

## **English 494A/B: Creative Writing: Poetry II**

**Instructor (Fall/Winter 2017-18): Larissa Lai**

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**Class Time: Tu 6:00 - 8:45pm**

**Classroom: SS1059**

### **Course description:**

English 494 is an upper-level undergraduate class that takes place over a full year—two blissful semesters in which we will work together to talk, think, laugh and grow your poetry-writing practice. This class will be structured primarily through a workshop format. Depending on the numbers, between two and four students will submit a small selection of poems each week for critique the following week. In this way, I will train you both in poetry-writing and constructive criticism. Through constructive criticism, you will also train each other, and the class will grow into a small community of active and supportive poet/practitioners. You will be asked to pay attention in the arenas of language, form, aesthetics, ethics, the body, history, memory and more. There will be a class session dedicated to the discussion of cultural appropriation also, as this is a pressing issue for any contemporary writer.

### **Texts:**

Alcoff, Linda. "The Problem of Speaking for Others." *Cultural Critique* 20 (1991-1992): 5-32. (Available online at the University of Calgary Library.)

Braid, Kate, and Sandy Shreve. *In Fine Form, 2nd edition*. Half Moon Bay: Caitlin, 2016.

Kinzie, Mary. *A Poet's Guide to Poetry*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2013.

Tysdal, Daniel Scott. *The Writing Moment: A Practical Guide to Creating Poems*. Don Mills: OUP Canada, 2014.

In addition, in the second term, students will be required to read a selection of full-length poetry collections, chosen by the class at the end of the first month.

One more pedagogical text may be added, as may stand-alone articles, blog posts or poems.

### **Application Requirements:**

To be considered for a place in this course, please submit the following items to the English Department main office (SS1152, University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4) by August 11, 2017:

1) a completed application form (on the final page of this document); and

2) a portfolio of 17-20 pages of poetry, in a 12-point font (unless there are poetic reasons for varying font size). In the portfolio, you are encouraged to select poems

to illustrate both the range and quality of your practice. Poems may be of any length, as long as the total length of the portfolio falls within the guidelines. Keep copies of the writing you submit, and include an SASE (self-addressed and stamped envelope) if you would like the portfolio returned. Further guidelines on portfolio submission are available here: <https://english.ucalgary.ca/cwundergradapply>

### **Course requirements:**

Over the year, students are required to write four batches of poetry that will be workshopped in class, two in the first term and two in the second term. A fifth batch, which will not be workshopped, is due at the end of the year to the instructor. There are also presentation requirements including close readings of poems and presentations structured around didactic texts. There will also be a presentation on a full-length poetry collection of your choosing (with some restrictions).

Students will also be required attend at least two, out-of-class readings or literary events over the course of the year and submit a one-page, double-spaced report on each reading. There is broad array of Calgary reading series to choose from including Single Onion and Flywheel. There are also Calgary Distinguished Writers' Program events, the Paget Hoy Speakers' Series, WordFest events, plus regular programming at Pages Bookstore, the Calgary Public Library, and Shelf Life Books. There is also a requirement to produce a statement of aesthetics. You will be guided and workshopped through this process.

Some of the writers we may read over the course of the year include: Erín Moure, Rain Prud'homme-Cranford, Wayde Compton, Jordan Abel, Shannon Maguire, Liz Howard, Angela Rawlings, Christian Bök, Robert Kroestch, Rita Wong, Roy Miki, Gregory Scofield, Marilyn Dumont, Fred Wah, Lisa Robertson, Natalie Simpson, d'bi young, Marie Annharte Baker, bp nichol, Robin Blaser, Steve McCaffrey, derek beaulieu, Sonnet L'Abbe, Daphne Marlatt, Nicole Brossard, Gail Scott, Sina Queyras, Pamela Mordecai, Lillian Allen, Roy Kiyooka, George Elliot Clarke, George Bowering, Margaret Christakos, Daniel Scott Tysdal. I will expect a lot of reading, but by the same token, I am committed to make the volume manageable.

### **Pedagogy:**

I am committed to a student-centred pedagogy and to a practice of making seemingly complicated ideas accessible. This course is designed primarily to facilitate the growth of your practice in the context of contemporary poetry. It is designed to strengthen both your skills and your sense of your place as a poet in the current poetry and poetics conversation. There will thus be lots of room made for your own critical and creative concerns as they relate to the existing concerns of our historical moment. This will not be a "bird" class, but neither will it be an impossible class. I am committed to the happy medium in which students learn a ton but don't die in the trenches. As an upper-level undergraduate class, this course is intended for students who already have a poetry practice and are looking to learn, deepen, grow and improve.

**APPLICATION AND PORTFOLIO DUE: Friday, August 11, 2017**

**APPLICATION FORM: ENGLISH 494A/B: CREATIVE WRITING: POETRY II**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ **(full)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

List previous English courses that may relate, and Course instructor:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List all previous Creative Writing courses (including non-credit), and instructor:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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Your reasons for wishing to enroll in this course:

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Name a few of your favourite poets or poetry collections:

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