ENGLISH 359.090
Intermediate Poetry Workshop
Policy Statement
Dr. Christine Butterworth-McDermott
SFASU English Department
Fall 2017/Ferguson 177/MWF 11-11:50

WHERE TO REACH ME:
E-mail: mcdermotc@sfasu.edu or cmcdsfaclass@gmail.com
Phone: 936-468-2059; leave a message.
Office: Liberal Arts North 227
Office Hours: MW 9-10/TR 1-2 & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Readings and discussions demonstrating the basic structural and technical elements of poetry with opportunities for practice and peer workshop.

PREREQUISITE:
English 261, or Introduction to Creative Writing (transfer credit)

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES
Since this class counts for both the Creative Writing major (the BFA) and the minor, our official learning outcomes are as follows:

- The student will demonstrate close reading skills and recognize strategies used by professional poets.
- The student will employ techniques and strategies for crafting carefully composed, competent creative work in poetry.
- The student will articulate useful, critical editorial advice for peer writers.
- The student will demonstrate strategic revision on completed creative work.

MY GOALS FOR YOU:
- Identify the elements of poetry
- Discuss the strategies used by professional, contemporary writers
- Learn to use the elements as part of your own creative “toolbox.”
- Produce a body of six poems beyond introductory level.
- Revise & edit poems
- Learn to work collaboratively in a workshop setting
- Articulate useful, critical editorial advice for peer writers in oral and written form.
- Learn to create three closed form poems (villanelle or pantoum, sestina, & sonnet)
REQUIRED MATERIALS:
- All reading material will be provided to you.
- Money for photocopying
- Plenty of paper
- Quality ink jets
- Professionalism & team attitude
- Ability to attend and participate in both small group and large group workshop
- The ability to turn work in on deadline in hard copy & by email.

READING, WRITING, THE CONNECTION:
Reading and writing are inter-connected. If you do not read, you will not be able to write to the best of your ability. Reading the work of professional writers—both that you like and don’t like—(& reflecting on it) will help you build an incredible base to know what you are capable of as a creative artist. It’s a bit like basketball; you watch the pros to learn their moves and adapt them to your game.

GRADING:

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<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Class Discuss/Exercises/Assignments</td>
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<td>Test</td>
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<td>Large Group Wksp.</td>
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<td>Poems (final packets)</td>
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IMPORTANT NOTE:

Workshop is a 3 part process: you must turn in your draft on time, you must participate in small group workshop, and you must revise it and turn it in by the revision date. If you miss any part of the process, you receive a “0” on that 5%. If you do not turn in your work on time, at the beginning of class, it will not be accepted you will receive a grade of 0 and cannot workshop and/or revise that work.

Failure of two major assignments (tests, poems, presentation, or final), either by not turning them or trying to turn them in late, results in failure of the class. This is regardless of other numerics. I don’t accept late work.
ATTENDANCE (5%):
0-1 absences = A (5% of grade)
3 absences = B (5% of grade)
4 absences = C (5% of grade)
5 absences = D (5% of grade)
6 absences = F (5% of grade)
7 absences = fail the course (100%)

sleeping in class = 1 absence
coming in late/leaving early = 1/2 absence
texting in class/doing other work = 1 absence

Being absent is not an excuse for missed information or assignments. You should either e-mail a classmate (or me) to find out what went on in class if you are not able to attend. You should pick up any missed packets or material. You must be responsible for all the material discussed in class on the days you were absent—and for the material for the next class period. This is especially true of poems for Large Group Workshop.

Cell Phone Policy:
Phones must be kept in pockets, purses, or backpacks—unless you are waiting for a notification during a family emergency (please tell me before class begins). If you text in class, I will count you as absent and you will receive 0s on your participation grades. Clearly this would affect your overall grade. Repeat offenders will be dropped a letter grade.

TEST ON TERMS (5%)
At the beginning of the course, I will give us all the same vocabulary for understanding poetry. At the end of these lectures you will take a test on the elements of poetry (imagery, lineation and spacing, and sound). The test will consist of two parts. The first will contain 25 questions which will be true/false, multiple choice, and fill in the blank. The second part worth 25 points will ask you to identify a certain aspect of a particular poem (the poems will be given to you). All terms and poems will come from those we have looked at in class, either from the poetry packet or handouts. The test is closed book.

