

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
ENGLISH 240: Graduate Poetry Workshop:
Narrative Poetry, The Conversation Poem, and “Ultra-Talk:
Spring 2015

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| Instructor: | Prof. Alan Soldofsky |
| Office Location: | FO 106 |
| Office hours: | M, T 2:30 – 4:00 pm; W 1:30 – 2:30pm , Th, pm by appointment |
| Telephone: | 408-924-4432 |
| Email: | alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu |
| Class Days/Time: | M 7:00 – 9:45 PM |
| Classroom: | Clark 111 (Incubator Classroom) |

Course Description

Our age lacks the structure of a story. – Carolyn Forché

Narrative arises with the recognition that we are all bearers of history – Alan Shapiro

In this MFA-level poetry workshop, we will explore varieties of narrative poetry and what Coleridge called “the conversation poem.” We will write and read poems that are based on narrative conventions, from realist traditional narrative to the fragmented discontinuous narratives associated with the Postmodern. Critics Brian McHale and Marjorie Perloff have argued that narrative has made a comeback in postmodernist poetry after its relative eclipse in modernist poetic writing. This come back is what poet Tony Hoagland refers to in “[Fear of Narrative and the Skittery Poem of Our Moment](#).” To stimulate your writing new poems in this course, we will sample narrative poems that we can read as models for our work from the Romantic era (Coleridge and Shelly) to the modern (A.E. Robinson, Robinson Jeffers, Robert Frost) to the postmodern (John Ashbery, Anne Carson, Mark Halliday, Matthea Harvey, David Kirby, Denis Johnson, Maggie Nelson, James Tate, Rachael Zucker, and others).

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Course Goals:

- Complete a portfolio consisting of a minimum of **eight** finished (revised) original poems at least **four** of which should be narrative poems, one of which is at least three pages long (could

be in segments, a sequence, or a serial poem). The narrative poems should exhibit the range of narrative modes and strategies that we are exploring during the semester.

- Explore varied modes and forms of narrative poetry—traditional and experimental—from the Romantics to the Postmodern era by reading a wide range of poets, close reading specimen poems, and writing new poems in a variety of narrative modes, forms, and styles.

- Narrative Modes to explore in our workshop: Traditional/Linear Narrative; Modular Narrative; Satiric Narrative; Anecdotal Narrative; Conversation Poems; Bifurcated Narrative; Multilevel Narrative; Self-Reflexive Narrative; Postmodern Hybrid Narrative; Interrupted Narrative; Ultra-Talk; Documentary Narrative; Postmodern Fragmented Narrative.

- To workshop early drafts student poems in small writing groups whose members post their poems on Canvas for peer comments throughout the semester.
- Workshop classmates’ poems on a weekly basis, finding ways to improve the work through critique and successive revisions.
- Read the craft and theoretical essays on narrative poetry provided via online handouts and hyperlinks during the semester.
- Give two multimedia in-class presentations, evaluating and analyzing texts of individual poems and/or songs (contained in the assigned reading lists on online playlists required or recommended for the workshop) through close readings; also share the texts and poets readings using the incubator classroom’s digital tools and the Canvas learning management system.

English Department Students Learning Goals

This course supports several of the English Department’s Student Learning Goals. The Department of English and Comparative Literature seeks to foster the intellectual development of its majors by encouraging study of literature and writing—whether creative, technical, or other professional writing. The Department strives to make its majors familiar with a wide range of works of British, American, and World literature, including folk and popular forms; and with the nature of the canon and of canon-formation, including issues of culture, history, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

Learning Objectives:

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

| Student Learning Objectives: | Skills/Knowledge Acquired: | Activities: |
|---|---|---|
| SLO 1: Students will demonstrate a high-level of ability to write and complete a publishable, full-length work of literature in a primary genre concentration (poetry). | 1. Students will learn to apply the craft of poetry writing in free verse and traditional meters and forms. 2. Students will learn the differences between a poem and a song lyric. 3. Student will learn to write songs collaboratively. | 1. Write at least 8 original poems, two of which will be written to be performed as songs or converted into song lyrics. 2. Write at least one original song in collaboration with another poet in the workshop. |

