

Department of English  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**ENGE4200 – Advanced Creative Writing Workshop: Poetry**  
Date and Venue TBC

Professor and Workshop Leader: Prof. Collier NOGUES  
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Office hours: Mondays 11AM-1PM and by appointment

TA and Workshop Leader: Ms. Pareys LAU  
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Office Hours: TBC

Prerequisite(s): At least one of the following: ENGE3260 Creative Writing; ENGE3290 Reading and Writing Short Stories; ENGE3360 Special Topics in Creative Writing; OR ENGE3370 Writing Hong Kong.

**Description:**

This course is the Creative Writing Stream's advanced writing workshop elective. In this course, you will hone your skills in poetry writing by receiving sustained, detailed feedback from a workshop leader and your peers in a focused, intimate setting. Our small class size will allow us to study and practice the techniques of creative writing with a rigor and intensity impossible in a larger lecture course. You will practice drafting and revision strategies; learn to give and receive constructive feedback; and produce a substantial, revised, and well-polished portfolio of your poetry. You will also learn professionalization skills including preparing your work both for publication and for further study in the field of creative writing. Our main texts will be each other's writing, but we will also read and discuss craft essays and published creative works, and become familiar with the several main models of creative writing workshops, their histories, and the communities with which they are associated. You do not need to feel "advanced" in your writing to take this writing-intensive course, but you must have taken at least one course in the Department's Creative Writing Stream, and you must submit a writing sample for pre-approval by the instructor.

**Learning outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Identify and describe the major models of creative writing workshops and their historical contexts and associated literary communities.
- Identify, describe, and more confidently use the artistic and rhetorical devices that constitute the building blocks of effective poetry.
- Explain the major stages of drafting, and articulate your own individual writing and revision process.
- Read and discuss others' poetry with greater precision and insight.
- Assess and sharpen your own poetry in response to written and oral critique.
- Produce a carefully revised, polished portfolio of poems accompanied by a critical reflection situating your portfolio in the context of contemporary poetry.

**Learning activities:**

The learning activities in this course will take several forms. Our core activity will be workshopping each other's poems, which is to say, reading and responding to each other's works. We will supplement workshop with discussions of craft essays and historical accounts of writing workshops and communities, and sessions in which we write together in response to generative prompts.

**Key concepts:**

Topics	Contents/fundamental concepts
The history of creative writing workshops	The relationship between writers and their larger communities The politics of writing and representation Differing values in creative writing and community
Workshop organization and etiquette	Giving and receiving clear and compassionate feedback Becoming a sharper reader of your own work
The craft of writing poetry	The drafting process, including generating ideas, beginning a draft, revising, asking for and receiving the feedback you need, and polishing your work Advanced craft techniques concerning style, tone, language, and audience

**The following workload schedule per week may help you allocate your time this term:**

Interactive Lecture/Tutorial (as one 3hr block)	Reading	Writing, including creative works, critical reflections, and workshop responses
In class	Out of class	Out of class
3 hrs	3 hrs	4 hrs
M	M	M

All elements, both in and out of class, are mandatory.

**Assessment Scheme**

Task nature	Description	Weight
<b>In-class Writing and Participation</b>	Because this course involves building a community of writers together, attendance and active participation are required. Sometimes we will write and share new work in class. Writers are expected to engage actively and curiously in all exercises, workshops, and class discussions.	20%
<b>Personal History of Creative Practice I and II</b>	Early in the term, as we explore the history of workshopping creative writing as a practice, I'll ask you to consider your own personal history of creative practice. What have you made, wanted to make, failed to make? Who has supported you, challenged you, made things more difficult, stood in your way? For whom have you made what you made? Who has silenced you? Who inspires you? (I myself owe thanks to	20%