PARTICIPATION (45%)
Participation is incredibly important in a workshop class. I expect you to participate in three main ways:

Class Discussion About Poems & Assignments (5%): Be prepared to discuss the elements of poetry for all reading assignments. I may call on you in class at any time. I prefer to conduct my classes in a reader-response style. I will ask a question about the material then the class will be asked to respond. I hope that you will respond not only to me but also to others in the class. Be prepared to talk about the assigned material on discussion days. If you do not understand the material, feel free to ask questions about what it means. Feel free to guess as well (oftentimes you won’t be as off base as you might think). Once again, let me stress that I’m not looking for “right” answers, but active engagement. Just
tell me what you think. The way to understand writing is to talk about it. I like the classroom to be lively, so don’t hold back. If you do not wish to talk in class, your participation grade will be no higher than a C.

There may be a variety of smaller in-class and take-home assignments given to you throughout the semester, which will ideally help you to create better poetry. Take-home assignments should be typed. Assignments will be graded on how well you meet the criteria of the assignment. Most of the assignments are designed to help you perfect your skills or editing.

**Small Group Workshop (20%)**

Your job as peers is to be prepared. You will need to have your poems ready to be exchanged on exchange day. You will need to prepare significant, astute notes—line by line and overall—on each and every poem. This preparatory work is worth 5% of your grade. Your written line by line edits are worth 5%. Your ability to have a conversation about the poems in class is worth 5% as well. Besides my own observation in seeing your commentary during class, and in revision packets, I will also take into account the workshop note the poets write regarding participation of peers. If you do not write quality comments on the poet’s work, you will be graded accordingly. You may turn in comments late to the writer, but you will receive a 0 from me.

**Large Group Workshop (20%)**

You will receive two poems from me the day before a Large Group Workshop. You will take them home and make comments (line by line and overall) on them. The poems will be anonymous (I take the names off the poems). Commentary should be completed before coming to class (end notes may be typed and attached if you prefer). When you make additional comments during workshop, please use a contrasting color pen/pencil. During LGW, you MUST be ready to talk about the poems you have read. Some of you will have seen the poem in Small Group Workshop, but I would like to ask you not to reveal the identity of the poet. I won’t call on you unless your hand is up, but participation in LGW is essential to getting a grade above a C in the course. You should have something to say about both of the poems, preferably constructive comment about each.

We will have 20 minutes to discuss each poem which is not a lot of time. It is therefore crucial to discuss each poem in a matter that will give the poets the most help. The questions I will ask are:

♦ What are the strengths of this poem?
♦ What could make the poem stronger?

When discussing strengths please hold off on criticism until I say “how could we make this poem stronger?” During the conversation, I will ask that the poet remain silent and not reveal his/her identity. At the end of the conversation, the poet should say thank you and we will proceed. Discussing strengths is just as challenging and rewarding as making comments about how to improve the poem.

At the end of workshop, students will pass their commented-on copies to me. I will take them home, grade them on the quality of commentary and return them to the poet in about a week’s time. If there is ever a problem with your experience in Large Group Workshop,
please email me or come and see me. I want to make this the most productive environment for you to create good poetry.

Grading on Workshop:
- In-depth written comments on peers’ work for small group workshop are expected.
- Thoughtful/constructive oral comments in small group workshop are expected.
- In-depth written comments on peers’ work in large group workshop are expected.
- Thoughtful/constructive oral comments in large group workshop are expected.
- Promptness, neatness of getting work to me, group members, and large workshop will be graded.
- Attendance and oral/written activity in group is expected.

PROFESSIONALISM (5%)
A portion of your grade is devoted to your ability to be professional and turn in all materials neatly and on time. This includes Edits, Rough Drafts, Final Drafts, Assignments, Portfolios. I will grade you on whether:
  a) you have emailed your rough draft to mcdermotc@sfasu.edu or cmcdsfaclass@gmail.com in a doc or docx file. This email needs to have a subject & a short note: “Hi, Dr. C., here’s my rough draft #3.” **This email must come before class time.**
  b) you have turned in your final packet in its correct format on time
  c) you turned in all your copies to small group workshop (4 are due each time). You must have hard copies for your group on exchange days.
  d) you turned things in on time (at the beginning of class, I don’t accept late work). This includes all edits. Edits should be done prior to small group workshop and large group workshop.
  e) everything is included and all requirements are met
  f) everything is neat, easily readable (i.e. no faded printing), complete, ordered correctly and stapled.
  g) everything is in the correct format (heading, correct genre format, correct font).
  h) you have taken your assignment seriously (rather than phoning it in).