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| SLO 2: Students will demonstrate high-level of proficiency to write works of literature in a secondary genre concentration (poetry). | See above. | See above. |
| SLO 3: Students will demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge of literary history, literary theory, and craft and theory of creative writing. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize trends in contemporary creative writing (poetry). 2. Identify developments within poetry, and the development of individual authors and schools/styles of writing. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write blog entries each week commenting on, evaluating, and analyzing poems assigned to be read for the workshop. 2. Give two in-class presentations on individual poems and/or song lyrics selected from required anthologies and playlists or from works on the recommended reading list. |
| SLO 4: Students will demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the evaluation and interpretation of literary texts. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close read peers' poems and song lyrics. 2. Evaluate strengths (successes) and weaknesses (problems) in peers' poems and song lyrics as well as published poems and song lyrics. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshop peers' poems and song lyrics weekly. 2. Workshop published poems and song lyrics weekly. 3. Give two in-class presentations on poems and/or song lyrics selected from required anthologies and playlists or from works on the recommended reading list. |

Course Methods and Activities:

The Digital Workshop

Poet Charles Bernstein writes, “Poetry is like a swoon, with this difference, / it brings you to your senses.” A good poetry workshop also brings poets to their senses—in a multiple ways. The kinds of close readings of our peers’ work we practice in the workshop makes us more aware of the nuances of diction, rhythm, music, image, rhetoric, and tone from which poems are constructed. And it heightens one’s awareness of what works and what doesn’t work in the text of the piece, based on understanding what the poem or lyric is seeking to do. The goal is to find out what readers/listeners are—and are not—responding to. And to understand how the text of the poem or lyric is—or could be better—crafted.

The workshop will be divided into three small groups that will rotate presenting their poems and lyrics in-class on a weekly basis (see calendar).

Small Groups: Group members will post early drafts of their work for other group members' comments, using the workshop's Small Group Workshop discussion board on the Canvas LMS. Posting new work on the Small Group discussions will be on-going for Weeks 1 – 9 and Weeks 10 -16. *Poems posted in the Small Group Discussion may not always be workshopped in-class.* You are also free to abandon poems that you find aren't working, after you have had them critiqued in small group Discussion. Comment on as many of these drafts by your group members as you can. Remember you will want your group's feedback on your early drafts, too. Keep your comments constructive and not personal. Let the authors know strengths and weaknesses you find in their works. Encourage the authors to revise further, or to "recycle" the material into another poem if you don't think the poem is working.

In-Class Workshops:

When it's your small group's turn to be workshopped, post the poem or lyric you want to present on that upcoming week's Workshop discussion board on the Canvas LMS. You should post your poem early in the week—by Wednesday if possible—to give your classmates time to closely read and comment on your work. If you post more than one poem, the instructor will select which one will be workshopped. (If time permits, a class member may have two short poems or workshopped the same week.) When your work is workshopped listen to the discussion without interrupting or being defensive. You should allow yourself to be open to suggestions for your poem, even if you'll not act on them. Your purpose is to hear what you didn't know about your poem, and to consider possibilities for revision you hadn't thought of before the workshop critique. You will be given a few minutes at the end of the workshop segment on your poem to ask your questions.

Workshop Protocol:

When you comment on a poem either in class or on Canvas, remember you are discussing the poem on the page—the text—not the poet in the flesh. Your comments should not be personal. You should explain what you see as the poem's strengths as well as its weaknesses. Be as clear as possible. Let the poet know what works for you in the poem and doesn't work. Explain your response as succinctly as you can, don't go on and on. And always be respectful in your criticism. You'll want a respectful response when your work is posted for the discussion in the workshop.

Playlists:

Are hyperlinks to specimen poems, sampling poets and narrative forms the class is exploring each week. Most are texts. Some include audio and video. Some of these poems will be read and discussed briefly in class. All are chosen as representative examples of narrative poems by the poet (or poets) read for class that week. You are urged to spend time on your own reading these poems. They are chosen to be possible models for your own work and to inspire you.