	<p>the poet and professor Divya Victor for inspiring this assignment.) These are some of the questions you may address. The goal is to help you build a foundation of understanding of your own purpose in writing and your sense of yourself in the world as a writer and creator. Toward the end of the course, I will ask you to revise and revamp this document, adding and adjusting as you see fit after the experience of the course, with a view toward your future as a writer. Due in Week 3 and Week 13.</p>	
<b>Workshop Submissions</b>	<p>Each week, several members of the class will submit poems to be workshopped. You'll submit your poem several days in advance so that everyone has a chance to read your work and think about it. I'll ask you to frame your work with the questions that are most important to you for us to answer. Over the course of the term, you will submit between 3-5 poems. Your Workshop Submissions grade will reflect the quality and thoughtfulness of your framing, primarily, but also the promptness with which you submit your drafts to be workshopped.</p>	20%
<b>Workshop Responses</b>	<p>Several times over the course of the semester, I will ask you to write or otherwise create responses to peer writing. Your Workshop Responses grade will reflect the attentiveness, clarity, and care you bring to the task of responding to your peers.</p>	20%
<b>Final Portfolio</b>	<p>The final assessment will take the form of a portfolio of your poetry. The length is flexible; between 5-7 poems is about right but depending on the poems, you may include fewer or more. Ideally, these will be poems you feel are ready for publication. You may include works that you have written and/or discussed in class, or other works that you think have benefited from what you've learned over the term. The accompanying critical reflection should include your thoughts on why you've chosen to include them, particularly in the context of your revised Personal History of Creative Practice. Due in Reading Week after our final class meeting.</p>	20%

**Course Schedule (subject to change):**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assessment/ Activities</b>
Week 1		<b>Introduction.</b> What is Workshop? Course policies and syllabus; introduction to course structure and approach; the stages of drafting; getting comfortable writing in community	In class: introduction email; generative writing together
----- Week 2		<b>Literary Communities and Workshop Models; Writing with Intention.</b> History and context of the creative writing workshop; considering audience and	Reading due: Chavez, Muller, Bennet, Nguyen (excerpts)

		goals in our writing	
----- Week 3		<b>Workshop Practice.</b> Workshop procedure and tone; how to give and receive constructive feedback gracefully; strategies for getting the feedback you need	Writing due: Personal History of Creative Practice I
----- Week 4		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 5		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 6		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 7		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 8		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 9		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 10		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 11		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 12		<b>Workshop</b>	Workshop submissions & Responses
----- Week 13		<b>Professionalization Workshop.</b> How to find suitable publication venues and communicate with editors; how to format work submitted for publication; how to prepare the Final Portfolio and critical reflection	Writing due: Personal History of Creative Practice II

### **eLearning/Course Announcements:**

We will be using Blackboard Learn as the eLearning platform in this course. Blackboard Learn will be used for a) dissemination of course materials such as readings, discussion questions, assignment prompts, and rubrics, b) supplementary class discussion, and c) d) course announcements.

You can access Blackboard Learn at: <https://elearn.cuhk.edu.hk/>

A demonstration of how to access Blackboard Learn to post and respond to announcements, download resources, and use the discussion forums will be given in the first lecture.

### **Feedback for evaluation**

In any community of writers, constructive feedback is key, and in this class it is very welcome. Students may raise questions or offer comments during workshop sessions, as well as via email or during individual office hours. Midway through the term, there will also be an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback via a Google survey.

At the end of the course, students will be asked to complete Course Evaluations for both the lectures and tutorials for the course. Both I and the department value this information highly, as it allows us to understand what we are doing well and how we can improve. We use your feedback to revise our teaching methods and course content.

### **Academic honesty and plagiarism**

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

#### Statement:

I declare that the assignment here submitted is original except for source material explicitly acknowledged. I also acknowledge that I am aware of University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, as contained in the website

<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student ID

### **Grade descriptors**

#### Course Grade Descriptors:

Grade A / Excellent: Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes.

Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a

manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study. The 'A' grade should be reserved for truly excellent work that exceeds the level expected for the majority of students and are expected to be achieved only by a small minority.

Grade A- / Very Good: Generally outstanding performance on ALMOST ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.

Grade B+ / Good (Plus): HIGH performance on all learning outcomes, OR HIGH performance on some learning outcomes which compensates WELL for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply WELL the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level WELL.

Grade B / Good: SUBSTANTIAL performance on all learning outcomes, OR SUBSTANTIAL performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a MORE COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.

Grade B- / Good (Minus): GOOD performance on all learning outcomes, OR GOOD performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.

Grade C+ / Adequate (Plus): VERY ADEQUATE performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a SOMEWHAT SUSTAINED manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.

Grade C / Adequate: ADEQUATE performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.

Grade C- / Adequate (Minus): SOMEWHAT ADEQUATE performance on A NUMBER OF learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to SOMEWHAT apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the BARE basic requirement at this level.

Grade D+ / Pass (Plus): BARELY SATISFACTORY performance on A FEW learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.

Grade D / Pass: ALMOST BARELY SATISFACTORY performance on VERY FEW learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in very few areas while responding very minimally with possibly tangential content in others.

Grade F / Failure: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. Fails to address the task and likely does not understand what the task requires. In other words, the work completely misses the point.