

**Poetry and Fiction Workshop**  
**ENGLISH 206, 306, 406, 288, 388, 488**

10:00-11:15am TTh

PL213

Fall Semester, 2017

Instructor: Gayle Brandeis

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Office hours by appointment

This workshop will give us an opportunity to explore our passion for language and storytelling in a thorough, fun, and rigorous way. We will deepen this passion by reading poems and stories, discussing craft and form, reading and commenting on each other's creative work, and doing lots of in class writing. This class will help you refine and expand your writing voice and give you a broader sense of possibility for your creative work.

**Text:** No physical text necessary—all readings found online (I suggest printing them out so you can make notes on them for discussion in class, or at least take notes as you read that you can refer to during our conversation. If you don't print out the pieces, please copy and paste them into a file on your computer so you don't have to go online to access them in class.)

**General guidelines:**

--Come to class on time and prepared, and be sure to turn off all cell phones, iPods, etc. Laptops are okay for notes, accessing assigned reading, and doing in-class writing, but you may not go online.

--Type all assignments in 12pt Times New Roman (or a comparable standard font) in black ink, page numbers clearly marked.

—Email your workshop pieces to me at least 48 hours before your scheduled workshop and I'll post it on Moodle, or bring copies of the story the class session before your workshop time (we will set the schedule the first day of class). I will pass out a separate sheet of workshop guidelines to clarify the process. It is important to me to create a safe, supportive workshop environment, one in which everyone is honest but kind. My greatest hope is that all of you will leave workshop excited to make your work even better.

**Grading:**

—Two absences are acceptable (though not desirable); anything beyond that will affect your grade.

Your grading will be based, in equal measure, upon these things:

—Your original creative work

206 students will workshop and revise one short story

306 students will workshop two short stories and revise one

406 students will workshop and revise two stories and give a presentation on a fiction writer of their choice

288 students will workshop and revise one poem

388 students will workshop two poems and revise one

488 students will workshop and revise two poems and give a presentation on a poet and/or poetic form of their choice

All students will turn in a portfolio of workshopped work and revision(s), along with a short essay explaining the revision process and also what they learned over the semester, in addition to their favorite three in class ratings.

--Your participation in class (including discussions, workshop critiques and in-class writing exercises)

## **Class Schedule**

**T 8/22** Introduction to our time together--intentions, expectations, etc.

**Th 8/24** Discuss “The Fire Cycle” by Zachary Schomburg (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/56022/the-fire-cycle>) and related craft issues, write

**T 8/29** Discuss “California Fruit” by Meg Pokrass (<http://www.smokelong.com/california-fruit/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 8/31** Discuss “Home” by Warsan Shire (<https://genius.com/Warsan-shire-home-annotated>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**T 9/5** Discuss “Do You Have a Place for Me” by Roxane Gay <http://sporkpress.com/weeklies/prose/archives/00000083.html> and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 9/7** Discuss “Alternate Names for Black Boys” by Danez Smith (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/56843/alternate-names-for-black-boys>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**T 9/12** Discuss “How to Date a Brown Girl (Black Girl, White Girl, or Halfie) by Junot Diaz (<http://engl-boston-culture-course.wikispaces.umb.edu/file/view/Diaz,HowTo.pdf>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 9/14** Discuss excerpt from *Your Heart is a Muscle the Size of a Fist* by Sunil Yapa (<http://www.npr.org/books/titles/462695190/your-heart-is-a-muscle-the-size-of-a-fist#excerpt>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**F 9/15-S 9/16\*\*\*Novelist Sunil Yapa will be giving a reading on 9/15 and a workshop on 9/16—attend for extra credit and enrichment\*\*\***