Blogging About Playlists and Assigned Readings:

You are expected to write weekly blog posts, commenting on the individual poems listed in the weekly reading assignments and Playlists on Canvas (and course calendar). Also Blog on the assigned craft and theory essays. In blog post, respond to at least three of the poems assigned. Explain which are your favorites. Describe what was "jaw dropping" for you in this poem, and made you return to it again. Close read a few lines or brief passages. Besides documenting that you read the week's poems assigned, this blogging exercise is designed to give you practice in the art of close reading. As a poet you should get in the habit of reading and thinking about poetry

daily. Regular close reading practice will also develop your critical eye in the workshop. (Blog posts should be about 2 – 3 paragraphs per week—averaging about 250 words. You can use your Canvas ePortfolios to set up individual Blogs.

In-Class Presentations from the Reading Lists:

Each class member is required to make **two** in-class presentations, enhanced by digital tools available in the Incubator Classroom. It's suggested that the first presentation be completed before Week 9; the second presentation by Week 15. Class members will select one poet from the required or recommended reading list for each your presentations. Two students will be allowed to present on the same poet, so they should work together to ensure they don't duplicate each other. The presentation should include: a brief bio of the poet's life and professional career; a briefly annotated bibliography of the poet's work; a descriptive review of the poetry collection you read; close readings of at least two different poems from the collection—poems that are your favorites or which you think are the book's strongest. Also describe how specific poems in the collection work as narratives and apply a point made by one of the craft or theory essays we've read to how you responded to individual poems or the collection as a whole. Be sure to include video and audio files of readings and interviews with the poets (and/or scholars of the poet) in your presentation. Show edited clips if the videos or audio readings are too long. *The total length of presentations (two presenters) on a poet should be no longer than 25 - 30 minutes.*

The presentations will follow the weekly presentations listed on the course calendar. The instructor will work with each presenter to get the most from the digital tools we have available on Canvas and in the Incubator Classroom. Presenters can use Canvas, Blogger, YouTube, Power Point, and/or other digital.

To sign up, use the Canvas sign-up calendar. Sign up on as early as you possible, listing the poem(s) you will present.

Final Project: Brief Analytical/Craft Paper with a Narrative Poem:

Write a short analytical paper (750 – 1250 words) in which you closely read a poem (chosen from the assigned or recommended reading lists). Then write a poem that models itself—in some manner—on the narrative mode, tactics, and strategy, as well as tone of voice that's used in the poem you've analyzed. Your poem should clearly exhibit the same narrative mode, style, strategy, and tone as the model. (The poem can be included in your 8 poem final portfolio.)

Reading List:

You are required to read entire collections for poets you have chosen to present in class. We will have access to abridged views of all the required books via Google Books (or unabridged eBooks available at the MLK Library). However, you are urged to purchase as many of these collections as you can afford. You are required to read the entire text of the book-length poems on the reading list.

REQUIRED:

Anne Carson. *Autobiography of Red*

Maggie Nelson. *Jane: A Murder*

Alan Soldofsky. *In the Buddha Factory*

Rachel Zucker. *The Last Clear Narrative*

REQUIRED (IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS):

Kazim Ali, *Sky Ward*

Samuel Taylor Coleridge. *Poems*

Robert Frost. *Selected Poems*

Robinson Jeffers. *Selected Poems*

Mark Halliday, [*Threserphobe*](#)

Denis Johnson. *The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millennium General Assembly: Poems Collected and New*

Jane Miller. *Memory at Three Speeds*

James Tate. *The Eternal Ones of the Dream: New and Selected Poems*

C. K. Williams, *Selected Poems*

RECOMMENDED:

Kazim Ali, *Bright Felon: Autobiography and Cities*

Toi Derricotte. *Natural Birth*

Edward Hirsch. *Gabriel*

George Keithley. *The Donner Party*

W. S. Merwin. *The Folding Cliffs*

Alan Williamson. *A Pattern More Complicated*

eBooks (from SJSU King Library):

Kazim Ali, [*Bright Felon*](#)

Mark Halliday, [*Jab*](#)

Mark Halliday, [*Selfwolf*](#)

C. K. Williams, [*Collected Poems*](#)

ON-LINE RESOURCES:

