

CRWR 511 section 2: POETRY WRITING

Tuesday 3:00 pm - 5:50 pm

LA 210- 3 credit hours

Fall 2016

Instructor: Sherwin Bitsui

Email: Sherwin.bitsui@u.montana.edu

Office Location: Liberal Arts 113

Office Hours: Tuesday 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Thursday 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Also by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Advanced seminar in poetry writing. May include readings in contemporary poetry and theory.

(Leans toward inventive forms.) A seminar in poetry writing inclusive of language and linguistics and investigations of hybrid forms in creating successful poems. This is an active workshop involving focus on the line and image in the creation of poetry. We will read, discuss, write, critique and consistently exercise in the practice of poetry. Participants will sample a diverse selection of contemporary poets throughout the course. This class will inspire a healthy understanding of what is at stake in a line and in considerate and intentional composition of a poem. Class also creates individual chapbooks of poetry and a unique individual multi-media or interdisciplinary poetic work in course conclusion.

PREREQUISITES: Open only to students admitted to M.F.A. in creative writing.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student will be able to:

- Discuss: Students will be able to discuss poetics, including bodies of work, in a complex manner.
- Differentiate: Through critical assessment, students will differentiate why poems and manuscripts, are successful, or not.
- List: Terms, uses, practices, and sources of successful/unsuccessful poetic example.
- Show: Craft, application, demonstration, and commitment to the genre, along with final product (chapbook).
- Evaluate: Poetic success and building a body of work intentionally.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- *Night Sky With Exit Wounds*, Ocean Vuong, (Copper Canyon Press), ISBN: 155659495X.
- *Digest*, Gregory Pardlo, (Four Way), ISBN: 1935536508.
- *Milk and Filth*, Carmen Jimenez Smith, (University of Arizona Press), ISBN: 0816521166.
- *The Cormorant Hunter's Wife*, Joan Kane, (University of Alaska Press), ISBN: 1602231575.
- *The Tribute Horse*, Brandon Som, (Nightboat), ISBN: 193765818X2.
- *The Sri Lankan Loxodrome*, Wil Alexander, (New Directions), ISBN: 0811218295.
- *Letters*, Orlando White, (Nightboat) ISBN: 193765835X.
- *Wunderkammer*, Cynthia Cruz, (Four Way Books), ISBN: 1935536478.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND ATTENDANCE:

All students are responsible for knowing and understanding the Student Conduct Code. The student is responsible for completing each course he/she is registered. The student is also expected to attend all sessions of the classes he/she is enrolled. Please review and adhere to all University of Montana Student Conduct code: <http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/documents/Student%20Conduct%20Code%20PDF-%20FINAL%208-27-13.pdf>

Attendance:

If you know you will be absent, petition early for excuse. If sick, please stay home and please notify me ASAP.

- Two unexcused absences will elicit a warning.
- Three unexcused absences quantify a drop in letter grade and you will be asked to consider dropping the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1. Students will write a poem a week.**
- 2. A final portfolio of 8 to 10 pages of new work.**
- 3. Students are required to purchase and read the required texts outlined in this syllabus and additional materials as assigned.**
- 4. Students are required to participate in weekly writing assignments and discussions.**
- 5. Students will write one (5 page) critical response to each collection. The student will respond to the author's use of style, form, structure, device and technique. These critical works will be presented during the following week of the assigned text.**

6. This class is community of concerned peer writers. We work to provide clear and distinct offerings to further each participant's poems. We read as writers, keeping in mind it is up to us to do all we can to produce publishable works with our own self-critique and our collective peer review. We assist one another.

7. Each student will write a short critical response (one page, typed, 12 point font, double spaced) to each text. These will be turned in weekly.

GRADING PROCEDURE:

I retain instructor authority to amend as necessary. Additionally, due to class needs, we may elect to amend as a class.

Discussion, participation & presentation	35%
Weekly assignments/responses (on time)	20%
Final Portfolio (critical work as assigned & sixteen pages of original poetry drafts)	20%
Final Manuscript (chapbook) (eight to ten pages of publishable poetry)	25%

If you have an idea for an alternative portfolio option (special project you are interested in) please see me individually to petition, otherwise stick with the syllabus as written and/or options given by instructor otherwise.

Final Portfolio is assessed as follows:

- 1-16 pts Avoidance of clichés
- 1-16 pts Freshness of imagery
- 1-16 pts Attention to sound and silence
- 1-16 pts Attention to rhythm and form
- 1-16 pts Imaginative risk
- 1-20pts Mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, sensibility...)

Assignments are expected to be completed.

DISABILITY STATEMENT:

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator

Nondiscrimination Statement and Title IX Coordinator Notice:

<http://www.umt.edu/eo/titleix/notice.php>

Calendar

August 30 (T)	Introduction to class, goals and policies. Discuss workshop protocol, as specific to this course.	In class writing prompt: TBD
September 6 (T)	Bring in a poem for first workshop. Workshop 1	In class writing prompt: TBD Read: <i>Night Sky With Exit Wounds</i> by Ocean Vuong
September 13 (T)	Presentation: <i>Night Sky With Exit Wounds</i> by Ocean Vuong Presenters: Workshop 2	Read: <i>Digest</i> Gregory Pardlo
September 20 (T)	Presentation: <i>Digest</i> by Gregory Pardlo Presenters: Workshop 3	Montana Book Festival Sept 20-25 Assignment: TBD
September 27 (T).	Discussion: TPD Workshop 4	Read: <i>Milk and Filth</i> Carmen Jimenez Smith Workshop 4
October 4 (T)	Presentation: <i>Milk and Filth</i> by Carmen Jimenez Smith Presenters: Workshop 5	Read: <i>Cormorant Hunter's Wife</i> by Joan Kane
October 11 (T)	Presentation: <i>Cormorant Hunter's Wife</i> by Joan Naviyuk Kane Presenters:	Read: <i>Tribute Horse</i> by Brandon Som

	Workshop 6	
October 18 (T)	Presentation: <i>Tribute Horse</i> by Brandon Som Presenters: Workshop 7	Read: The Sri Lankan Loxodrome by Wil Alexander In class writing prompt: TBD

October 25 (T)	Presentation: <i>The Sri Lankan Loxodrome</i> by Wil Alexander Presenters: Workshop 8	Read: <i>Leterrrs</i> by Orlando White
November 1 (T)	Presentation: <i>Leterrrs</i> by Orlando White Presenters: Worskhop 9	Read: <i>Wunderkammer</i> by Cynthia Cruz
November 8 (T)	No Class. Election Day.	
November 15 (Tw)	Presentation: <i>Wunderkammer</i> by Cynthia Cruz Workshop 11	
November 23 (T)	Workshop 12	
November 29 (T)	Workshop 13	
December 6 (T)	Last Class. Turn in Final Portfolio Final Presentations.	
December 13 (T)	Conferences.	
Winter Break		

