

Sarah Kennedy
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ENG 347: The Writing of Poetry

REQUIRED TEXT:

Three books of poetry of your choice (from the list at the end of syllabus).
www.poems.com (Poetry Daily website, to be viewed regularly by students).

COURSE SUMMARY:

In English 347, you will study and practice three interactive elements in the making of poems: reading and responding to a selection of contemporary poetry, mechanics and techniques (writing and presentation), and the cooperative poetry workshop. This is an advanced course, and you should already have the basic elements of writing poems—meter, sound devices, line considerations, metaphor and other tropes—mastered. Writing assignments will include creative exercises, poetry writing, and analytical prose writing about an author of your choice. By the end of the course, you will have produced a mini-chapbook of poems, with an introductory essay, as well as a critical essay about your chosen poet.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

You will be expected to work at your critical paper over the course of the semester (and Discussion Board posts will be regularly added for conversation about your prose writing). Weekly creative writing assignments will be read and discussed on the Discussion Board by the entire class. This work-in-progress will be discussed *as work in progress*. Near the end of the semester, you will present, in brief Discussion Board posts, your response to your poet.

COURSE POLICIES:

English 347 is heavily devoted to student interaction: reading our poetry, talking about writing problems and pleasures, discussing technique, and airing opinions about contemporary poetry. Every student is required to take an active part in discussions. Note that having the writing assignment done does not mean having a finished poem done; the main point of workshopping is to improve work-in-progress. We will all produce phrases that are trite, lines that are sloppy, whole poems that have to be thrown away. This class is designed to allow us to help each other get the “junk” out of our writing—and our reading!

Online Discussion: Students will review other student poems and post responses to them on Blackboard (assuming that other poems are present). Regular and active participation is essential to your success in this course. This means that you must post your creative work (and your responses to others, if they are available) the week that they are due according to the syllabus. DB postings that are more than one week late will not receive credit.

The student will be expected to

post a poem (or revision) weekly in the Blackboard Discussion—please upload a poem in Word that can be downloaded for line-editing. Do NOT paste your poems

directly into the DB unless specifically requested.
post at least three responses of 75-100 words to other poems OR to Dr. Kennedy's
comments on Blackboard each week
read all postings to Blackboard for the semester.

Portfolio Format: Portfolios must be submitted in Word and in MLA format to the Assignments site on Blackboard. Please double space, number pages, and title your portfolios. You are responsible for keeping a copy. Submission documents must be titled in this format:

LastnameCourseAssignment

Example: SmithENG347MidtermPortfolio

If you have trouble uploading an assignment, please try another browser and/or another computer!

Late Work: Any late portfolios will be penalized a letter grade for every day that they are late, and no portfolio or poem posted more than a week beyond the original due date will receive a passing grade. This "late policy" applies to both weekly writing assignments and formal portfolios.

Revision. Both midterm and final portfolios must contain revised work. These revisions need to demonstrate a substantial rethinking and reworking of the original work—including additional attention to the text(s) being addressed in prose work. The extent and success of the revision will help determine the essay's final grade.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism, submitting someone else's ideas or words as though they were one's own, is an honors violation at Mary Baldwin University. (See the *Student Handbook*.) To avoid even accidental plagiarism in this course, please adhere to the handbook guidelines and/or consult the instructor with your questions if you are ever in doubt.

You will also find substantial help with proper quotation and MLA citation form (as well as punctuation, sentence structure, paragraph development, etc.) online at the OWL (online writing lab) at Purdue: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu> (select Non-Purdue Instructors & Students and select General Academic Writing or MLA Formatting & Style Guide).

ET Requests: An ET for this course will be allowed if the student has completed all of the required Blackboard postings. Responses for ET work will be submitted directly by email to the instructor.

GRADING:

20%	Mid-Term Portfolio: DUE OCTOBER 28 at midnight (to include 4-5 finished poems and a draft of the critical essay)
40%	Final Portfolio: DUE DECEMBER 9 at midnight (to include 10 finished poems, 250-word introductory essay, and revised critical essay)
<u>40%</u>	Participation on Blackboard
100%	Total

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

I strongly support and will enforce the Academic Integrity policy of the university. Plagiarism (the use of others' words or ideas without crediting the original author) and cheating constitute violations of this policy. Do your own work; write your own poems; cite the authors in your critical essay and if you used borrowed material in your poems.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

The weekly schedule of 347 will be fairly flexible. The three books you're required to purchase on your own should be in your hands by the first week of October so that you can begin to work on your analysis of the poet's work. If you find a poem you really like or hate, please bring it to the attention of the class and we'll talk about it!

WEEK ONE (Sept 3-9):

Introduction to the course and to each other

POST: an introduction to yourself as a person and as a writer. What kind of writer are you? What are your goals? Your ambitions?

POST: at least one poem of yours, either new or old by Sunday, Sept 9, at midnight.