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Course Homepage on Canvas URL | Update to date course information, syllabus, class activities, worksheets, reading/writing assigned, instructor and student blogs, presentation notes and slides, etc. https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1072558 |
| Academy of American Poets URL | Large resource with thousands of poems, essays, biographies, weekly features, and poems for special occasions. www.poets.org |
| The Poetry Foundation URL | Publisher of <i>Poetry</i> magazine, an independent literary organization committed to a vigorous presence for |

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| | poetry in American culture. A large website containing thousands of poems, biographical essays, teaching ideas, blogs, and archived issues of Poetry. http://www.poetryfoundation.org/ |
| Associated Writers and Writing Programs (AWP) URL | AWP provides community, opportunities, ideas, news, and advocacy for writers and teachers of writing. http://www.awpwriter.org |
| Poets & Writers Online URL | Information, support, and guidance for creative <i>writers</i> . Find <i>writing</i> contests, grants for <i>writers</i> , news, small presses, and much more. http://pw.org |
| New Pages URL | News, information and guides to independent bookstores, independent publishers, literary magazines, alternative periodicals, independent record labels, alternative newsmagazines and more. http://www.newpages.com |
| The New York Times blog “Measure for Measure” URL | How to write a song and other mysteries. Songwriters pull back the curtain on their creative process and on the pleasures and pains of being a musician. http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/category/measure-for-measure/ |

Due Dates:

Blogs on Assigned Reading and Playlist:

- Blogs posts due each week by the Monday, 6:00pm before class. Graded CR/NC.

Poetry Portfolio:

- Set 1: four poems – due March 16
- Set 2: revisions of first set of poems and four new poems (maximum) – due May 11. (Letter Grade)

In-class Presentations:

First presentation by March 16 (Letter Grade)

Second presentation by May 4 (Letter Grade)

Final Project:

- May 18

EXTRA CREDIT:

Reporting on Two Poetry Readings

Attend two poetry readings during the semester. Write a brief report or a thumbnail review of

each reading, citing a few specifics about the poems read and about the poet's presentation. The reports or reviews should be approximately 250 – 500 words. Submit your reviews at spring break or at the end of the semester.

- Submission dates: March 16 and May 11 on Canvas

Grading

- **60%**: Final poetry portfolio, including 8 finished poems (2 of which are at least three pages long) -- *Letter Grade*
- **10%**: Weekly blog posts on Assigned Readings and Playlists; and participation in workshop discussions (in class and online) -- *CR/NC*
- **20%**: Two in-class presentations – *Letter Grade*
- **10 %**: Short analytical/craft paper – *Letter Grade*

A Note on Grades: In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs (stanzas).

Grades given conform to the English Department and university grading policy. The Department of English is committed to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU *Catalog* (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance:

A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

A Note on Plagiarism: Any case of suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported to the office of Graduate Studies for further investigation.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Avoiding Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of somebody else's words or ideas and is considered an instance of academic dishonesty that instructors must report. Repeated instances of plagiarism will result in a student's expulsion from the University. You commit plagiarism by:

1. Buying, stealing, or borrowing a paper or creative work;
2. Hiring someone to write a paper or creative work;
3. Building on someone's ideas without providing a citation;
4. Or copying from another source or using a source too closely when paraphrasing.

In other words, submit only your own work. To learn how to cite sources accurately and forthrightly, consult your handbook.

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy is available at](#)

http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors. The instructor reserves the right to revise the requirements and to notify students of such revision in a timely manner, e.g., "subject to change, announced at least one class meeting in advance.

Campus policy in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

"If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability."

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html) . [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/) . Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

More University Policies (You Should Know)

Estimation of Per-Unit Student Workload: Success in all courses is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical, and practical. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Recording policies: Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that students obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for private, study purposes only. Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. Students may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this

course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.

Student Technology Resources: Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Calendar of Readings (In the South Bay Region)

Attend at least one reading. Write a 500 – 1,000 word impressionistic review describing and quoting lines few of the poems works and receive extra credit for your course participation grade.

