

**Professor Ronaldo V. Wilson**

**Lit 179C-01 (70821)**

**Methods and Materials:**

Experiments in Play: Poetry and Performance

Summer 2020

1-4:30 PM M,T,W,TH,F

June 22-July3

### **Course Description**

Charles Bernstein, in his seminal work, *A Poetics*, argues that, “Poetry is an aversion of conformity in the pursuit of new forms....ways of putting things together, or stripping them apart.” And Eileen Myles, in her essay, “The Lesbian Poet” writes that, “....you aestheticize, when you get to an edge. In the poem, you’re turning around. The flickering lights of the fading line re-erupting one quarter inch down, unpredictable, rude.” And Claudia Rankine, in an interview in *Jubilat*, says that “form, when it is really working, is open, responsive and flexible.”

This Methods and Materials Course is a summer intensive course that asks students to *experiment* and *play* in some radical ways to create and encounter poetry through a distinct set of performance practices: improvisation and spoken word, movement, sound, and visual practices as a way to encounter, create, and animate our writing.

Along with studying poets that move between received and innovative forms, lyric, spoken-word, improvised, and otherwise performed, our goal will be threefold: (1) to learn from established and emerging poets, writers and artists about their practices; and how to (2) create our own works and enhance own practices after study and discussion; and (3), to share new, original work with classmates in a collaborative studio/workshop space to enhance our study, work, and play.

In this sense, I hope to facilitate a context in which we will meet as *artists, readers and thinkers*, engaged with one another—and the material of this course—in *the practice* of writing and performing our writing, as we will learn from our reading and writing this summer. By working (and playing) in poetry—across multiple forms, and multiple works—my hope is that you render meaningful writing that surprises your readers, yes, but perhaps mostly, surprises you.

Please be prepared to participate in open/active ways to include, at times, the traditional workshop mode (of only distributing works with one another for discussion and critique), but also individual and collaborative performance work to include in and out of class writings which may include movement exercises, sound and visual work, and other interdisciplinary methods.

### **Materials**

Available as Files on Canvas:

I will include work from Sade Murphy, Cecilia Vicuña, Angel Dominguez, CA Conrad, Wayne Koestenbaum, Jennifer Tamayo, Bhanu Kapil, Duriel E Harris, Douglas Kearney, Justin Chin, Jill Magi, Wanda Coleman, Timothy Yu, Terrance Hayes, Erica Dawson, and Renee Gladman who each work in multiple modes in writing and performance to varying degrees.

Devices and Terrain:

In addition to sharing our work, we will be using recording devices via smart phones, cameras, possibly garage band, iMovie, and/or equivalent, to enhance our creative practices, so please be ready to use other means to capture the work as needed. Other machines include the usual in a writing workshop course: pencils, pens, marker; and other surfaces-screens, as we will be working remotely, in Zoom. We will also be working in our shared Zoom space, chat, and breakout groups to construct performances and writing, as well as working outside on given days to expand our play in inventive ways.

### **Procedure**

To stimulate our writing, students will be asked to read, view, and engage with assigned readings and screenings of material each class session, and to create new, original work, as well as to share this work in class. While these drafts will be created and shared, “live,” other more evolved versions will be shared in various intervals throughout the term for feedback and discussion in a more formal critique/workshop setting. Please see the syllabus for this schedule as it alternates on particular dates throughout the session.

Please note, too, that this course is being taught synchronously, which means I am conducting each class live during the allotted time, as we will be engaged in discussion of course material, several in-class writing and performance activities, as well as frequent workshopping of one another’s works throughout the 2 weeks. In case, I will record meetings and make them available on the cloud, for your review, but attendance and participation is critical for this course as you will each be discussing your works with the entire class, and sometimes in small groups

### **Requirements:**

*Attendance:* Because this is a summer intensive class, of only two weeks, which demands completing assignments in class, working with peers, and utilizing peer feedback, attendance is essential and mandatory for this class. More than two missed class meetings will seriously jeopardize your grade. Three or more missed classes will result in course failure. If in the case of a severe emergency, and you must miss class, please let me know ahead of time, or no later than the day of your absence. *Of course, I remain open to accommodation, etc., especially given that this course is being taught remotely.*

*Participation:* It is mandatory that students bring in the required texts for this course, as well as to read and bring any scheduled material to session. The reading for this course is a central part of this course. Since this is a program in a BA Literature program, our goal here is to become as

fine readers of our discipline and craft as we are developing writers! Hence, it is essential that students read actively, participate in discussion, complete and share in-class writing exercises, and present *new work* from this course, to the entire class throughout the semester.