**T 9/19** Discuss “The Rememberer” by Aimee Bender (<http://www.missourireview.com/archives/bbarticle/the-rememberer/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 9/21** Discuss "Dear Amy Nehzooukammyatootill" by Aimee Nezhukumathil (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/56129/dear-amy-nehzooukammyatootill>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**T 9/26** Discuss “What You Pawn I Will Redeem” by Sherman Alexie (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2003/04/21/what-you-pawn-i-will-redeem>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 9/28** Discuss “Jewish Food” by Joan Larkin (<https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/jewish-food>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**T 10/3** Discuss “Second Language” by Lidia Yuknavitch <https://www.guernicamag.com/second-language/> and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 10/5** Discuss “Three Poems by Patricia Smith” (<http://thenormalschool.com/three-poems-by-patricia-smith/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**T 10/10** Discuss “The Next World and the Next” by Alice Sola Kim <http://www.lennyletter.com/culture/a394/the-next-world-and-the-next/> and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 10/12** Discuss “Diminishing Silence” and “What We Don’t Heart” by Sholeh Wolpe (<http://www.connotationpress.com/featured-guest-editor/422-sholeh-wolpe-poetry>); workshop; write

**F 10/13-S 10/14\*\*\*Poet Sholeh Wolpe will be giving a reading on Friday and a workshop on Saturday—attend for extra credit and enrichment\*\*\***

**T 10/17** Discuss “13 Crimes Against Love, or, the Crow's Confession” by Alexander Chee (<http://lodestarquarterly.com/work/52/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 10/19** Discuss “Dear Phyllis Wheatley” and “Rewind/Play” by Fatimah Ashgar (<http://pin-wheeljournal.com/poets/fatimah-asghar/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**T 10/24 Out of Town**

**Th 10/26 Out of Town**

**T 10/31** Discuss “Black Box” by Jennifer Egan (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/06/04/black-box-2>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 11/2** Discuss “Abecedarian Requiring Further Examination of Anglikan Seraphym Subjugation of a Wild Indian Rezervation” by Natalie Diaz ( <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/56353/abecedarian-requiring-further-examination-of-anglikan-seraphym-subjugation-of-a-wild-indian-rezervation>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**T 11/7** Discuss “Blood Child” by Octavia Butler (<http://www.melissagish.com/Blood-child.pdf>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 11/9** Discuss “from The Sea Ranch” by Jared Stanley <http://www.pangyrus.com/poetry/from-the-sea-ranch/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**F 11/10-S 11/11 \*\*\*I’ll be reading with poet Jared Stanley 11/10 and teaching a workshop with him 11/11. Come join us for extra credit and enrichment!\*\*\***

**T 11/14** Discuss “Good Bones” by Maggie Smith (<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/good-bones>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 11/16 Out of Town**

**T 11/21 THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Th 11/23 THANKSGIVING BREAK (Happy Thanksgiving!)**

**T 11/28** Discuss Discuss “The Bath” by Raymond Carver (<http://courses.unt.edu/mpenkov/carver%20-%20the%20bath.pdf>) and “A Small, Good Thing” by Raymond Carver (<http://christchurchlr.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/A-Small-Good-Thing.pdf>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

**Th 11/30 Out of Town**

**T 12/5** In class readings/presentations **PORTFOLIOS DUE**

**Th 12/7 Out of Town**

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

**Sierra Nevada College Mission Statement:** Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.

**Core Themes:** Liberal Arts, Professional Preparedness, Entrepreneurial Thinking, Sustainability

**Learning Differences:** In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, [hconover@sierranevada.edu](mailto:hconover@sierranevada.edu).

**The Honor Code:** The faculty of SNC believes students must be held to high standards of integrity in all aspects of college life in order to promote the educational mission of the College and to encourage respect for the rights of others. Each student brings to the SNC community unique skills, talents, values and experiences which, when expressed within the community, contribute to the quality of the educational environment and the growth and development of the individual. Students share with members of the faculty, administration and staff the responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development, where actions are guided by mutual respect, integrity, responsibility and trust. The faculty and students alike must make diligent efforts to ensure high standards are upheld by their colleagues and peers as well as themselves. Therefore faculty and students accept responsibility for maintaining these standards at Sierra Nevada College and are obligated to comply with its regulations and procedures, which they are expected to read and understand.

**Consequences of Violating the Student Honor Code:** SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC

Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the Honor Code and the consequences of violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM and FABRICATION and for refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code become part of a student's academic record.

1st Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

2nd Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

3rd Offense: Student is expelled.

**The SNC Email System:** The SNC email system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students should check their college email accounts daily during the school year.

Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, @hotmail or @gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having email redirected does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC email account.