SJSU Campus Readings Presented by the Center for Literary Arts (free admission)

- Feb. 4, 7pm: [Randall Mann and Michelle Richmond](#) reading, MLK Library 225/229.
- March 18, 7pm: [Kazim Ali](#) reading, MLK Library 225/229.
- April 8, 7pm: [David Perez](#) reading, MLK Library 225/229.

Readings at Other Accessible Nearby Bay Area Venues

Diesel Books— 5433 College Ave, Oakland

- February 22, 3:00 pm: [Jana Harris and Marilyn Chin](#)

BookShop Santa Cruz 1520 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz

- March 10, 7:30pm: Ellen Bass and Jericho Brown

SF Jazz Poetry Festival, SF Jazz Center, 201 Franklin St., San Francisco

- April 18, 7:30pm: [Alan Soldofsky and Juan Felipe Herrera](#)

Additional reading dates to be listed when scheduled

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Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Changes in the schedule will be posted on the workshop's online Canvas learning management site.

Poetry Writing activities and the required final course portfolio fulfill SLO 1 and SLO 2 (see Student Learning Objectives). Peer critiques exchanged orally during workshop and in writing on required Canvas peer reviews fulfill SLO 3 and SLO 4 (see Student Learning Objectives).

Course Schedule

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|------|---------|--|
| 1 | Jan. 26 | <p>Course and student introductions.</p> <p>SYLLABUS REVIEW: Online on Canvas.</p> <p>WRITING GROUPS: Set up in class.</p> <p>COURSE WRITING REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS.</p> <p>DISCUSSION: Tony Hoagland essay, "Fear of Narrative."</p> <p>PLAYLIST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Couples," Mark Halliday • "First Person Fabulous," Mathea Harvey • "The Rally," James Tate • James Tate reading (at Key West Literary Festival) • "Mont Blanc: Lines Written in the Vale of Chamouni," Percy Bysshe Shelley • Intro to Shelley on YouTube |
| 2 | Feb. 2 | <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: What constitutes a narrative? What makes a narrative poem a narrative poem?</p> <p>Small Group Workshops to Begin on Canvas:</p> <p>ASSIGNED READING TO DISCUSS:</p> <p>CRAFT ESSAYS:</p> <p>"One Arc Synoptic: Plot, Poetry, and Consciousness," Daniel Tobin, pp. 149 – 158.</p> <p>"In Praise of the Impure," Alan Shapiro, pp. 30 – 58.</p> <p>PLAYLIST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Mask of Anarchy," Percy Bysshe Shelley |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|------|--------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “West Running Brook,” Robert Frost • “By the Road to the Contagious Hospital,” William Carlos Williams • “Those Winter Sundays,” Robert Hayden • “Combat,” C. K. Williams |
| 3 | Feb. 9 | <p>POETRY WOKRSHOP: Group 1</p> <p>DISUCSSION TOPIC: Types and forms of narrative poetry since the Romantic period.</p> <p>ASSIGNED READING TO DISCUSS: CRAFT ESSAYS: “Robert Frost and the Modern Narrative,” Dana Gioia The Art of Robert Frost, Adam Plunkett, from <i>The New Republic</i> James Tate, Paris Review Interview (with Charles Simic) “More Truly and More Strange,” Alan Soldofsky</p> <p>READING LIST: (for presenters) Selected Poems, Robert Frost <i>The Eternal Ones of the Dream: New and Selected Poems,</i> James Tate</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Robert Frost poems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “An Old Man’s Winter Night” • “Out, Out,” • “Two Look at Two,” • “Home Burial,” <p>James Tate poems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Dear Reader” • It’s Not the Heat So Much as the Humidity” • “Never Again the Same” • “Restless Leg Syndrome” • “Long Term Memory” • “The Cowboy” • “A Sound Like Distant Thunder” <p>PRESENTATION: On Robert Frost’s traditional anecdotal narratives PRESENTATION: On James Tate’s satiric anecdotal narratives</p> |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|------|---------|--|
