Stephen F. Austin State University  
ENGLISH 4359: Advanced Poetry Workshop (Fall 2021)

Course number/section: ENGL 4359-001  
Meeting place: Ferguson 177  
Meeting time: 3:30-4:45 p.m. TR  
Professor: Dr. Sara Henning  
Office: LAN 263  
Office hours: TR 1:00-2:00 p.m.; W 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
(Zoom available)  
Email: henningsd@sfasu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Classroom analysis and discussion of student writing.

Repeated: May be repeated once for up to six hours.

Prerequisite Course(s): 12 hours of ENG, including ENGL 2307 and ENGL 3359.

This advanced studio writing course is meant to build on skills developed in English 3359: Intermediate Poetry. In this course, you will complete a culminating portfolio of 8-10 linked poems, with an introductory artist statement. During our time together, we will discuss issues related to poetic criticism and craft, read the work of four famous poets, and study workshopping strategies used in prestigious writing programs across the country. Because reading gives writers the best lens into understanding the successful craft-based choices employed by other writers, we will discuss our readings with a writerly eye.

Credit Hour Justification:

ENGL 4359 “Advanced Poetry Workshop” (3 credits) typically meets twice each week in 75-minute segments, for 15-weeks, and includes a 2-hour final examination or Final Portfolio of revised original poetry. This course builds off the skills practiced on the intermediate level. Students are assigned readings of professional poetry collections as well as other published works. They are required to complete 8-10 poems (generally linked together in some manner) for assignment or workshop review participate in workshop by having read and responded to others’ work and submitted editorial comments (roughly 40-60 pages of editorial suggestions); to create a self-reflective final portfolio that includes at least two drafts (original and revised) of their poetry. These activities average at a minimum 6 to 9 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED PRACTICES

B.H. Fairchild  
The Art of the Lathe  
Alice James Books, 1998  

Ada Limón  
The Carrying  
Milkweed Editions, 2021  
Professionalism

Ability to meet the attendance and participation requirements for an advanced, studio workshop

Regular access to a Mac or PC laptop, tablet, or other electronic device for writing, revision, and workshop

Printing capabilities

Familiarity with Brightspace/D2L

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SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
SFASU Counseling Services
[www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices)
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

**Crisis Resources:**
Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Poetry Modules (4)**

We will focus our attention on four collections of poems this semester, essentially creating space for four, three-week modules. During each module, we will split our time between analyzing craft-based strategies (culminating in
Craft Responses (4)

Our study of poetic craft will hinge on analysis and synthesis: which strategic choices does a writer employ to thematically, narratively, and/or architecturally construct a poem? In these short assignments (1 typed page, MLA), you will investigate the craft-level strategies employed in the assigned reading material. Your response may take one or several of the following forms:

1. A close-reading of a single poem, with use of textual evidence providing a nuanced investigation.
2. A question or observation posed about the day’s reading, followed by an analysis providing investigation or insight. Such investigation/insight must be defended with textual evidence.
3. A comparative investigation of form & technique/craft-based strategies evident in the day’s reading you’ve seen used in previously studied poets.
4. An investigation crafted around your own interests/insights.

Modeling Poems (4)

For each book module, you will create one poem “written in the style of” the poet we are considering, in addition to one “free” poem (see below).

“Free” Poems (4)

Following our study of each poet’s collection you are assigned to read, you will write a poem which aligns with the goals of your linked collection of poems. This poem is to be turned in during the week your poem is not workshopped by the class. “Free” poems may model the work of the poets we are studying, if you are the kind of writer who likes a prompt, or you may take them in any other aesthetic direction which calls to you.

In other words, you will write two poems per module: (a) a poem addressing a thematic, narrative, or architectural technique utilized by the poet in question, with the goal of co-opting this work into your larger, connected collection; and (2) one additional poem.

