

Hauck Hall 112/Potentially Woolson T/Th 2-3:15 pm,
Office Hours: W 2-5, Thurs 11-1 and by appointment
Office: Carnegie 102
Office Phone #: 2387
E-mail: vaggarwal@rollins.edu

ENG 367 Creative Writing: Hybrid Poetics

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Poets often turns to other forms both within larger poetic works and without—performance, film, video, blogs, essay. In this class we will think about how poetic cultures—in a societal and biological sense—interact and seep. After all, what is the distinction between poetry and prose—what are the alignments? Is our relationship to genre so neat? As Derrida suggests in “The Law of Genre,” are gender and genre related? How are they related? What happens when we break the law of genre? Does our notion of gender also shift? When the poem is no longer a “poem”? When does the description of the event of trying to get at “the poem” which is no longer a poem take over as writing. We will experiment with writing between lyric and essay, autobiography and fiction via blogs, collaborative work, ritual, and old-fashioned pen-to-paper.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Wayne Kostenbaum, *Humiliation*

Tonya Foster, *A Swarm of Bees in High Court*

Ronaldo Wilson, *Farther Traveller*

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, *Dirty River: A Queer Femme of Color Dreaming Her Way Home*

Short excerpts from other works will be available through Blackboard Course Documents, or through handouts.

Official Policies

Academic Honor Code

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires a commitment, to act with honor in all things. Because academic integrity is fundamental to the pursuit of knowledge and truth and is the heart of the academic life of Rollins College, it is the responsibility of all members of the College community to practice it and to report apparent violations.

The following pledge is a binding commitment by the students of Rollins College:

The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community. Therefore, I, a student of Rollins College, pledge to show my commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in my academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in my social life and in my relationships with others.

This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to all papers, quizzes, tests, lab reports, etc., the following handwritten abbreviated pledge followed by their signature: **“On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work.”** Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge; submission implies signing the pledge.

Departmental Policy for Day and Evening Courses

All English courses that commence after 4:00 p.m. follow the policies of the Hamilton Holt School. To meet the number of contact hours required for Holt courses, evening classes offered once a week must meet fifteen times during the semester. While Arts and Sciences classes cancel meetings for scheduled breaks (i.e. Fall Break), unscheduled breaks (i.e. Fox Day), and reading days, students enrolled in evening courses are required to meet during those times.

In evening courses, final examinations will be administered during the fifteenth meeting of the semester.

In day courses, final examinations will be administered as designated by the Arts and Sciences final examination schedule.

Credit Hour Statement:

This course is a four-credit-hour course that meets three hours per week. The value of four credit hours results from work expected of enrolled students both inside and outside the classroom. Rollins faculty require that students average at least three hours of outside work for every hour of scheduled class time. In this course, the additional outside-of-class expectations are work on blog, writing, critical reading and annotation, research for final projects, and small-group presentations

Disability Statement:

Rollins College is committed to equal access and does not discriminate unlawfully against persons with disabilities in its policies, procedures, programs or employment processes. The College recognizes its obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to provide an environment that does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability on this campus and anticipate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to participate in your classes, please make timely arrangements by disclosing this disability in writing to the [Disability Services Office at \(box 2764\) 1000 Holt Ave., Winter Park, FL, 37289](#) or email or call the Director of Disability Services, Grace Moskola at 407-975-6463, gmoskola@rollins.edu.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Last Day to Drop a Class without Notation ('W' Deadline), Monday, January 25
Last Day to Drop a Class without Penalty ('WF' Deadline), Monday, March 28

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance in class and for any class event (whether a conference with me or a film screening) *is mandatory*. You are responsible for being in class on time. Your grade will begin to drop after three absences or excessive tardiness. Missing more than 3 classes may result in automatic failure of the course.

Here is what is considered an absence:

- 1) Leaving class halfway through for an appointment
- 2) Not attending a class

You will be marked absent for any of these reasons. If for some reason, you have to leave class, please be as discreet as possible.

Also being considered absolutely present entails the following:

- 1) No texting
- 2) No excessive breaks
- 3) No hiding behind your laptop

Please notify me if “extraordinary” circumstances prevent you from following this policy (illness/flu).

Email is the official means of communication at Rollins. Therefore, you are responsible for checking your accounts regularly.

If there is a change in the class assignment or any other shift, you will be informed via email. Any shifts in schedule will also be posted on Blackboard. Blackboard is our central communication hub!

Course Readings:

You are responsible for completing all of the readings on time. You should check every week under Course Announcements to make sure that you know what we are reading for a given week. Weekly assignments will be posted there. Moreover, I will be posting assignments and course material on Blackboard. If you miss a class for any reason, check on Blackboard for assignments. You can access Blackboard through the Rollins homepage (<http://www.rollins.edu>) under the Campus Logins menu (pull down Blackboard). I will also put relevant websites and materials on Blackboard.