| 4 | Feb. 16 | <p>POETRY WORKSHOP: Group 2</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: The Conversation Poem</p> <p>ASSIGNED READINGS: “The Lyric Self: Artifice and Authenticity in Recent American Poetry,” by Alan Soldofsky “This Lime-tree Bower, My Prison,” by Steven Cramer</p> <p>READING LIST: <i>Poems</i>, Samuel Taylor Coleridge</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Conversation Poems by Samuel Taylor Coleridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Eolian Harp” • “Frost at Midnight” • “This Lime-tree Bower, My Prison,” • “Dejection: An Ode” <p>Modern Conversation Poems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In Autumn,” Jon Anderson. • “In Sepia,” Jon Anderson • “Biography in the First Person,” Stephen Dunn. • “Asking for Directions,” Linda Gregg • “Oso Buco,” Billy Collins <p>PRESENTATION: Coleridge’s Conversation Poems and the Modern Conversation Poem</p> |
| 5 | Feb. 23 | <p>POETRY WORKSHOP: Group 3</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Dramatic Narratives, Self-Reflexive Narratives</p> <p>ASSIGNED READINGS: CRAFT ESSAYS: “The Prophet as Confessionalist,” by Alan Soldofsky</p> <p>READING LIST: Selected Poems, Robinson Jeffers.</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Robinson Jeffers Poems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Mal Paso Bridge” • “Roan Stallion” • “Hungerfield” |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|------|---------|--|
| | | PRESENATATION: Robinson Jeffers: Dramatic Narratives, Self-Reflexive Narratives |
| 6 | March 2 | <p>POETRY WORKSHOP: Group 1</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Bifurcated Narratives</p> <p>ASSIGNED READINGS: CRAFT ESSAYS: “Bifurcated Narratives in the Poetry of Robinson Jeffers, C. K. Williams, and Denis Johnson,” by Alan Soldofsky</p> <p>READING LIST: Selected Poems, Robinson Jeffers.</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Robinson Jeffers Poems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Apologies for Bad Dreams” • “Tamar” • “The Purse Seine” </p> <p>PRESENATATION: Robinson Jeffers: Bifurcated Narratives</p> |
| 7 | March 9 | <p>POETRY WORKSHOP: Group 2</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Bifurcated Narratives, Multi-Level Narratives, and Self-Reflexive Narratives</p> <p>ASSIGNED READINGS: Contemporary Poetry as Philosophy: Subjective Agency in John Ashbery and C. K. Williams. “A Letter to a Workshop,” C. K. Williams</p> <p>READING LIST: Selected Poems, C. K. Williams Assorted C. K. Williams poems, Poetry International Rotterdam</p> <p>PLAYLIST: C. K. Williams Poems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Bob” • “Still Life” • “Tar” • “From My Window” </p> |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|------|----------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Gas Station” • “The Dog” • “The Gaffe” • “The Singing” • “Gas” <p>John Ashbery Poems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As We Know” • “The Handshake, the Cough, the Kiss” <p>PRESENTATION: C. K. Williams</p> |
| 8 | March 16 | <p>WORKSHOP: Group 3</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Postmodern Hybrid Narrative Forms</p> <p>READING LIST: Sky Ward, Kazim Ali</p> <p>ASSIGNED READINGS: Interview with Kazim Ali, <i>American Poetry Review</i>, Sept./Oct. 2013 Poetry is Dangerous: An Essay by Kazim Ali</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Poems by Kazim Ali</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Astronomer” • “Home” • “Fairy Tale” • “Lake House” • “Marble Hill” • “Bright Felon DVD Extra/Alternative Ending” • “Hymm” • “Dear J.” • “Beacon” (on You Tube from <i>Bright Felon</i>) |
| | March 23 | SPRING BREAK |
| 9 | March 30 | <p>POETRY WORKSHOP: Group 1</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Binary Narratives and Monologue</p> <p>READING LIST: <i>The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millennium General Assembly: Poems Collected and New</i>, Denis Johnson</p> |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|------|---------|---|
| | | <p>PLAYLIST: Denis Johnson Poems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Talking Richard Wilson Blues, by Richard Clay Wilson” • “The Confession of St. Jim-Ralph” • “The Boarding” • “Minutes” • “Passengers” • “The Flames” • “Now”; pp. 109 – 110. • “White Fires of Venus” • “Incognito Lounge” (scroll down); pp. 81 – 85 <p>PRESENTATION: Denis Johnson</p> |