WEEK TWO (Sept 10-16):

POST: a new poem, in your choice of form and subject. Include a BRIEF introduction in which you discuss why you chose the form and subject that you did. Post by Sunday at midnight

WEEK THREE (Sept 17-23):

POST: a narrative poem (telling a story) by Sunday at midnight.

WEEK FOUR (Sept 24-30):

POST: Ideas about which poet you might want to write your critical paper on. Why did you choose this poet? Are you completely out at sea about the whole criticism business? Please post this by Sunday at midnight.

POST: a lyric poem (story, if present, only suggested; focus on emotional state/language) by Sunday at midnight.

WEEK FIVE (Oct 1-7):

POST: the name of the poet you've chosen, if you were unsure in Week Four, and the books you're going to use. Please post by Sunday at midnight. Be sure to get the books ordered ASAP!

POST: a new poem in your choice of form and subject by Sunday at midnight.

WEEK SIX (Oct 8-14):

REVISION WEEK!

POST: at least two revised poems from previous weeks by Sunday at midnight.

WEEK SEVEN (Oct 15-21):

POST: BY MONDAY AT midnight (note that this is much earlier in the week than your previous postings!): drafts of proposals for critical paper (to include poet, titles, working thesis about important subjects, themes, metaphors, or formal strategies: roughly 500 words). You must post this early in the week so that you can take my responses into consideration and revise before turning in your midterm portfolio.

WEEK EIGHT (Oct 22-28):

POST: a new poem, using either description or a controlling metaphor (or both!) by Sunday at midnight.

UPLOAD ONTO ASSIGNMENTS BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT: MIDTERM PORTFOLIO

WEEK NINE (Oct 29-Nov 4):

POST: a new poem in form/subject of your choice by Sunday at midnight.

WEEK TEN (Nov 5-11):

POST: a dramatic monologue (a poem in the voice of someone who cannot be you) by Sunday at midnight.

WEEK ELEVEN (Nov 12-18):

POST: a rough draft of your critical paper by Sunday at midnight.

POST: a revision of one poem you have written since midterm by Sunday at midnight.

WEEK TWELVE (Nov 19-25):

POST: a description of how your final portfolio is coming together: how you see your poems as a body of your work, not just a series of poems, by Sunday at midnight.

Please post any time during the week questions you may have about revisions and preparation for the final portfolio.

WEEK THIRTEEN (Nov 26-Dec 2):

THANKSGIVING: Spend this week drafting and revising your paper and your poems.

WEEK FOURTEEN (Dec 3-7):

FINAL WORKSHOP WEEK: Please keep in mind that this is a short week and the DB will close on Dec 7 at midnight!

POST: at least two revisions for further thoughts

POST TO ASSIGNMENTS BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9 at MIDNIGHT: FINAL PORTFOLIO WITH 500-WORD INFORMAL INTRODUCTION TO YOUR WORK, ALL REVISED POEMS, AND FINAL CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF YOUR CHOSEN POET

ENG 347 Poets for Consideration:

Elizabeth Alexander (gender, narrative, race)
Dorothy Barresi (pop culture, gender, lyric)
Diann Blakely (pop culture, the South, gender)
Eavan Boland (Ireland, gender, motherhood)
Carol Ann Duffy (gender, myth, satiric humor)

Rita Dove (narrative, race, gender, music, history)
Cornelius Eady (race, lyric, music, pop culture)
Alice Fulton (theory, language)
Margaret Gibson (gender, narrative, nature)
Linda Gregg (lyric/narrative, American culture)

Robert Hass (nature, environment, narrative)
Tony Hoagland (pop culture, humor)
Kathleen Jamie (Scotland, environment, gender)
Kathleen Jesme (nature, gender, relationships)
Allison Joseph (race, personal narrative, American culture)

Suji Kwock Kim (Korean-American culture, nature, food)
David Kirby (travel, philosophy, humor)
Ted Kooser (nature, rural, love)
Yusef Komunyakaa (jazz, war, race, American culture)
Li-Young Lee (Chinese and Chinese-American culture, language, lyric image)

W. S. Merwin (nature, environment, American history)
Heather McHugh (American culture, gender)
Paul Muldoon (theory, Ireland)
Sharon Olds (domestic violence, family drama)
Pattiann Rogers (American culture, relationship, gender)

Alan Shapiro (American culture, relationships)
Cathy Song (American culture, lyric)
Lisa Russ Spaar (gender, psychology, the South)
Arthur Sze (Chinese-American culture, history, form)
Natasha Trethewey (the South, gender, racial identity, photography)

Derek Walcott (Caribbean culture, race, history, literary forebears)
Afaa Michael Weaver (relationships, American history, race, theory)
David Wojahn (American pop music, relationships)
C. D. Wright (the South, relationships, form, gender)
Charles Wright (the South, history, philosophy, theology, nature)
Robert Wrigley (nature, the West, animals, theology)