscripts up for critique.

Also: each week the instructor will give students a "take-home" writing prompt which will be presented in class and discussed and will be considered part of participation.

4) **10%: Mini-Seminar Presentation**

This presentation should be **10-12 minutes** in length, put together with the aim to generate class discussion about an assigned topic from weekly readings. The ability to succinctly organize your points and make good use of examples from the textbook and/or assigned poems will be graded.

Include 3 questions for the class to discuss.

The presentation and questions will be formally written up (2 pages) and handed in to the instructor on the same day. Always include a works cited list.

A full list of presentations topics and schedule will be decided in Week One.

5) **10%: "Passages" contribution** (review of a poetry reading or a weekly prompt)

Once over the course of the term each student will post a poem (based on take-home prompt) or review of a local poetry reading on the Carleton Creative Writing Concentration website, "Passages."

A schedule for postings will be decided in Week One.

Attendance:

Students who miss more than three classes without documentation of a medical or personal situation will automatically have his/her grade reduced by a full letter grade. Provide such documentation to the instructor as soon as possible.

Thus, over the course of the term you will:

- Prepare and revise two poetry manuscripts and write a brief revision summary thereof
- Read/comment upon 3-4 manuscripts weekly
- Prepare a short mini-seminar presentation, including questions and formal write-up
- Write/ post a poetry prompt/ poetry review assigned by the instructor
- Keep up with the textbook and all assigned readings
- Prepare weekly "take home" prompts and speak about them in class

There are no tests or exams. You can expect to devote a minimum of 6-8 hours per week to this course.

Weekly Course Schedule—Winter 2015

Week 1: Introduction/ Writing with Images/ Senses

Jan. 5

- In-class writing exercises
- ***Sign up for presentations and manuscript submission dates***
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 1, 7-24; Chapter 2, 25-36 (plus additional)

Week 2: Sound/ Music/ Conflict

Jan. 12

- In-class writing exercises
- Presentations: TBA
- ***First submissions by 3 or 4 participants are due; copies of manuscripts are to be handed out to the group in order to be critiqued in class during Week 3***
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 3, 39-51; Chapter 53-71 (plus additional)

Week 3: Poems and Plot

Jan. 19

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 5, 73-90 (plus additional)

Week 4: “Empathy and Creativity”

Jan 26

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clarke, Chapter 6, 92-104 (plus additional)

Week 5: Time and Space

Feb. 2

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 7, 107-119 (plus additional)

Week 6: “Frames and Forms”

Feb.9

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 8, 121-137 (plus additional)

Reading Week: February 16th, University Closed; Library Open. ☺

Week 7: Stanzas, Prose, Organizing Words

Feb. 23

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 7, 140-151 (plus additional)

Week 8: “Surrealism”

Mar. 2

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 10, 152-164 (plus additional)

Week 9: “Writing About Sadness”

Mar. 9

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 11, 166-174 (plus additional)

Week 10: Writing Eros

Mar. 16

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 12, 176-188 (plus additional)

Week 11: Writing Racism/ Gender

Mar. 23

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 13, 189-204 (plus additional)

Week 12: Humour and Beyond

Mar.30

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 14, 205-214 (plus additional)

- Presentations: TBA
- Workshop manuscripts
- Reading due: Clark, Chapter 15, 216-228 (plus additional)
- Cookies and treats 😊

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines **plagiarism** as **presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or the work of others as one's own.**

This can include:

- * reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source
- * submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else
- * using ideas, quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement in an essay or assignment
- * failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works, and/or failing to use quotation marks
- * handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, suspension from a program, suspension from the university, or even expulsion from the university. See the Section on Academic Integrity in the Student Conduct Portion of the Undergraduate Calendar.

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation.

If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable).

After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).