*Writing and Assignments:* You will be producing five new works over the course of the term, all 1-2 pages in length, in forms that speak to the writers we engage with. On our workshop/studio critique days, you should be prepared to share this work. Normally, I will ask you to share the work to a Google Folder, so that each student has access to your file. Each person is responsible for giving written feedback on each person's work, and we will also learn how to give constructive, and insightful comment on work in class, which I discuss below. I will give you written comments by the next day, and/or at the end of weeks 1 and 2, at the latest. You will also produce a Final manuscript of 5-7 pages due date, a week or so after we are finished. Right now, I am thinking July 10, but I must double check to see when this special session's grades are due.

*Note on making comments to one another on writing and performance:* Again, erring on the side of asking questions in your comments is usually a good start. Please remember, *your* primary role as a reader/viewer is not to *edit or fix* the work, but to *ask and discover* what is happening within what you are encountering. Hence, your constructive suggestions might come out of what you see as the work's explorations, manifest, or possible. Commenting on work is often the most difficult aspect of our conversations, so let's try to be open and in wonder with one another!

*Note on Writing Process:* Because this is a writing workshop, and an advanced one in performance, and play, it is required that you dedicate much of the time for this class during these two weeks for writing, reading, and re-writing. You might also keep a journal, a record of your reading and drafts in progress.

*Assignment Format:* Poetry and other writings for workshops should occupy no more than two to three pages. One to two pages should share what you think of as the "finished" or "current" draft of the poem. The second page should pose one central question that you think you are exploring about performance, perhaps a brief paragraph (two to three sentences) in which you attempting to address this question, even if this isn't totally clear or obvious to you. It may speak to any aspect of performance that you glean from writing and/or discussion.

*Workload Note:* According to Systemwide Senate Regulation 760, one academic credit corresponds to three hours of work per week for students during a 10-week quarter. This means that the expected workload for this 5 Credit Course such is at least 15 hours per week.

*Note on Housekeeping:* The workshop space is a living, rare space that must be treated with care. To receive it, it asks for your utmost discipline. Leaving and entering the room can be disruptive to the space, and the workshop's integrity as a whole, so please be mindful and attentive of this. We will take breaks, and work in breakout rooms, so please be mindful of eating, something that can be distracting in class, and equally so, virtually. Beverages are

fine. In our virtual studio/workshop, one should be fully present in mind and body for the entire session. Of course, there are exceptions in the case of emergencies! I also prefer that your cameras remain on, as Zoom is often limited, already, in giving us all a sense of what one another is thinking or feeling, so this is one way. Chat can also be instructive in this regard.

Above all, during all studio/workshops, and in class, students are expected to be courteous, respectful, and helpful in their commentary and critiques, and to keep in mind that a creative writing workshop/studio is a learning community. Please, remember, in a learning community, each of us are responsible to one another to maintain a healthy, positive, and productive class atmosphere!

### **Evaluation**

Attendance, Participation (40%) Assignments (30%) Final Project (30%)

### **Accessibility Accommodation**

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please get an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and submit it to me in person outside of class (e.g. during office hours) within the first week of the quarter. You may get in touch with staff at the DRC at <[drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu)>, <drc.ucsc.edu>, or <https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/9542521577> (Links to an external site.) for more information about the requirements and/or process for qualifying for classroom accommodation.

