English 459
ADVANCED POETRY WORKSHOP
MW 1:00-2:15/Spring 2018
Dr. Christine Butterworth-McDermott
SFASU Department of English

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Office Hours: M-F 11-12 and by appointment

Official Course Description:
Classroom analysis and discussion of student writing. Prerequisites: 12 hours of English including ENG 261 and ENG 359 or graduate standing or consent of instructor. May be repeated once for up to 6 hours.

Details:
This course is a continuation of the skills we've learned in 359. Obviously, this course requires a lot of writing. You will complete a collection of 8 linked poems (how they are linked is up to you). There will also be plenty of workshopping of your own and others' poetry. We will also be talking about published work; why it is successful, what the author intended to do with the work and how he/she achieved that effect.

Required Materials:
- William Brewer, I Know Your Kind
- Ross Gay, catalog of unabashed gratitude.
- Ada Limon, Bright Dead Things.
- Maggie Smith, Good Bones
- You’ll need plenty of money for copies.
- You need dedication to your own work & making others’ work the best it can be.

459 helps to meet these Program Learning Outcomes:
- The student will demonstrate close reading skills and recognize strategies used by professional creative writers.
- The student will employ these techniques and strategies, 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.
- The student will compose a complete, polished manuscript of substance.
**Grade Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Class Discussion/Professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Poems inspired by poets (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Poetry Response Papers (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Poem on given theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Question/Observation assignments (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Poems for workshop (2) &amp; response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Large Group Wksp./Written comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Large Group Wksp./Oral comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Final Project (8 linked poems)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

******PLEASE NOTE: All poems & papers must be turned in hard copy and emailed.******

Poems already viewed in another workshop cannot be turned in for this class.

**Attendance (5%)**

If you want to do well in this course, I would strongly suggest you attend every class period. There will be numerous discussions, group interactions, and several assignments. Your eventual grade will benefit from high attendance and active participation. If you aren’t here, I count you as absent. If you are asleep in my class, you are absent. Please plan your absences wisely and please inform me if there are extenuating circumstances to you not attending class:

- 0-1 absences = A
- 2 absences = B
- 3 absences = C
- 4 absences = D
- 5 absences = F
- 6 absences = fail the course

Sleeping in class = 1 absence

Coming in late/leaving early = 1/2 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.

**Discussion/Professionalism (10%)**

We will be reading several collections of poetry. You’ll be expected to comment on them in class, having a conversation about the poet’s craft. It should be evident that you’ve read the entire collection and understand its arc.

A portion of your grade is devoted to your ability to be professional and turn in all materials neatly and on time. This includes Assignments, Papers, Poems, Workshop comments. This also includes interactions and email correspondence. I will grade you on whether:

- a) you bring your hard copy.
b) you email your material to mcdermotc@sfasu.edu or cmcdsfaclass@gmail.com in a doc or docx file. This email must have a subject & a short note: “Hi, Dr. C., here’s my poem.” Emails must come before class time.

c) you turned things in on time (at the beginning of class, I don’t accept late work). everything is included and all requirements are met

d) everything is neat, easily readable (i.e. no faded printing, no colored ink), complete, ordered correctly and stapled.

e) everything is in the correct format (heading, correct genre format, correct font).

f) you have taken your assignment seriously (rather than phoning it in).

Extra Information

🍀 Work will not be accepted late.

🍀 If you do not show up to turn in your assignments, you will not be allowed to turn them in late or via email. Please email your assignment prior to class if you cannot attend.

🍀 If you do not show up to your workshop day, you may not include those poems in your final project.

🍀 Your poems & all assignments should be meticulously proofread and presented in the most professional manner. If they have errors in grammar, spelling, etc., you will receive one grade lower than the poems warrant.

🍀 Two missed assignments (papers, poems, etc) will constitute failure of the class.

2 Poems Inspired by Poets (10%)  
We will read four collections by professional poets, ½ the collection for each class period. Choosing one poem from the section you read, you will then create your own poem written in the style of the author we are reading. For example, if we were to study Mark Doty, who is highly imagistic and likes to write in tercets, you would have a poem that has both those qualities. You will include a one paragraph explanation (on a separate page) of what aspects of the craft of a particular poem inspired you and how you used it in your work. You will do this twice. DUE DATE: Rotates.

2 Poetry Response Papers (10%)  
You will be writing two short papers (3-4 pages give or take) that respond to two of the four collections we are reading (your due dates are assigned). Read the assigned portion of the collection of poems from start to finish and write about how the poet used one specific technique (imagery, lineation, placement, internal rhyme, etc.) admirably in a series of 3 poems from that section. How do the poems “speak” to each other? How does the theme and/or craft of one poem work of the other? Why did the author choose to put these poems in this order/place in the collection? I’d like a close textual reading of each poem and then a discussion of how they connect. The paper must be in MLA format (typed, double-spaced, single sided) and should be approximately 3 pages. It should be an essay (intro, body with evidence, and conclusion). It should use direct quotes from the poems to prove the thesis. DUE DATE: Rotates.
4 Questions/Observation Assignments (5%)
On the days when you don’t have a paper or poem due, you will be asked to write 2-3 sentences about why you liked a particular poem, an observation you made about the craft of the poet, or a question you might have about the poet’s technique. This question/observation must specifically cover the assigned reading material. You will turn this in (typed) at the beginning of the class. DUE DATE: Rotates.

