San José State University
Department of English & Comparative Literature
ENGL 131, Writing Poetry, Section 1, Fall, 2019

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Belinda Kremer
Office Location:	FOB 216
Telephone:	(408) (TBA—)
Email:	Belinda.Kremer@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday 3–5pm
Class Days/Time:	M & W Noon—1:15pm
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall (SH) 444
Prerequisites:	ENGL 71 (or equivalent) or consent of instructor
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	_____

Course Format

This course meets in person. Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at http://sjsu.instructure.com. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU at http://my.sjsu.edu to learn of any updates.

Course Description

From the catalog: "Workshop in verse forms. Study of traditional and contemporary models."

For our section: This course focuses on your composition of new poems, and your understanding of what poems are and what they can do. As you write, we'll read diverse poets—some writing and publishing today, some from other eras far and near. You'll engage with formal poems in both brand-new forms (such as the "golden shovel") and long-standing forms, such as the villanelle. Simultaneously, you will ground your grasp of the forms themselves. You'll work in free verse, as well, understanding that free verse is a verse form. In free verse, we'll consider what bounds the "free" to animate sound, space, and the line— to bring these alive.

   Poems shaped by evolving technologies, especially sound poems, visual poems & digital hybrids, will interest us. We'll consider poetry's two core, competing media—sound and space (aka "silence"). We'll consider how poetry's primary unit, "the line," works these media. You'll try your hand at a number of forms & aesthetics, with the support of our having studied them together.

   Short exercises will get you writing, lead you to build on basic elements, and push you to test old habits and try new things. Our workshop processes will be grounded in: finding, reading,

engaging with, sharing, and responding to poems written by others and by you; drafting, feedback, & development and revision of your work; your generous attentions to the work of your peers in the course; and more reading, feedback, & revision. We'll work with both local and semester-long deadlines; deadlines are a writer's best friend.

The primary objectives of the course are: That you learn a variety of verse forms, especially those that have been most popular among poets and readers across many centuries. That in addition to knowing the forms, you learn to see, understand, and appreciate how choices in the constraints and affordances of a form are shaping a particular poem. That these understandings deepen your pleasure in poetry, both as audience and as a poet. Finally, that you leave the course able to purposefully choose, and invent, among all the forms & hybrids, as you read and write poems

Department-Level Student Learning Objectives for Courses (SLO): The Department of English and Comparative Literature has established the following Student Learning Objectives (SLO) for its baccalaureate courses: Students will demonstrate the ability to 1) read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric; 2) show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature; 3) write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject; 4) develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively; 5) articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts. Major Assessment for AY 2019-2020 is _____.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify, analyze, and compose poetry in traditional/long-standing formal verse forms.

2. Identify, analyze, and compose poetry in new/contemporary formal verse forms.

3. Identify, analyze, and compose poetry in the the verse form of free verse.

4. Articulate how choices in lineation, stanza form, diction, syntax, rhythm, meter, layout, tone, voice, and genre comprise "meaning-making" in a given poem.

5. Understand what a "poetics" is. Identify "poetics" in others' work. Articulate a personal poetics.

6. Articulate purposeful choices in the poems they compose, and articulate the intended effects of these choices on reader experience.

7. Use evidence from poems as concrete support for interpretations/readings of poems.

Required Texts/Readings

Books

1. ***The Practicing Poet: Writing Beyond the Basics*** Diane Lockward
Terrapin Books, 2018 **Paperback** ISBN: 1947896075 or **e-book**

2. ***Blackout Poetry Journal: Poetic Therapy*** Kathryn Maloney
Ein gluckliches Madchen, November 2017 **Paperback** ISBN-10: 1979775001

3. *The Daily Poet: Day-By-Day Prompts For Your Writing Practice*
Kelli Russell Agodon & Martha Solano   Two Sylvias Press, October 2013
Paperback ISBN-10 149270653   or **e-book**

Other Readings
Online Texts: Some you will access singly/independently, as directed, in and outside of class. Some will be in Canvas, at "Pages," or "Discussions," or "Files." Remember to routinely check both your class notes, and our course in Canvas for readings, other materials, and assignment information. Our class meets in person, and the whole of the course is not accessible simply by visiting Canvas. That said, we will do much work in and through that convenient platform.

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

A **large-screen digital device**: one whose screen is large enough for you *and others* to easily and comfortably: locate, view, edit, download, upload, develop, comment on, revise, exchange texts— i.e., not an iPhone SE (admirable as they are for other reasons); **and on which you can consistently access Canvas and the web in general**.

Something to write with, and something to write on— by hand. Aka: **pen and paper**.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Course requirements, reading materials, learning activities, and assignments all contribute to and are aligned with course learning outcomes (CLOs) 1–7 above. Each thing— researching poets and poems, accessing literary journals online, doing the daily writing, reading your peers' work, contributing to workshop, participating in all discussions and activities and projects, developing and revising your work, responding to poems— is as important as each other thing. That said, read below for some important information the University as a whole wants us to all be aware of, and to see how grades are determined, and how your work assessed, overall, in the course.

As required by the University, for your reference:
 University Syllabus Policy S16-9 at *http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf*

Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' *Syllabus Information web page* at *http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/*

And: "Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

Final Examination or Evaluation

The culminating activity for this course will be a Web-based Final Portfolio of your best work, to the highest possible standards of poetics and aesthetics. The portfolio will be due during our schedule final examination period, and the submission window for the portfolio will close absolutely at the end of our scheduled final examination period.

Grading Information

Determination of Grades

1. **Poems** are graded on craft, style, mechanics. The demands of each of these will vary by genre, form, and poem; standards will be clearly articulated, and poems we study will demonstrate excellence.