This grade also includes email correspondence.

POEMS & REVISION PACKETS (30%)

*Format:*
I will ask you to turn in all poems single spaced on a sheet of white paper. The title should be bolded. For the purposes of this class, do not write poems longer than 2 pages. Do not double side your work. I may do this for LGW, but when you turn in your poem it should not be double sided. Remember, too, all formatting affects the overall feeling/reading of the
poem, so don’t put something into columns just to save paper. Your poem should be typed in Times New Roman 12 point with one inch margins. The format should look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Name</th>
<th>Your Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poetry Writing-359</td>
<td>Poetry Writing-359</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poem #4</td>
<td>Poem #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Date</td>
<td>The Date</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Your Poem Should Appear Here.

If your poem goes onto a second page, “cont’d” should appear in the bottom right hand corner of the first page.

The second page would just have your last name and page number in the upper right hand corner.

**GRADING:**

I do not comment on rough drafts although I ask you to send it via email. I wait until you’ve revised your poem after small group workshop. After you turn in your revised packet, via hardcopy, I will read it and make comments on it. All creative work will be graded on its professional format, spelling, etc., along with content. *It will take at least a week to return your poems, perhaps two*.

The bulk of my comments will focus on how well you employ the elements of poetry (open form and closed form depending) and will be geared to helping you make it the **best poem it can be**. I will include a benchmark grade to give you an idea of where the poem can go. With revision most work can be improved and/or tightened. Our goal is to make your work as professional/publishable as possible.

- **A** exceptional use of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea. If rhyme is used it does not lean toward verse. Presented professionally. Poem is original in imagery & idea as well as sophisticated in use of craft.
- **B** well-defined use of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea. If rhyme is used it does not lean toward verse. Poem is original in imagery & idea as well as sophisticated in use of craft, professionally presented in correct format. Not as original/sophisticated as an A but could get there with revision.
- **C** simplistic or derivative use of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea, but presented in correct format. Rhyme leans toward verse. Revision would improve poem.
- **D** poorly developed use of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea OR incorrect format, simplistic rhyme, errors in terms of grammar or presentation.
- **F** plagiarized, grammatically unreadable, incomplete, does not fulfill assignment, not handed in.
**REVISION PACKETS**
A “Revision Packet” is stapled or paper clipped and arranged in this order:

- **a)** a typed double-spaced note to me about:
  1) workshop (how it went, who gave you good advice, why you ignored certain advice.
  2) the poem—what do you like about this poem? What is working craft-wise? What do you feel the poem needs the biggest help with?

- **b)** the revised poem after small group workshop.
- **c)** your peers’ commentary on the poem. There will be two or three of these.

**Your revisions may include things like:**
- Verb changes
- Images developed, extended, changed
- Eliminations, block-outs
- Sound/rhythm development or changes
- Structural changes (i.e. line breaks, spacing)

**I will FAIL the following**
- Late work.
- Work with insufficient number of copies given to group. If you fail to bring copies for your group, you will fail the assignment as this will count as late work. Make sure you get your copies done well in advance of class. Remember if your printer breaks down the library has printers & copy machines.
- If you have to be absent, please email your poem and I’ll be happy to distribute it to your group. Your absence still counts; but it keeps you from falling behind.
- Incomplete work—all creative work must be presented in its entirety.
- Assignments/creative work not typed in standard format
- Work with an abundance of spelling/grammatical errors
- Plagiarized poems will result in failure of the assignment & course (see university policy below). I will also report you to the Chair & the Dean.

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**A word on subject matter:**

There is a difference between writing for the self and writing for others. **If something is too personal, special, etc., it is better placed as a journal or diary entry:** a poem goes out into the world. I am open to most subject matter, different styles of writing, and different types of language as long as they all serve a greater artistic purpose. I will say however that certain subjects are overdone. It’s hard to make a poem about writer’s block (staring at a blank page) or smoking pot fresh, and I would like you to refrain from the “shock” or “twist” ending. And no serial killer poems.
**Final (10%)**

I will ask you to write a poem in a timed format. It may or may not be in form. You should be able to show what you’ve learned about image, line, placement, and sound. All rules of grammar and spelling apply.