Poem Inspired by a Theme (5%)
Right before Spring Break, I will ask you to turn in a poem with a specified theme; this theme will be wide enough to incorporate into your overall project. DUE DATE: 3/5

2 Poems for Workshop & Response (15%)
This assignment will consist of 2 poems and an explanation of how the poets we’ve been studying (to that point) influenced your choices. We will workshop 4 poems in one day. Your two will be ½ a workshop. You will need to make enough copies for the class and me and turn in the day before your workshop. DUE DATE: Rotates

One poem should appear per page (if the poem runs more than a page, the phrase (cont’d) should appear in the lower right hand corner of the first page). Do not double-side.

I will ask the poet who has been workshopped to type up a 1-2 page response to their group workshop. The poet will discuss who gave them the best comments in workshop and what he/she learned about his/her craft from the experience. This is also an opportunity to discuss any concerns he/she had regarding the process. This is to be turned in the day after the large group workshop and should address the oral portion of the workshop only.

Grading on Response:
- Response needs to be in MLA format
- Response must be written in a semi-formal tone (complete sentences, etc.)
- Response must mention specific responses from workshop

Format for Poems

Standard Format:
- Poems need to be typed, single spaced on a sheet of white paper.
- Poems should be typed in a readable, 12 point serif-ed font with one inch margins. This is a serifed font. Arial is a sans serif font.
- Your heading (name, class title, etc.) need only appear on the first page of the packet, but your last name should appear on each subsequent page in the upper right corner.
Your theme should be indicated in your heading on the first page. 

The following is an example of how the heading should appear:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poet Name</th>
<th>459</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-14-2014</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YourPoem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

Do not double side your work. I may do this for example work, but when you turn in your poems 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 or double-space unless you intend to.

Grading for Poems:

- All work MUST be turned in on the due date (at the beginning of class) or it will not be counted. **Please also email your poems to me.**
- If you do not turn in your work on time **in class,** I will not accept it, you cannot workshop it, and it cannot be revised. You will receive a 0/F for that assignment.
- All poems will be graded on professional format, spelling, etc.
- After I get your packets, I will include comments about how you can improve the poems. All comments will focus on how well you employ the elements of poetry.
- I will see how well you take my suggestions in your final draft (how thoughtful, extensive, etc. your revisions are)

What Grades Mean in terms of poetry:

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.

Except for poems not turned in (and thus not accepted), all creative work can be improved in the revision process.

**Group Workshop (20%)**

Each student will have a group workshop on his/her poem packets. Your job as peers is to:

A) **Write** significant, astute notes on each and every poem: both line edits and end comments (10%). You must be a careful reader. Remember make the poem the best it can be, not what you want it to be.

B) **Speak** about those poems in class in an intelligent and respectful fashion (10%).

I will grade you on your in-class comments and also collect written peer responses after each workshop, evaluate them, then return them to the poet. If you have poor handwriting or very small handwriting, please type up your end comments. If I can’t read your writing, I may request this of you. Comments should be balanced between positive comments and constructive comments. If you do not make quality comments on the poet’s work, you will be graded accordingly.

You will turn in your comments to me at the end of workshop. I will read them and grade the commentary then turn the comments back to the poet within a week’s time.

If you do not write quality comments on the poet’s work, you will be graded accordingly.

**Grading on Workshop:**
- 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, peers will be graded.
- Attendance and oral/written activity is expected.
**Final Project (15%)**

At the end of the semester, you will hand in a collection of 8-10 linked poems. The collection will have a brief introduction about your intent and your execution. The poems should be arranged as they would appear in a chapbook.

The project should be bound together in some manner. The order of the project should be:
- Title page
- Contents page
- Introduction
- Final poems
- Rough drafts I have marked (i.e. graded copies).

**Revisions may include:**
- 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; 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.
- 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 papers will result in failure of the course (see university policy below)

**My Pet Peeves:**

Here are the things that drive me crazy. Don’t do them and we’ll all have a happy semester! 😊

- 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.

- Students who don’t show up or participate in workshop. Remember we’re a team here and your input is important. If your classmates work their butts off to critique your work, you should do the same. It’s very clear who the “slackers” are. Slackers are graded accordingly. I have no respect for slackers.

- 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—a lot of you already know it—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.

☞ Never ever ever say that a poem “has no point” or is “not good.” It may not have a noticeable point to you as the reader at that particular moment, but I will say that to the writer it definitely has a point. Try to come from that place of understanding. You can say, “I’m not sure I’m getting this, but I think the poem is about...” is acceptable. “This has no point” is not. There's a difference between “This poem is repetitive and I found it boring,” and “I’m not sure the repetition is working to help the message of the poem.” Try not to speak to anyone in a way you wouldn’t want to be spoken to.

☞ I like short poems, long poems, imagistic poems, poems that discuss language, poems that about love and death and hope and despair. However, I would greatly prefer if you wouldn’t write poems about murder.