Think of the assigned readings in class as a jumping-off point for your writing. To loosely paraphrase Argentine writer, Jorge Luis Borges, writers create their own precursors. Hopefully, you will create (or are already in the process of creating) your own constellation of writers that propel your work forward. Think of yourself in a dialogue with poets and writers from the past and present, or in an intimate conversation with the English language in all of its weird permutations. Use the assigned poems as potential models for your drafts and exercises. Above all, come to class with compelling things to say about the readings! Your exercises will be based in some part on the readings. We will usually go over readings during class.

In-class Exercises:

We will be doing in-class exercises and experiments in writing. Here is one online site by poet Charles Bernstein that offers a list of experiments you can actually do at home!
(<http://www.writing.upenn.edu/bernstein/experiments.html>)

Winter with the Writers and Readings:

You are required to go to at least one author reading during the course of the term (with a short write-up on the event).

Weekly Exercises and Revisions:

You will turn in weekly exercises to me in a paper copy; you can also use your blog/tumblr account for your exercises, but you still need to turn in a paper copy. I will put up the workshop schedule on Blackboard (whose poems we will be workshopping on any given week). If your poems are being workshopped, you will need to post on blackboard by Monday noon!

Workshops:

Everyone in class is responsible for reading and annotating the workshop poems/essays by class. We will have a group discussion about the work. You are required to post responses on Blackboard for every piece that will be workshopped and return a copy of the poem to the author with your commentary. As the term progresses, we will have workshops for your final projects. Workshop groups will be assigned in the second week of classes. Remember: everything in workshop stays in workshop—very important to establishing trust within the workshop process. Also, you do not have to share in workshop anything you do not want to share. You should turn in work that you have written this term, but workshopped poems do not have to conform to the schedule of exercises. For instance, you can use a revised exercise from week 2 as a workshop poem for week 5.

Blog/Craft journal:

You will keep a record of your revisions and thinking out the exercises and readings through either a blog or a written journal. This blog/journal can include found objects (or pictures of objects), song lyrics, current inspirations and obsessions. You will turn this in at the end of the term along with your final projects. Aim for weekly entries (I will look for approximately 12 pages).

Group presentations:

You will do a group presentation on one of the four assigned books. You should give the class an understanding of the writer's aesthetics and you should also perform selections of the work aloud. What is strange about the collection? These presentations should take approximately 30-40 minutes in which your group leads part of the class discussion about the collection. You will be assigned groups on the second day of class.

Revisions/Craft essay:

You will have a midterm in which you turn in three revisions. You will have a questionnaire about these revisions and will turn in a craft essay as part of your packet.

Final Project:

At the end of the class you will turn in a sequence of 7-12 pages of original work in "traditional" or "experimental" forms of your choice (i.e., long poem, essay, mixed-genre). This final piece should include revisions that you have turned in earlier in the semester, as well as additional work. You should also generate a 3-page craft essay (a sense of the your reading-impetus for

your set of poems). A sound recording and/or a visual component of your poems may accompany your final project—which you can present the final exam day!

ASSESSMENT

Grade Breakdown:

367:

- 15 % Exercises
- 10 % Class Participation/Workshop participation
- 10 % Craft journal or blog
- 15 % Revision set and craft essay
- 40 % Final Projects
- 10% Presentation

Grade distribution

A 92.5-100	B+ 86.5-89.49	C+ 76.5-79.49	etc.
A- 89.5-92.49	B 82.5-86.49	C 72.5-76.49	
	B- 79.5-82.49	C- 69.5-72.49	

To earn a C in the class:

You turn in all the assignments and revisions. Your final project consists of revisions of exercises from the class. You adequately respond to your peers on Blackboard and offer suggestions in workshop.

To earn a B in the class:

You turn in all the assignments and revisions on time. Your final project demonstrates some thinking about formal strategies and offers thoughtful revisions of previous drafts. You offer substantial input to your peers and come prepared for class discussion.

To earn an A in the class:

You take an imaginative approach to the assignments and revisions. You demonstrate a strong engagement in both the Blackboard responses to student poems and class discussion. Your work shows a thoughtful link between the form and the content. In your final project, you pay close attention to the organization and arrangement of individual poems and sections.

PROVISIONAL COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Weekly schedule and assignments will be distributed via Blackboard.

Week 1:

1/12 Introduction: David Bowie “Ashes to Ashes” and “Black Star”

1/14 Prageeta Sharma: “A Situation for Mrs. Biswas”

<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/situation-mrs-biswas>

Sharma “By Submarine: The Identity Book on Being Alone with Yourself” (blackboard)

Bhanu Kapil, “[Race Drops for Ban]” (blackboard)

Some entries from Kapil’s blog: <http://jackkerouacispunjabi.blogspot.com/2016/01/my-mitten.html>

Week 2:

1/19 Class canceled! Exercise: Post 2 paragraphs of writing answering the following question from *Kapil’s Vertical Interrogation of Strangers* (blackboard): “Tell me what you know about dismemberment.”