Metacognitive Self-Evaluation Statement (4)

After each of the 4 workshops, you will turn in a metacognitive self-evaluation (1-2 type-written pages, double-spaced), describing your intentions toward your workshop poems, how group workshop helped you to reconsider/develop their strengths and address their limitations, as well as consider where your poems stand in relationship to the grading criteria provided below. You will end your metacognitive self-evaluation by providing yourself a letter grade for each poem (letter grade with numerical equivalent offered), which must be both justified and rhetorically positioned within the text of your metacognitive self-evaluation. As I grade your poems, I will provide holistic feedback using our course grading rubric via marginal comments and a reflective end statement. Such feedback is meant to help guide your progress as a writer and should be used for the purposes of preparing a final draft for your portfolio. I reserve the right to raise or lower your grades, based on how you rhetorically position your grade justification in relationship to the quality of your poem.
Grading Rubric

A=accomplished use of imagery, figurative language, voice, lineation strategy, and music (consonance, assonance, internal rhyme, and/or elements of prosody, when appropriate) to construct a moving aesthetic experience. Poems written in form (sonnet, villanelle, etc.) make intentional use of formal conventions, moving beyond demonstration of competency to achieve artful purpose. The poem abides by standard conventions (MLA). The poem demonstrates artistic mastery.

B=effective use of imagery, figurative language, voice, lineation strategy, and music (consonance, assonance, internal rhyme, and/or elements of prosody, when appropriate) to construct a very good aesthetic experience. Poems written in form (sonnet, villanelle, etc.) make intentional use of formal conventions, moving beyond demonstration of competency to achieve artful purpose. The poem abides by standard conventions (MLA). With revision, the poem has the potential to achieve artistic mastery.

C=competent use of imagery, figurative language, voice, lineation strategy, and music (consonance, assonance, internal rhyme, and/or elements of prosody, when appropriate) to construct an aesthetic experience. However, the poem may sometimes lean on cliché, other derivative language, or affect an archaic tone without rhetorical justification. Poems written in form (sonnet, villanelle, etc.) either skews occasionally from formal conventions or never quite moves beyond demonstrated competency. The poem abides by standard conventions (MLA). With substantial revision, the poem has the potential to achieve artistic effectiveness.

D=undeveloped use of imagery, figurative language, voice, lineation strategy, and music (consonance, assonance, internal rhyme, and/or elements of prosody, when appropriate) to construct an unsatisfying experience. The poem often relies on cliché, other derivative language, and may appear rhetorically incomplete or incoherent. Poems written in form (sonnet, villanelle, etc.) may fail to achieve formal conventions, leaning toward verse. The poem does not abide by standard conventions (MLA) and demonstrates errors in grammar, syntax, and other formatting concerns. Large-scale revision of poetic strategy is recommended.

F=The poem presents significant issues related to at least one of the following outcomes: academic integrity (poem is plagiarized), severe grammatical/syntactical infractions, failed rhetorical strategies, a failure to attend to goals of the assigned task, or failure related to submission by appropriate due date.

Workshops (4)

Each poetry module will culminate in a class-level workshop, in which you will submit both of the following: (a) your modeling poem AND (b) your “free” poem for whole-class consideration. With your poems, you should include an author’s note describing your poem’s rhetorical and aesthetic goals, as well as any questions you have for your peers and instructor. You will turn in your workshop poem the day before your scheduled workshop, in order to give your workshop members (and your professor) enough time to provide instructive, holistic feedback, which could include reactions, broad-stroke comments, and noting places that are particularly strong/need additional development.

As a peer, prior to Workshop, you will provide constructive feedback for each workshop member’s work. On each day of Workshop, you will submit your critiques in the appropriately labelled Dropbox, in addition to returning them to the author.

Your job as peers is to:

   a. Provide written, constructive feedback on each workshop draft. This constructive feedback will be undertaken by using the following strategies: (a) line-by-line marginalia/edits and (b)
a short, summative assessment (one paragraph), close-reading the draft for its stylistic and craft-based choices. The goal of workshop is to help a writer actualize their goals for a piece of writing, not to force it to reflect the goals of the other workshop members.

b. **Speak** about each workshop draft in a respectful, prepared, and engaged manner, with an eye to assessing its strategies and effects on a reader.

Your job as workshop members is to (a) post your critiques on each writer’s Discussion Board thread by the beginning of their workshop class periods, as well as to place your critiques in the appropriately labelled Dropbox for grading purposes. Comments, both written and oral, should be balanced between supportive comments and constructive comments.

NOTE: A detailed model with instructions, etiquette, and expectations for workshop will be provided prior to the first workshop. Due dates for submitting drafts and submitting feedback will also be provided.

