

**English 436.01**  
**Creative Writing, Poetry: Short Forms**

**Instructor: Larissa Lai**  
**Email: [larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca](mailto:larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca)**  
**Class Time: MoWe 2:00pm - 3:15pm**  
**Classroom: SS1059**

**Course Description:**

This is a class in writing short form poetry. Over the course of the semester, you will learn twelve different forms. Some forms we might address (though we can't do them all): acrostic, ballad, blues poem, dub, calligram, canzone, chant, collaboration, concrete poem, eclogue, elegy, event poem, free verse, ghazal, limerick, list poem, lyric, nonsense verse, occasional poem, ode, pantoum, pastoral poem, performance poem, projective verse, prose poem, quatrain, rap, renga, sestina, sonnet, villanelle. You might invent a form of your own. You will write every week. Each week several of you will submit a small selection of poems for critique the following week, for critique by the professor and your peers. In addition, we will read and discuss the work of several contemporary poets.

**Application Requirements:**

To be considered for a place in this course, please submit the following items to [larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca](mailto:larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca) by Aug. 1, 2021:

- 1) a completed application form (on the final two pages of this document) (note that the questions on the second page are for fun-- they won't affect your chances but they will help me get to know you); and
- 2) a portfolio of 10-15 pages of your best writing (poetry preferred, but all forms permitted), in a 12-point font (unless there are poetic reasons for varying font size). In the portfolio, you are encouraged to select work to illustrate both the range and quality of your practice. When in doubt, select in favour of quality. Pieces may be of any length, as long as the total length of the portfolio falls within the guidelines.

**IMPORTANT:** Please put "English 436.01 Application Portfolio" in the subject line of the email. I receive a lot of email, and this is the only way I can be sure I'll be able to find your application when I'm looking for it.

**Enrolment Note:**

Since enrolment portal will be closed until I have a chance to through the portfolios, please enroll in a different course for the time being. The portal will be opened to students accepted into the class by the end of August at the latest.

**Course requirements:**

Over the term, students are required to submit between several batches of poetry (depending on class size). Batch length will be confirmed in the syllabus-- expect 7-15 pages per submission. (If we do a larger number of batches, the length expectation for each will be shorter. If we do a smaller number of batches, the length expectation for each will be longer.) In-class presentations on class readings will also be required. The final assignment will be a batch of poetry which may consist of revised poems from workshop and/or new poems or a combination of both, plus a short statement on practice/aesthetics (which I will teach you how to write).

I will expect a fair bit of reading, but by the same token, I am committed to make the volume manageable.

**Pedagogy:**

I am committed to a student-centred pedagogy and to a practice of making seemingly complicated ideas accessible. This course is designed primarily to facilitate the growth of your practice in the context of contemporary poetry. It is designed to strengthen both your skills and your sense of your place as a poet in the current poetry and poetics conversation. There will thus be lots of room made for your own critical and creative concerns as they relate to the existing concerns of our historical moment. This will not be a "bird" class, but neither will it be an impossible class. I am committed to the happy medium in which students learn a ton but don't die in the trenches. This course is intended for students who already have a poetry practice and are looking to learn, deepen, grow and improve.

You will be graded based on the quality of the work you've produced, the strength and grace of your critiques for others, participation and in-class presentations.

**APPLICATION AND PORTFOLIO DUE: Aug. 1, 2021**

**APPLICATION FORM: ENGLISH 436.01 (LAI):**

**CREATIVE WRITING: POETRY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ **(full)**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

List previous English courses that may relate, and Course instructor:

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List all previous Creative Writing courses (including non-credit), and instructor:

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Your reasons for wishing to enroll in this course:

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Name a few of your favourite poets or poetry collections:

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Favourite ice cream or sorbet flavour, and why (just for fun, but also so I can get to know you):

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