☞ Meanness, prejudicial comments, etc. Don’t treat anyone in a way you wouldn’t like to be treated yourself. Arrogance, rudeness, general nastiness doesn’t fly here.

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/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

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*Writing has laws of perspective, of light and shade, just as painting does or music. If you are born knowing them, fine. If not, learn them. Then rearrange the rules to suit yourself.*  
–*Truman Capote*

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**Calendar for 459**  
*Subject to Revision as Necessary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK ONE</th>
<th>1/17</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>Introduction to course.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEK TWO</td>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Lecture on elements of poetry/craft/technique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/24</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Lecture on elements. <strong>FOR NEXT TIME:</strong> Read Student Examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK THREE</td>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Discuss assignment/Papers/student examples. <strong>FOR NEXT TIME:</strong> Read excerpt of connected poems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|          | 1/31 | W | Discuss excerpt.  
**FOR NEXT TIME:**  
*EVERYONE:* Read Smith’s *Good Bones.* (to page 45, parts 1 & 2)  
*GROUP ONE:* Write a poem using Smith’s style  
*GROUP TWO:* Write papers  
*GROUPS THREE & FOUR:* Observation/Question assignment. |
WEEK FOUR
2/5 M Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Smith.
FOR NEXT TIME:
EVERYONE: Read Smith’s Good Bones. (to end, parts 3 & 4)
GROUP FOUR: Write a poem using Smith’s style
GROUP THREE: Write papers
GROUPS ONE & TWO: Observation/Question assignment.

2/7 W Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Smith.
FOR NEXT TIME:
EVERYONE: Read William Brewer’s I Know Your Kind. (to 33)
GROUP TWO: Write a poem using Brewer’s style
GROUP FOUR: Write papers
GROUPS ONE & THREE: Observation/Question assignment.

WEEK FIVE
2/12 M Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Brewer.
FOR NEXT TIME:
EVERYONE: Read Brewer’s I Know Your Kind. (to end)
GROUP THREE: Write a poem using Brewer’s style
GROUP ONE: Write papers
GROUPS TWO & FOUR: Observation/Question assignment.

2/14 W Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Brewer
FOR NEXT TIME:
EVERYONE: Read Ada Limon’s Bright Dead Things
(to page 49, parts 1 & 2)
GROUP ONE: Write a poem using Limon’s style
GROUP TWO: Write papers
GROUPS THREE & FOUR: Observation/Question assignment.

WEEK SIX
2/19 M Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Limon.
FOR NEXT TIME:
EVERYONE: Read Ada Limon’s Bright Dead Things
(to end, parts 3 & 4)
GROUP FOUR: Write a poem using Limon’s style
GROUP THREE: Write papers
GROUPS ONE & TWO: Observation/Question assignment.

2/21 W Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Limon.
FOR NEXT TIME:
EVERYONE: Read Ross Gay’s catalog of unabashed gratitude. (to 44)
GROUP TWO: Write a poem using Gay’s style
GROUP FOUR: Write papers
GROUPS ONE & THREE: Observation/Question assignment.
**WEEK SEVEN**
2/26 M  Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Gay.

**FOR NEXT TIME:**
*EVERYONE:* Read Gay's catalog of unabashed gratitude. (to end)
*GROUP THREE:* Write a poem using Gay’s style
*GROUP ONE:* Write papers
*GROUPS TWO & FOUR:* Observation/Question assignment.

2/28 W  Turn in poems, papers, assignments. Discuss Gay.

**FOR NEXT TIME:** Write 1 poem (open style; on topic)

**WEEK EIGHT**
3/5 M  Everyone turns in poem. Discuss assignment for next section/Group Workshop. **FOR NEXT TIME:** Students 1 & 2 prepare poems.

3/7 W  Students 1 & 2 handout Poem Packet. **FOR NEXT TIME:** Edit Students 1 & 2. Students 3 & 4 prepare Poem Packet.

**WEEK NINE: 3/15 & 3/17: SPRING BREAK**

**WEEK TEN**

**FOR NEXT TIME:** Edit Students 3 & 4’s poems. Students 5 & 6 prepare Poem Packet.


**FOR NEXT TIME:** Edit Students 5 & 6’s poems. Students 7 & 8 prepare Poem Packet.

**WEEK ELEVEN**

**FOR NEXT TIME:** Edit Students 7 & 8’s poems. Students 9 & 10 prepare Poem Packet.

3/28 W  Catch up day

**WEEK TWELVE:**
4/2 M  Catch up day

4/4 W  Students 7 & 8’s workshop. Students 9 & 10 handout Poem Packet.

**FOR NEXT TIME:** Edit Students 9 & 10’s poems. Students 11 & 12 prepare Poem Packet.
WEEK THIRTEEN


WEEK FOURTEEN


WEEK FIFTEEN
FOR NEXT TIME: Edit Students 19 & 20’s poems.

4/26  W    Students 19 & 20's workshop.

WEEK SIXTEEN
5/3   M    Explanation of final project. Editing/project tips.

5/5   W    Office hours for help.

FINAL PROJECT DUE DURING FINALS WEEK