### **DRC Remote Accommodations:**

The Disability Resources Center reduces barriers to inclusion and full participation for students with disabilities by providing support to individually determine reasonable academic accommodations. Operations continue via remote appointments. If you have questions or concerns about exam accommodations or any other disability-related matter, email the DRC Schedulers at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu) for an appointment.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. Academic dishonesty diminishes the university as an institution and all members of the university community. It tarnishes the value of a UCSC degree. All members of the UCSC community have an explicit responsibility to foster an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. All members of the university community are expected to present as their original work only that which is truly their own. All members of the community are expected to report observed instances of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty in order to ensure that the integrity of scholarship is valued and preserved at UCSC.

In the event a student is found in violation of the UCSC Academic Integrity policy, he or she may face both academic sanctions imposed by the instructor of record and disciplinary sanctions imposed either by the provost of his or her college or the Academic Tribunal convened to hear the case. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript.

For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Integrity page](#)[Links to an external site.](#) at the Division of Undergraduate Education.

### **Title IX:**

The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors.

The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct. [Information about the Title IX Office](#)[Links to an external site.](#), the [online reporting link](#) [\(Links to an external site.\)](#), applicable campus resources, reporting responsibilities, the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) [\(Links to an external site.\)](#), and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at [titleix.ucsc.edu](#)[Links to an external site.](#). The Title IX Office is actively responding to reports and requests for consultation. If you are not currently working with someone in the office and want to make a report/request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using our [online reporting link](#). [\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

For more information please visit the [Title IX Operations under Covid-19](#)[Links to an external site.](#) page.

### **Important Summer Session Remote 2020 Deadlines:**

Session 1:

Drop: Monday, June 29

Request for "W": Friday, July 10

Summer is unique. **You will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment.** You must drop yourself. Dropping before the deadline results in a full-tuition reversal/refund. Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund).

For all dates and deadlines, including 'change of grade option' (P/NP) and grades due, here is the summer academic calendar: <https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html>[Links to an external site.](#)

For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email [summer@ucsc.edu](mailto:summer@ucsc.edu).

## **Tentative Schedule**

### *Session 1 June 22*

Voice, Form and Performance: Justin Chin, Wanda Coleman, Wayne Koestenbaum

In Class Live Writing/Performance Prompt 1

Share/Discussion Exercises

### *Session 2 June 23*

Discussion of Chin, Coleman, and Koestenbaum continued.

Workshop/Studio Critique Day (Prompt 1 Drafts)

Studio/Discussion

### *Session 3 June 24*

Embodied Writing: Bhanu Kapil, CA Conrad, Erica Dawson, Renee Gladman

In Class Live Writing/Performance Prompt 2

Share/Discussion Exercises

### *Session 4 June 25*

Discussion of Kapil, Conrad, Dawson, and Gladman continued.

Workshop/Studio Critique Day (Prompt 2 Drafts)

### *Session 5 June 26*

Moving In and Moving Outside: Angel Dominguez, Cecilia Vicuña, Douglas Kearney

In Class Live Writing/Performance Prompt 3

Share/Discussion Exercises

### *Session 6 June 29*

Discussion of Dominguez, Vicuña, and Kearney continued.

Workshop/Studio Critique Day (Prompt 3 Drafts)

*Session 7 June 30*

Archives of Form and Sense: Jill Maji, Terrance Hayes, Timothy Yu, Sade Murphy  
In Class Live Writing Prompt 4

Share/Discussion Exercises

*Session 8 July 1*

Discussion of Maji, Hayes, Murphy, and Yu continued.

Workshop/Studio Critique Day (Prompt 4 Drafts)

*Session 9 July 2*

Playing Sound and the Stage: Duriel E. Harris, Jennifer Tamayo  
In Class Live Writing Prompt 5

Share/Discussion Exercises

*Session 10 July 3*

Discussion of Harris, and Tamayo continued.

Workshop/Studio Critique Day (Prompt 5 Drafts)

Final due on July 10, (Possibly, have to confirm) a final version of your writings, 5-7 pages, and/or alternative, to also include a reflection that explores your discoveries, and describes what's next?