ADVANCED POETRY WRITING-ENGL 4300 (Spring 10)  
Section 01 (CRN 24954)  
TR 1700-1815—U 268 (James M. Baker University)  

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http://a-s.clayton.edu/bbyrd/Homepage.htm  
Office hours: TR 1530-1700  
(and by appointment)  

Text and Online Materials:  
* Creating Poetry, John Drury  
* The Best American Poetry 2009, ed. David Lehman and David Wagoner  
Poetry Daily website: http://www.poems.com/  
Ron Silliman’s blog: http://ronsilliman.blogspot.com/  

Additional Required Materials:  
2 manila folders or envelops in which you will turn your midterm and final portfolios  
$20 for copying expenses  

Notebook Computer Requirement:  
Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook  
computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the  
student's academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For  
additional information on CSU’s Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to  
http://itpchoice.clayton.edu/policy.htm.  

In-class Use of Student Notebook Computers:  
Student notebook computers will be used daily in the classroom. Computers are required  
to access course materials and to communicate with me. Access to the internet is  
mandatory.  

Catalog Description:  
Advanced instruction in writing poetry.  

Prerequisite: ENGL 3800 (Intro to CRW) with a minimum US grade of C  

From Student Learning Outcome for all English Majors  
1. Analyze and evaluate texts that reflect diverse genres, time periods, and cultures.  
4. Produce a variety of materials, including oral presentations, for a range of rhetorical  
   contexts.  

Student Learning Outcome:  
* Understanding of and practice in poetry writing through a series of exercises focused on  
specific elements of the craft  
* Familiarization with major 19th century poets, Modernists, New York School poets,  
Beats, Black Mountain poets, “confessional” poets, language poets, major contemporary  
African American poets, and established as well as new voices in today’s American  
poetry through student presentations and discussions of these movements.  
* Practice in writing poetry according to specific American contemporary movements  
* Familiarization and understanding of one specific contemporary book of poetry  
published within the last two years through working on the presentation of the book.  
* Experiencing performing one’s reading through participation to an open mic event.
* Experiencing at least two poetry readings by attending a couple of events.

*NOTE: I will provide students with a schedule of literary events taking place during the semester. Check the link on the English Department webpage and on my homepage for a schedule of the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Spring 2010.*

**Exercises:**
After starting most of the exercises in class, you will finish them at home, type and edit them before placing them in your folder. These exercises are designed to trigger your imagination, help you start writing, and support a point/element of craft discussed in class.

**Presentations:**
You will sign up for 2 presentations on authors we will study and for 1 presentation on a contemporary book of poetry published within the last two years. When presenting an author, focus on his/her work and on his/her influence on American poetry today. Look into the craft, style, etc. When presenting a book, focus on craft, style, etc. and try to make connections with previous movements or poets. Find out about influences, maybe...

**List of poetry presses you may want to pick your book from for presentation:**
Ahsahta Press
Alice James Books
Anhinga Press
BOA Editions
Burning Deck Press
City Lights Press
Coffeehouse Press
Copper Canyon Press
Cracked Slab Books
Fence Books
Flood Editions
Green Integer Press
Kelsey St. Press
Night Boat Press
O Books
Pavement Saw Press
Red Hen Press
Salt Publishing
Soft Skull Press
Verse Press

**Final portfolio:**
You will turn in a sample of thoroughly revised and polished poems (3-5 pages).

**Participation to an open mic reading:**
You will select two poems to read at the event which I will announce later in the semester.

**Late work Policy:**
I do not accept late work. Late work will receive a 0 unless arrangements are made between us before a planned absence or immediately after class, in the case of a personal emergency. Once we have made arrangements, you will turn the assignment in question directly to me.

**Visiting Writers Reading Series:**
Mandatory attendance to all three events from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series. If your school schedule or your work schedule prevents you from attending the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series, you need to see me by January 31st so that we may make other arrangements.

*You will notice that I have canceled two class meetings this semester in order to make up for your attendance to the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series Spring 2010.

**University Policies:**
Students must abide by policies in the Clayton State University Student Handbook, and to the Student Code of Conduct.

**University Attendance Policy:**
Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students' ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine what excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient causes for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

**Attendance Policy (specific to this course):**
Attendance is expected for all class periods. Attendance is mandatory for workshops and presentations. Attendance to all three events from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series (or if unable to attend these, to other literary events) is also mandatory. By “mandatory” I mean that failing to comply with the previous requirements will result in dropping one letter grade from your overall grade. An excused absence is an absence for which you provide me with a note from your doctor or other competent authority. Any absence after 2 excused absences will affect your participation grade. After 4 excused or unexcused absences, your overall grade for the course will drop one letter grade then one additional letter grade for each additional absence.

**You will notice that I have canceled two class meetings this semester in order to make up for your attendance to the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series Spring 2010.**

**Tardiness:**
Although I understand that circumstances may occur so that a student may be 5 minutes late to class, being repetitively late 15 minutes or more to class disturbs class. Four instances of 15 minutes or more tardiness to class will result in one absence.