2. **Workshops & Analysis** are graded on your ability to understand and use critical vocabulary to produce and analyze poems; and to read, analyze, and evaluate published work from a writer's perspective.

3. **Development & Revision:** graded on evidence of flexible strategies for creating, revising, and editing poems in various forms and styles.

4. **Self-assessment & Reflection** on the processes of writing are graded on thoroughness, honesty, and the application of self-assessment strategies offered and practiced in class.

5. **Participation in a community of writers**, both in the classroom and beyond, is graded on activity, quality of contribution, community ethos, and literary citizenship. Important aspects of this community ethos are expressed below, at "Classroom Protocol." We will also work together to understand and work from this ethos, as well as to understand and aspire to what we value in a "literary citizen."

Overall Assessment—Weights for Your Course Grade
Poems, workshops, analysis, development, revision, self-assessment, reflections, participation in a community of writers— each will be part of the three categories below:

Informal Work	20%
All Other Assignments and Participatory Events	20%
Formal Work, Including the Final Portfolio	60%
	100%

Grade	Corresponding Percentage
A plus	96 to 100%
A	93 to 95%
A minus	90 to 92%
B plus	86 to 89 %
B	83 to 85%
B minus	80 to 82%
C plus	76 to 79%
C	73 to 75%
C minus	70 to 72%
D plus	66 to 69%
D	63 to 65%
D minus	60 to 62%

Note: This workshop course is not suited for, and does not offer, "extra" credit. Successfully performing all of the work of the course, with excellence, is the path to a grade that reflects excellence.

Note: Late work is not acceptable. If there is an occasion for an exception (which is unlikely), the late work will typically "cost" one full grade per day late.

Classroom Protocol

As a learning and creative community, we adhere to these principles of community:

1. Everyone participates. Everyone understands that domination of a discussion, workshop, or other activity is as poor (or poorer) a form of participation as a failure to contribute. Everyone actively supports opportunities for community members contribute equally, and actively allows space (including silence and wait time) for others to contribute. Everyone refrains from negatively commenting on any person's identity or being. Even the strongest disagreement on ideas, aesthetics, approach, or interpretation is not a disagreement with anyone's personhood. We are at the *very least* civil; we expect to bring our best selves, including generosity of attention and generosity of spirit. When in doubt, we assume the best about another person's actions or intentions.

2. We arrive early or on time, are ready to begin class when class begins, and remain for the full class period. If you must, for some emergency reason, arrive late (or leave early), do not disrupt the community when you arrive. Attend each class meeting in full. This course meets in person, and its pedagogy relies on you being in class to learn. When you miss class, you are making a choice to miss that learning opportunity. Should you have to miss class for an emergency reason, contact a classmate for notes, and consult Canvas. There is no such thing as "making up" a missed class. If you wish to contact me and let me know why you missed class, please do so — it can be good for me to know what's going on with you. That said, I will not be emailing you class notes, or an overview of class — that is something to get from your peers. Remember that of the 7 days in a week, and the 24 hours in a day, we meet just 2 of the days, for just over 1 of the hours. Be in class. While attendance itself is not allowed to be factored into your course grade, there will be activities and assignments that are only possible to complete in class. Simply put: Come to class.

3.
4. We will all silence and put away our cell phones during class meetings. If you have an emergent situation that requires you to be available by phone, come to class early enough to let me know in person, quietly let me know, and we will decide on the best way for you to track the important call.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 *(http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf)*, relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/"

ENGL 131-1 / Writing Poetry Silence, Space & the Line: Your Poetic Path

Fall 2019 Course Schedule

This schedule is a rough overview of the semester. It will be responsive to your interests and your needs as we engage various forms and projects, and thus is subject to development, and to change with fair notice. Notice will be made available in class, via an updated Syllabus, or in Canvas—primarily, in Canvas.

Course Schedule

Week	Week Begins	Major Focus and/or Anchoring Concepts or Projects Each Day: See Course Notes and Canvas for Specific Assignments
1	Wed 8/21	A Poetics: Your Starting Point
2	Mon 8/26	Sound Form Focus: What are the Forms of Verse?
3	Wed 9/4	Space Form Focus: Sonnets
4	Mon 9/9	Space Craft Focus: Meter **Poem Cluster 1 Due**
5	Mon 9/16	Space Form Focus: Blank Verse
6	Mon 9/23	Space Form Focus: Free Verse
7	Mon 9/30	The Line Form Focus: Villanelle
8	Mon 10/7	The Turn ("verse") Form Focus: Sound Poetry **Poem Cluster 2 Due**
9	Mon 10/14	The Turn Craft Focus: Book Arts
10	Mon 10/21	The Stanza (the "room") Form Focus: Stanzas as Formal Guide

Week	Week Begins	Major Focus and/or Anchoring Concepts or Projects Each Day: See Course Notes and Canvas for Specific Assignments
11	Mon 10/28	The Stanza Form and Craft Focus: Lineation & the Stanza in Free Verse
12	Mon 11/4	The Poem Craft Focus: Diction **Poem Cluster 3 Due**
13	Wed 11/13	The Poem Craft Focus: Performance
14	Mon 11/18	The World: Poetics Form & Craft Focus: Revising Your Formal Poems. Revision as Re-Seeing.
15	Mon 11/25	The World: Poetics Form & Craft Focus: Articulating Poetics
16	Mon 12/2	A Considered Poetics: Your Ending Point
17	Mon 12/9	Portfolio Building & Portfolio Workshops; Self-Reflections
Final Project		**Web-based Portfolio. Due at start of Final Examination period.** Assignment closes absolutely at end of Final Examination period.