**Final Portfolio**

You are to submit a final portfolio composed of revised versions of your creative work. Your portfolio must also include a 3-5 page artist statement reflecting on your goals within the field of creative writing. You may address such questions as (a) why you are moved to create art, (b) how your artistic practice has evolved as a result of continued study this semester, and/or (c) how your work sits in conversation with your favorite writers. You must, to some extent, address how your linked collection reflects your artistic goals and practice.

The portfolio must include all of the following:

1) ‘Table of Contents’ page listing all pieces in portfolio, including page numbers

2) Artist Statement

3) Final drafts of poems

All work must be compiled in an electronic document, formatted using MLA standards, and submitted to your instructor during your final exam period.

Notes on Grading Criteria:

This portfolio assignment is worth a total of 300 points (roughly 30% of final grade). The portfolio will be scored by completeness of assembled work, attention to detail and description in analyses for each piece submitted, obvious attempts at development and revision in creative work, and obvious ability to utilize subject specific terms discussed in class throughout the semester.
Grading

30% Final Portfolio (Including workshop draft, final draft, and 3-5 page artist statement) — 300 points possible
10% Craft Responses — 100 points possible (25 points per response)
20% Modeling Poems (with metacognitive self-evaluation) — 200 points possible (50 points per poem)
20% “Free” Poems (with metacognitive self-evaluation) — 200 points possible (50 points per poem)
10% The Workshop — Extensive Written Feedback (marginalia and holistic commentary) Provided on All Workshop Drafts, Returned to Workshop Member; Evidence of Workshop Attentiveness (workshop drafts available via laptop, tablet, or other approved device) — 100 points possible
10% Evidence of Thoughtful, Engaged, and Professional Verbal Participation in Workshops (4) and Over Assigned Readings — 100 points possible

Total: 1000 points

Note: Because this is a studio workshop, I expect each student to participate fully in class discussion and attend class. Lack of attendance and participation will negatively impact your grade.

Grading Standard:

A (excellent performance): 90-100.
B (above average performance): 80-89.
C (average performance): 70-79.
F (failure): 0-59.

COURSE POLICIES

Technology Requirements

Desire2Learn (D2L)

D2L will be used to facilitate some aspects of the course. In D2L, you will be able to:

- Access additional required materials not found in your textbook (additional assigned readings on elements of craft and additional poems or stories which illustrate those elements).
- Access your course grades.
- Access supplemental resources/activities which are not required but may be useful.

Email

Course news and updates will be sent to you via email, so you will be responsible for checking your SFA email account regularly. Emails sent to the instructor on weekdays (Monday-Friday) will receive a response within 24-48 hours.

Absences
Because this is a hands-on, activity-oriented studio class, attendance is a significant factor for success in this course. Missing class means missing in-class activities, which are meant to support artistic development. Missing more than two regularly-scheduled class periods (1 week) without justifiable cause demonstrates a lack of commitment on your end. If an extraordinary circumstance develops which negatively impacts your ability to perform or attend class, please reach out to your instructor at your earliest convenience to discuss your progress and your options.

Valid excuses are limited to health, religious observation, family emergencies, and participation in certain SFASU-sponsored events. Students must provide written documentation from which a decision will be made regarding the absence’s excusability. Without written documentation, the absence will automatically be considered unexcused. Students with acceptable excuses may be permitted to make up work when the nature of the work missed permits. However, no absences beyond the allotted number will be permitted, whether unexcused or excused. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, students are still responsible for all course content and assignments. Note also that you must turn in all major assignments to pass the course.

I take attendance at the beginning of class; arriving more than five minutes after class begins will result in your being marked absent.

**COVID-19 update:** if you have been exposed to COVID-19 or have tested positive for the virus (and you are symptomatic or asymptomatic), refrain from attending class for the appropriate quarantine period until you are well. Please reach out to let me know that you are ill, and we can make other arrangements. **You will not be penalized for missing class due to COVID-19.**

**Late Work**

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. If a circumstance arises in which you need to discuss your progress with me, please see me during office hours or email me to check in. You should save your work in multiple places; I highly recommend using online storage options such as OneDrive, which is included as a free service in the university’s downloadable subscription of Microsoft Office 365, to prevent lost work.