| 10 | April 6 | <p>WORKSHOP: Group 2</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Interrupted or Stalled Narratives</p> <p>ASSIGNED READING: Interview with Jane Miller, from <i>Greenbelt Review</i> Review of Memory at Three Speeds from <i>The Boston Review</i> “Everything Only Connected with ‘And’ and ‘And’: The Skewed Narrative of Elizabeth Bishop,” Chase Twitchell</p> <p>READING LIST: <i>Memory at Three Speeds: New and Selected Poems</i>, Jane Miller</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Jane Miller Poems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Miami Heart” • “A Young Poet” • “The Poet” • “Sympathétique,” pp. 147 – 148 • “The General’s Briefing” • “Adoration” • “The Impossible” <p>Elizabeth Bishop poems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Moose” • “The Burglar of Babylon” • “Over 2,000 Illustrations and a Complete Concordance” <p>PRESENTATION: Jane Miller</p> |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
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| 11 | April 13 | <p>WORKSHOP: Group 3</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Ultra Talk</p> <p>ASSIGNED READING: “The Ultra Talk Poem & Mark Halliday,” David Graham,</p> <p>READING LIST: Threserphobe, Mark Halliday</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Mark Halliday Poems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Chicken Salad” • “Slightly Tearful” • “The Value of Education” • “Wheeling” • “Frankfort Laundromat” </p> <p>Daivd Kirby Poems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Slurring and Contradicting” • “Senior Coffee” </p> <p>PRESENTATION: Mark Halliday: How to Write an “Ultra Talk” Poem</p> |
| 12 | April 20 | <p>WORKSHOP: Group 1</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: The Serial Poem</p> <p>ASSINGED READING: Interview with Rachael Zucker, Martha Silano, American Poetry Review, Nov./Dec. 2014 “Anatomy of a Long Poem,” Rachael Zucker Interview with Rachel Zucker, in <i>The Believer</i>, June 2012 from From Cohen to Carson: The Poet’s Novel in Canada, pp. 19 – 21.</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Rachel Zucker poems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Poem” • “I’d Like a Little Flashlight” • “Hey Allen Ginsberg, Where Have You Gone and What Would You Think of My Drugs” • “The Dread of the Power of the Instincts” • “Everyone Who Goes There Says You Can't Imagine” • “Not Knowing Nijinsky Or Diaghilev & Other poems” • “Either All I Or None No Matter Is, Is” • “Here Happy Is No Part Of Love” </p> |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
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| | | PRESENTATION: Rachel Zucker |
| 13 | April 27 | <p>WORKSHOP: Group 2</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Poem As Nonfiction Narrative</p> <p>ASSIGNED READING: Maggie Nelson Interview, with H.L. Hix “The Hybrid Narrative,” Thomas Larson</p> <p>READING LIST: Jane, A Murder, Maggie Nelson “Narrative and Crime: The Documentary Imagination,” Raymond McDaniel</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Sections from Jane, A Murder</p> |
| 14 | May 3 | <p>WORKSHOP: Group 3</p> <p>DISCUSSION TOPIC: Poem as Novel</p> <p>ASSIGNED READING: from From Cohen to Carson: The Poet’s Novel in Canada, pp. 230 – 251 (some pages omitted) “Metaphor as Self-Discovery in Anne Carson’s Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse,” Sébastien Ducasse</p> <p>READING LIST: The Autobiography of Red, Anne Carson</p> <p>PLAYLIST: Selections from The Autobiography of Red</p> |
| 15 | May 11 | <p>LAST CLASS WORKSHOP: Longer narrative poems (not workshopped yet in class.)</p> <p>READING LIST: In the Buddha Factory, Alan Soldofsky</p> <p>Alan Soldofsky reading from <i>In the Buddha Factory</i></p> <p>POEMS FOR SECOND (FINAL) SET DUE (Submit via Canvas).</p> |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
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| Final Week | May 18 | FINAL MEETING AND CELEBATION; DETAILS TBA READINGS: PERFORMACE/READING: Student readings of new poems performed for a private audience |