

ARHU 319: FORM AND THEORY OF POETRY WRITING

Fall 2021

Thursdays, 5:30 to 8:00 pm (in-person & masked[i]; when weather allows, we'll meet outside)

Queen Anne's Hall, The Jellema Collection/Library Room #1132

Instructor: Dr. Laura Lauth, Email: lelauth@gmail.com

TA: Ray Newby, Email: raynewby00@gmail.com

Office hours (virtual): encouraged & by appointment

Required Materials (provided by instructor):

There are no required materials to purchase for this class. For complete reading list see Course Website on ELMS/Files/ARHU319B/Resources/ARHU Reading List: Poetic Forms with Definitions & Examples Updated 9:29:21. Any materials not available electronically are housed in Production Lab on our ARHU 319 Reserves Bookshelf.

Update: Students nominated the following forms for this semester: ekphrastic poem, list poem, letter poem, and stanzaic poem. All poets/poems listed under those four forms represent the required reading for this semester. Laura has also assigned or reviewed a number of other poems from the Reading List to illustrate concepts of craft, and those have been highlighted as well.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation (verbal and written): 30%

JPWH Social & Literary Events: 10% (WHN Series will resume this spring)

Student Conference: 10%

Written assignments/drafts: 30% (~6% each)

Final Manuscript: 20%

Course Policies: for an extensive explanation of all course policies, please visit www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html

Excused Absences & Late Assignments: The University excuses absences for certain reasons (illness, representing the University at certain events, religious observance, and the death of an immediate family member), provided notice is given and the cause of absence is appropriately documented. **Students have the responsibility to inform the instructor of any planned absences in advance via e-mail.** If you will not be able to attend class due to illness or other emergency, please notify Laura by e-mail as soon as possible. **It is the student's sole responsibility to request and collect notes, handouts and assignments missed in class. Late assignments will only be accepted at the discretion of the instructor.**

Assignments:

→ **Poems must be posted to ELMS by Tuesday at 11:59 pm prior to the Thursday workshop** (when they will be discussed).

→ Students **must read and critique peer poems assigned prior to workshop, bringing a physical copy of their feedback to class**. We will discuss protocols for critiquing peer work. You can find the weekly roster of who will be workshopped on which days in the files section.

→ Students **must keep copies of my comments for each poem submitted to workshop. You will be expected to consult instructor comments when revising for the final manuscript and will be asked to include/attach those comments when submitting the final manuscript.**

Conferences:

→ Student Zoom Conferences will be scheduled during late October and early November. They will take place outside of class time and are approximately 25 minutes each. After consulting instructor and peer feedback, students will revise one poem (either first or second form assigned) and “bring” to the conference; be prepared to screen share a scan of the original with my comments on it and the revised draft. We’ll talk about your vision for the poem, the choices you’ve made in revision, and any questions you have about revising for the portfolio/final manuscript. You’re also welcome to bring any questions you have about the forms and craft concepts we’ve covered thus far. If I can’t get to all of your questions in the time allotted, we can always set up another meeting.

Special Accommodations: Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS) facilitates reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals, including COVID-19-related accommodations. If you have a registered disability that will require accommodation, please contact me immediately so that we can arrange a time to meet. If you have a disability that requires accommodation and have not yet registered it with ADS (Accessibility and Disability Service) in Shoemaker Building 0106 (301.314.7682 or 301.405.7683 TTY/TDD), you should do so as soon as possible. After receiving an Accommodations Letter from ADS, you are expected to meet with each course instructor, in person, to provide them with a copy of the Accommodations Letter and to obtain their signature on the Acknowledgement of Student Request form. We will then discuss a plan for how the accommodations will be implemented throughout the semester for the course. More information is available from the [Counseling Center](#) or by e-mailing ADS at adsfrontdesk@umd.edu.

Annotated Syllabus **Like all things in life, it's subject to change**

We are living through something like a revolution in poetic practice. Our workshop will give you the chance to read some of this exciting new work and innovate alongside contemporary poets who are experimenting with formal “constraint as [a] catalyst and subject,” who are asking themselves "what it

means...to make or break a vow...to reckon with the body's bounds,"[\[ii\]](#) as well as the cultural constraints governing identity and freedom. Students will begin the semester by exploring an extensive reading list of contemporary poets working in a variety of forms and will then nominate four (4) forms and two to three (2-3) model poems for each form. The list includes links for easy digital access; when a poem is available only in print, you will find it on a reserve shelf in the production lab. Those forms and poems receiving the most nominations will become our reading (and practice) for the semester. This approach is an experiment with the constraints of curriculum itself and guarantees that students have a hand in shaping their own workshop. The philosophy behind this model is simple: we learn most from what we love.