**Plagiarism:**
Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. Plagiarism is one of the most common forms of academic misconduct. It will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is a counterproductive, non-writing behavior that is unacceptable in a course intended to aid the growth of individual writers. Plagiarism is representing another’s work or part thereof, be it published or unpublished, as one’s own. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Life/Judicial Affairs.

**Disability Services:**
Individuals with disabilities who need to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, Student Center 214, 678-466-5445. disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu.

Evaluation:
In order to receive a C in this course, you must turn in all the written work below on time and contribute to a presentation/performance. Remember that attendance is required and that after 4 absences, your overall grade starts dropping. Similarly attendance is mandatory for workshops and presentations. Attendance to all three events from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series (or other literary events, if needed) is also mandatory. By “mandatory” I mean that failing to comply with the previous requirements will result in dropping one letter grade from your overall grade.

- Participation 20%
- Exercises (started in class finished, polished and typed) 20%
- Finished, typed and *thoroughly revised* poems (3-5 pages) 20%
- Presentations 20%
- Presentation (book) 10%
- Performance / Open mic event 10%

Grading:
A  90-100 (excellent)
B  80-89 (above average)
C  70-79 (average—i.e. you did everything, but the quality of the work is average)
D  60-69 (you probably forgot to turn in some assignments or did not attend all required events. . . .)
F   60 and below

Mid-term Progress Report
The mid-term grade in this course, which will be issued on March 2nd, 2010, reflects approximately 30% of the entire course grade. Based on this grade, students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar (within a couple of days).

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Course Schedule:
I will refer to *Creating Poetry* as CP.
Bring the *Best American Poetry 2009* to each meeting.
As most writers do, you will keep a small notebook with you at all time during this term so that you can record thoughts, dreams, observations, and start a list of words. Your notebook then becomes a pool of words and ideas for you to use in your creative work.

**Week 1**
1/12  Introduction to the course and to peers
1/14  CP (chapter I—preparing)

**Week 2**
1/19  CP (chapter IX—sources of inspiration), in-class exercise 1, *sign up for presentations*
1/21  CP (chapter X—things to write about), in-class exercise 2
Week 3
1/26 CP (chapter II—language), in-class exercise 3
1/28 Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, presentations __________, __________

Week 4
**TUESDAY 2/02 novelist Patti Callahan Henry reads at CSU at 6:30pm in B10**
2/02 CP (chapter III—sight), in-class exercise 4
2/04 Rainer Maria Rilke and Arthur Rimbaud, presentations __________, __________

Week 5
2/09 CP (chapter IV—sound) and (chapter V—movement), in-class exercise 5
2/11 Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, and Gertrude Stein, presentations __________, __________

Week 6
2/16 CP (chapter VI—shaping), in-class exercise 6
2/18 New York School poets (Frank O’Hara, John Ashbery, James Schuyler, Kenneth Koch), presentations __________, __________, __________, __________, in-class exercise 7

Week 7
2/23 Beat poets (Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Diane Di Prima, Anne Waldman), presentations __________, __________, __________, __________, __________, in-class exercise 8

sign up for workshop
Group 1: __________, __________, __________, __________
Group 2: __________, __________, __________, __________
Group 3: __________, __________, __________, __________
Group 4: __________, __________, __________, __________
Group 5: __________, __________, __________, __________

2/25 Bob Kaufman and Imamu Amiri Baraka, presentations __________, __________, mini workshop

Week 8
**THURSDAY 3/04 poet Chad Davidson reads at CSU at 6:30pm in B14 (event sponsored in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts) after visiting our class**
3/02 Chad Davidson visits our class
3/04 Black Mountain poets (Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Denise Levertov, Robert Duncan), presentations __________, __________, __________, __________, __________, in-class exercise 9

Week 9 SPRING BREAK

Week 10
3/16 “Confessional” poets (Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, John Berryman), presentations __________, __________, __________, __________, __________, in-class exercise 10
3/18 No class for attending readings from Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series Spring 2010

Week 11
3/23  Yussef Komunyakaa, Nikki Giovani, and Ai, presentations ____________, ____________, mini workshop
3/25  Language poets (Ron Silliman, Lyn Hejinian, Charles Bernstein, Susan Howe), presentations ____________, ____________, ____________, ____________, in-class exercise 11

Week 12
3/30  Forrest Hamer, Claudia Rankine, Terrance Hayes, presentations ____________, ____________, mini workshop
4/01  Presentations (book)

Week 13
4/06  Presentations (book), group 1 brings poems to class
4/08  No class for attending readings from Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series Spring 2010

Week 14
4/13  Workshop group 1, group 2 brings poems to class
4/15  Workshop group 2, group 3 brings poems to class

Week 15
**THURSDAY 4/22 poet Scott Wilkerson reads at CSU at 6:30pm & CYGNET launching party B14**
4/20  Workshop group 3, group 4 brings poems to class
4/22  Workshop group 4, group 5 brings poems to class

Week 16
4/27  Workshop group 5
4/29  final portfolio due except for group 5

Week 17  Final exams week
5/04  final portfolio due for group 5