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**PET PEEVES**

In the effort of fairness—here’s some things that drive me crazy. Don’t do them and we’ll all have a happy semester! 😊

- People coming in late. It is disruptive and rude. It affects both your attendance grade and your participation grade.
- Talking when others are talking. If someone “has the floor,” he/she is usually trying to make a worthwhile point. It will be in your interest to listen to them because it is polite and because it may help you on your poems.
- I try to be upfront about expectations and due dates. I write them down on the board, tell you in class and usually on the assignment sheet/syllabus. You shouldn’t have to ask me when the due date for something is. If you choose not to do something, you will be graded accordingly.
- Okay, here’s the weird one, I can’t stand it when people pack up early. I will try to never hold class over the allotted time, but if I am talking or someone else is, don’t move. Sit and listen—when I say “that’s it for today” you can start closing your book, putting stuff away, or zipping/unzipping your backpacks.
- Please don’t ask me to read your creative work outside of class (“Please read my novel!”) or someone else’s (“My girlfriend is a great poet, can you read her stuff?”). I’d like to say yes, but my time is really limited due to the amount I teach, how much I have to grade, and my own creative & academic work.
- Meanness, prejudicial comments, arrogance, rudeness, general nastiness doesn’t fly here. Being mean isn’t cool, it’s mean and it’s bad karma. Kindness matters.

On a personal level, teacher to student, I *do* prefer the hard-working student. You may be a brilliant poet, but unless you’re a team player, I tend to get annoyed. It’s just common sense: don’t treat anyone in a way you wouldn’t like to be treated yourself. Not everyone is on the same level as you. Someone may be ahead or behind. Your job as a CW student at SFA, as I see it, is to help everybody in your workshop, and not talk smack about them behind their back.
EMAIL ETIQUETTE:
When you write to a professor, an email is like a business letter. It is a good idea to put your best foot forward. Here are some tips.
• Make sure you have a subject line; I know I tend to ignore things that don’t have one. So, “English 359” in the subject line is helpful, or “Ryan Gosling from 359”
• I don’t open any attachment without a clear note from you—“Dear Dr. C., here’s my poem #3, ‘Hey, Girl.’”—would be lovely.
• Be succinct and to the point about what you need: “Could we set up an appointment to talk about my discussion grade?” or “Here is my assignment.”
• Make sure you have checked your email for spelling errors/typos
• Try to avoid writing last minute. If you write an email at 3 am, I won’t answer it before late morning. I usually don’t check or respond to non-personal email between the hours of 8 p.m.-9 a.m. Expect an answer in 12 hours. Do not expect an answer on Saturday.

EXTRA RULES
Be constructive in your criticism—which means offer helpful advice (not just this is great!) but don’t crush someone either. There’s a fine line between being constructive and being destructive. Harsh criticism can hurt. Be honest, but fair.

Point out the strengths of a work, not just its negatives. At the same time, don’t just say “it’s good”—come up with concrete ways to discuss how the poem can be improved, or why it should remain as is.

As artists, none of us are exactly the same. We each are trying to achieve different things for different reasons. Never try to make someone else’s work into your own; let it exist by its own rules.

Don’t give up. There will be times when communication will fail, but keep trying, eventually there will be a breakthrough.

Remember to enjoy yourself, experiment, get enthused. Find a consuming passion. Be an artist. That’s what it’s all about.

Last Words
College can be very demanding. So, while keeping your goals in mind, also take the time to take care of yourself. You won’t succeed if you spread yourself too thin. So be good to you, eat some ice cream, and when things get bleak remember to relax and have fun!

Enjoy the semester.
University Policies You Need to Know:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (A-9.1)
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

WITHHELD GRADES SEMESTER GRADES POLICY (A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.
Calendar for English 359
Subject to Change

Week One
M 8/28 Intro to Course.
W 8/30 Intro/FORM & FUNCTION
F 9/1 Elements of Poetry/IMAGE, METAPHOR, SIMILIE.

Week Two
M 9/4 No Class
W 9/6 In-class exercise on Image.
F 9/8 Elements of Poetry/LINE LENGTH & PLACEMENT.