Week I: Sept 2

Introductions

Go over syllabus, curriculum model, required reading, course web page, course expectations and policies.

Take tour of ELMS Course page & Production Lab "library" for this class

Students may use remaining class time to begin reading through the forms and model poems

Assignments

Read through the list of forms and example poems; [nominate](#) 4 forms and 2 to 3 example poems for each form **prior to midnight on Tuesday, September 7.**

Week II: Sept 9

Review student selections and updated syllabus.

Laura will introduce the first form (ekphrasis), and we'll read at least one example poem together.

In-class writing exercise to get folks started on the first form (as time allows).

Assignments

Read assigned example poems for the first form and [submit your first poem](#) in the assigned form **prior to midnight on Tuesday, September 14.**

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop (see guidelines for providing feedback).

Week III: Sept 16

Workshop the five (5) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week IV: Sept 23

Workshop the five (5) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week V: Sept 30

Workshop the three (3) assigned peer poems.

Introduce second form (list poem).

Writing exercise as time allows.

Assignments

Read assigned example poems for the second form and [submit your second poem](#) in the assigned form **prior to midnight on Tuesday, October 5th.**

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week VI: Oct 7

Workshop the five (5) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week VII: Oct 14

Workshop the five (5) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week VIII: Oct 21

Workshop the three (3) assigned peer poems.

Introduce third form (letter poem).

Writing exercise as time allows.

Assignments

Read assigned example poems for the third form and [submit your third poem](#) in the assigned form **prior to midnight on Tuesday, October 26th.**

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week IX: Oct 28

Workshop the five (5) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week X: Nov 4

Workshop the five (5) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Week XI: Nov 11

Workshop the three (3) assigned peer poems.

Introduce fourth form (stanzaic poem).

Writing exercise as time allows.

Assignments

Read assigned example poems for the fourth form and [submit your fourth poem](#) in the assigned form **prior to midnight on Tuesday, November 16th.**

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Begin revision for final project.

Week XII: Nov 18

Workshop the six or seven (6-7) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Read the assigned peer poems, [critique](#), and bring feedback to workshop.

Revise for final project.

Week XIII: Nov 25

(No class—Thanksgiving Recess)

Week XIV: Dec 2

Workshop the six or seven (6-7) assigned peer poems.

Assignments

Revise for final project.

Week XV: Dec 9

Final MS project due: 3 poems rigorously revised

Class Party & Reading! Come prepared to read one or two poems from your revised manuscript.

JPWH Social & Literary Events:

Please make a note of these required events and dates:

Tuesday August 31, 5-7pm, Welcome Back, Queen Anne's Courtyard (brick courtyard, near Preinkert Dr.)

Sat. Sept 18, 2-9pm, Retreat, Start at 2pm at Queen Anne's Courtyard.

Wednesday, October 6, 6-8pm TBD (probably an Open Mic, outdoors).

Wednesday November 3, 6-8pm TBD.

Endnotes

[i] According to the University's COVID-19 compliance guidelines, any student with an approved COVID-19 vaccination exemption must wear a mask at all times while indoors and outdoors when around others. These students must also be tested twice each week for COVID-19 and must sign the University Health Center's Memorandum to Unvaccinated Individuals. Additionally, current County and University guidelines require all individuals to wear a mask indoors. Any student not abiding by these expectations may be in violation of the *Code of Student Conduct*, Part 10(e)(3): Failure to comply with a directive of University officials.

[ii] See the abstract/book blurb for Dora Malech's newest collection of poems, *Stet*, here: <https://www.doramalech.net/stet.html> (Links to an external site.), which is worth reading in its entirety: "In *Stet*, poet Dora Malech takes constraint as her catalyst and subject, exploring what it means to make or break a vow, to create art out of a life in flux, to reckon with the body's bounds, and to arrive at a place where one might bear and care for another life. Tapping the inventive possibilities of constrained forms, particularly the revealing limitations of the anagram, *Stet* is a work of serious play that brings home the connections and intimacies of language."