1/21 excerpts from *Vertical Interrogation of Strangers*. Assignment—bring to class. Print out everyone’s answers to the above question and assemble a sequence/arrangement of the various responses. How do we make our individual pieces into a collaborative poem?

Week 3:

1/26 Carmen Giménez Smith “Parts of an Autobiography” (blackboard); Mongrel Coalition Against Gringpo <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2015/04/the-gold-star-awards-a-message-from-the-mongrel-coalition-against-gringpo//>; Kristen Kaschock “windowboxing” (blackboard) to page 13

Experiment: Write a manifesto-style poem/piece with single-line statements and bring to class.

1/28 Workshop

Week 4:

2/2 Meet in Orlando 215: Alan Nordstrom’s class for 30 minute teaching demo by candidate: Excerpt from Hilton Als *The Women*; Exercise: Respond to Kapil’s question: “Who was responsible for the suffering of your mother?” (this doesn’t have to be your actual mother—it can be the idea of mother or a historically maligned mother (Aurelia Plath, Mary Todd Lincoln) or psychopathic mother (Medea). Think about how Als combines a reckoning with his mother, the pejorative cultural idea of “the negress,” and his own identity.

2/4 first 30 minutes Orlando 215: Workshop

Week 5:

2/9 first 30 minutes Orlando 215 Reading “My Herculine ‘Layers’” Aaron Apps. Exercise: Address the question from *Vertical*: “What is the shape of your body?”

2/11 first 30 minutes Orlando 215. Workshop 2 pieces.

Week 6:

2/16 Wayne Kostenbaum *Humiliation*. Exercise: Multipart writing in paragraph blocks on an affect/emotion/state: (i.e. exhilaration, shame, plentitude, dejection, sadness, fervor, awkwardness, boredom, flatness, anxiety).

2/18 Workshop

5:30 PM at Cornell Fine Arts Museum Laura Anderson Barbata and The Brooklyn Jumbies—artist’s talk and performance (I really recommend we all go!) This can substitute for attendance at any other event!

Week 7:

2/23 *Farther Traveler* Ronaldo Wilson; Video “Pink” <https://vimeo.com/87731917>

Exercise: Following the poem “Streaming,” start discussing a movie you have seen as if it was part of your own dreamlife or life. Alternatively, make a short video of yourself or something else and speak this film/dream. You can use a smartphone for the video/no need for high tech! You can also do something inspired by Laura Anderson Barbata and stilt-walkers!

2/25 Workshop

Week 8: No class week of March 1 for spring break

Week 9:

3/8 Tonya Foster, *Swarm of Bees in High Court*. Turn in 3 revisions of exercises for midterm.

3/10 Workshop.

Week 10:

3/15 excerpt from *Heath Course Pak* by Tan Lin

Jai Arun Ravine review *Heath Course*

Pak: <http://www.lanternreview.com/blog/2013/01/23/review-tan-lins-heath-course-pak/>

Shamala Gallagher, “Craft Essay” <http://bwr.ua.edu/craft-essay-by-shamala-gallagher-author-of-mooncalf-from-issue-42-1/>

Sueyeun Juliette Lee, “**WHAT ONE WANTS AND WHAT WILL BE PRESCRIBED WITHOUT ONE SINGLE CENTER FOREVER**”:

<http://www.thedrunkenboat.com/SueyeunJulietteLee.html>

Exercise: Intersperse found text or images into a piece you are already working on or into a new piece.

3/17 Workshop

Week 11:

3/22 *Don Quixote* excerpt Kathy Acker (blackboard); Dodie Bellamy “Digging Through Kathy Acker’s Stuff” <http://lithub.com/digging-through-kathy-ackers-stuff/>

Exercise: Write an intimate homage to a writer or personality you admire. Write an autobiography in the shape of a character/writer/persona from history/literature/pop culture.

3/24 Workshop

Week 12:

3/29 Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, *Dirty River: A Queer Femme of Color Dreaming Her Way Home*

3/31: Pick up in-class exam/questionnaire with Jessica Love at the English Department front desk. Turn in a short piece as a draft for final project and a short craft essay (1-2 pages double-spaced) by 3:15 to the English Department front desk.

Week 13:

4/5 TBA work by Justin Chin

4/7 Individual meetings about final projects (20-30 minutes each)

Week 14:

4/12 Individual meetings about final projects (20-30 minutes each)

4/14 Class Canceled!

Week 15

4/19 Workshop Intensive

4/21 Workshop Intensive

Final WEEK!

4/26 Last day of class: Presentations/readings from your final projects!

Monday May 2: Final Projects Due/ Craft blog/diaries due