Week Three
M 9/11 In-class exercise on line length/placement.
W 9/13 Elements of Poetry/SOUND.
F 9/15 In-class exercise on Sound. FOR NEXT TIME: Study for Test

Week Four
M 9/18 TEST on Poetry Terms
W 9/20 Discuss format. Grading. Expectations. FOR NEXT TIME: Write POEM #1. Make 4 copies for workshop (3 for workshop members, 1 for me).
F 9/21 Exchange POEM #1 for Small Group Workshop (SGW). Discuss Editing & Workshop. FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on peers’ poems.

Week Five
M 9/25 SGW Poem #1. FOR NEXT TIME: Revise Poem #1; Get packet ready to give to me (short note about group workshop, finished poem, group comments).
W 9/27 PACKET #1 (REVISED POEM #1) DUE to me; Tips to Help Your Poetry. FOR NEXT TIME: Write POEM #2. Make 4 copies for workshop (3 for workshop members, 1 for me)
F 9/29 Exchange POEM #2 for SGW. Discuss Large Group Workshop How-To FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on peers’ poems for LGW #1.
Week Six
M 10/2 CATCH-UP DAY
W 10/4 LGW 1 on 2 poems.
FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on peers’ poems for SGW #2.
F 10/6 SGW Poem #2.
FOR NEXT TIME: Revise Poem #2; Get packet ready to give to me (short note about group workshop, finished poem, group comments). Comment on poems for LGW.

Week Seven
M 10/9 PACKET #2 (REVISED POEM #2) DUE to me. LGW 2 on 2 poems.
FOR NEXT TIME: Write Poem #3 (OPEN FORM); Make 4 copies for workshop (3 for workshop members, 1 for me).
W 10/11 Exchange POEM #3 for SGW. FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on peers’ poems for SGW.
F 10/13 SGW Poem #3. FOR NEXT TIME: Revise Poem #3; Get packet ready to give to me (short note about group workshop, finished poem, group comments). Read & comment on poems for LGW.

Week Eight
M 10/16 PACKET #3 (REVISED POEM #3) DUE to me. LGW 3 on 2 poems.
FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on peers’ poems for LGW.
W 10/18 LGW 4 on 2 poems
F 10/20 Discussion of Form poetry/Sestinas
FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on poems for LGW.

Week Nine
M 10/23 LGW 5 on 2 poems. FOR NEXT TIME: Read assigned poems for LGW, comment.
W 10/25 LGW 6 on 2 poems. FOR NEXT TIME: Write POEM #4 (SESTINA). Make 4 copies for workshop (3 for workshop members, 1 for me).
F 10/27 Exchange POEM #4 (Sestina) for SGW. How to workshop form poetry.
FOR NEXT TIME: Read & Comment on Peer Poems for SGW.

Week Ten
M 10/30 SGW #4 (Sestinas). FOR NEXT TIME: Revise Poem #4 (Sestina); Get packet ready to give to me (short note about group workshop, finished poem, group comments).
W 11/1 PACKET #4 (REVISED POEM #5-SESTINA) DUE /Discuss Sonnets.
FOR NEXT TIME: Read assigned poems for LGW, comment
Week Eleven

M 11/6   CATCH-UP DAY

W 11/8  Exchange POEM #5 (Sonnets) for SGW.
  FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on peers’ sonnets for SGW

F 11/10  SGW #5 (Sonnets).
  FOR NEXT TIME: Revise Poem #5; Get packet ready to give to me (short note about
group workshop, finished poem, group comments).

Week Twelve

M 11/13  PACKET #5 (SONNETS) DUE. Discuss villanelles & pantoums.
  FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on poems for
  LGW.

W 11/15  LGW #8 on 2 poems. FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on poems for
  LGW.

F 11/17  LGW #9 on 2 poems. FOR NEXT TIME: Write POEM #6 (VILLANELLE or
  PANTOUM). Make 4 copies for workshop (email to me).

Week Thirteen:
  THANKSGIVING

Week Fourteen

M 11/27  Exchange POEM #6 (Villanelle/Pantoum) for SGW
  FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment on peers’ poems for SGW

W 11/29  SGW #6 (Villanelles & Pantoums).
  FOR NEXT TIME: Revise Poem #6; Get packet ready to give to me
  (short note about group workshop, finished poem, group comments)

F 12/1   PACKET #6 (VILLANELLE/PANTOUM) DUE. FOR NEXT TIME: Read & comment
  on peers’ poems for LGW

Week Fifteen

M 12/4   LGW #10 on 2 poems.

W 12/6   CATCH-UP DAY

F 12/9   Discuss Final.