**Course Citizenship**

Although students with disciplinary problems tend to be few and far between at the college level, if behavioral disruptions persist within a single class meeting (or, for that matter, across multiple meetings), the student in question will be asked to leave the class with a lowered participation grade and an absence recorded for the day.

Please make safe choices during the global pandemic. Wearing masks are encouraged, but optional.

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 available to help SFA students succeed.

**Assignment Submission**

You must submit all written work to the assigned D2L/Brightspace Dropbox, in addition to submitting hard copies of workshop drafts to me. All work submitted for Group Workshops must be submitted on the appropriate course Discussion Board. Assignments are due by class time on their due date.
Academic Integrity

Adhering to academic integrity standards at all times by producing your own work and successfully attributing others' ideas to them is a necessary aspect of university communication. 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) falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assignment; 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 include, but are not limited to: (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 the Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author due credit.

Any appeals on academic integrity cases must be made within thirty days after the first class day of the next long semester. Students should appeal to the instructor first then to the chair if the situation is not resolved. Further appeals can be made to the dean and provost if necessary.

Please read the complete policies at: https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf

Course Evaluations

Course evaluations will be available online near the end of the semester. I request that you take advantage of the opportunity to give feedback about how effective this class and my teaching was, particularly because I read evaluations to help make decisions about future classes. In other words, your feedback can help my future students have a good class experience.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

1. The student will demonstrate close reading skills and recognize strategies used by professional creative writers.
2. The student will employ techniques and strategies for crafting carefully composed competent creative work in a variety of genres (fiction, poetry, literary non-fiction).
3. The student will articulate useful, critical editorial advice for peer writers.
4. The student will demonstrate strategic revision on completed creative work.
5. The student will compose and sustain a complete, polished manuscript of substance in the focus-genre.

Title IX Statement

Stephen F. Austin State University strives to provide an educational and work environment that affirms the rights and dignity of each individual. It is the policy of the university, in accordance with federal and state law, to prohibit unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, citizenship and veteran status. Additionally, Stephen F. Austin State University prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Unlawful discrimination based on sex includes discrimination defined as sexual harassment.

The Discrimination Complaints policy (2.11) and the Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Violence, Harassment, and Misconduct policy (2.13) outline the university's commitment and detail the procedures used to prevent, respond, and investigate complaints. It is the responsibility of the university president to ensure that SFA and all its constituencies comply with the provisions of this policy and with all federal and state laws, executive orders and regulations regarding non-discrimination.
The university prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct because such behavior violates the university's institutional values, adversely impacts the university's community interest, and interferes with the university's mission. The university also prohibits retaliation against any person who, in good faith, reports or discloses a violation of this policy, files a complaint, and/or otherwise participates in an investigation, proceeding, complaint or remediation under this policy. Once the university becomes aware of an incident of sexual misconduct, the university will promptly and effectively respond in a manner designed to eliminate the misconduct, prevent its recurrence and address its effects.

Stephen F. Austin State University is dedicated to providing an environment of non-discrimination and equal opportunity in its programs and employment opportunities. The Title IX office supports the University's commitment by offering training, programs and processes that promote an inclusive, diverse and supportive environment consistent with the SFA Way.

To fulfill its mission, the Title IX office:

- Coordinates the delivery of detailed educational programs and training concerning discrimination, harassment, sexual violence, interpersonal violence, and stalking;
- Recommends, develops, interprets and implements policies and procedures in support of non-discrimination;
- Oversees investigations into complaints of discrimination, harassment and sexual violence by promptly organizing an impartial administrative review and addressing any patterns or systemic problems that might be identified during the review of such complaints;
- Serves as the university's designated office responsible for coordinating the University's compliance with state and federal law, including, but not limited to:
  - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,
  - Violence Against Women Act,
  - Campus SAVE Act.
- Works with the Office of the General Counsel to investigate and respond to external complaints (e.g. EEOC, OCR).

The many terms and definitions that surround sexual misconduct issues can be confusing and may create unintended barrier to reporting incidents of sexual misconduct.

It is important to remember, only those options clearly identified as confidential assistance can keep your information private. Generally, any person not identified as a confidential reporter is required to report an incident that is reported to them. This requirement is intended to protect members of the campus community, visitors and guests from criminal and discriminatory behavior.

**Accommodations**

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 your instructors and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations, and no accommodations can be made except through the ODS. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).