

Com 446: Performance of Women's Literature

Instructor:

Office:

Office Hours:

Office Phone:

Email:

This course is about communication, performance, literature, and gender. Its goal is to enhance our understanding of women's lives and experiences through the critical analysis and performance of literature written by women. More specifically, we will study three authors who write in the genres of poetry, prose, and drama. We will allow the themes, language, characters, conflicts, contexts, and *performances* of their work to enhance our knowledge of women's lives and the complex intersection of gender and communication.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The following objectives will be met through a process of lecture, performance, reading, discussion, and critical analysis.

- To define, explore, appreciate, and understand the communicative value of performing literature.
- To present valuable aesthetic and intellectual messages to an audience by working as an individual and within dyads and groups.
- To apply specific theories in the sociocultural criticism of literature written by women.
- To play, to laugh, to listen, to risk, to learn.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Books:

Lorde, Audre. *The Collected Poems of Audre Lorde*. New York: Norton, 1997. Print.

Kingsolver, Barbara. *Homeland and Other Stories*. New York: Harper & Row, 1989. Print.

Ruhl, Sarah. *Dear Elizabeth: A Play in Letters from Elizabeth Bishop to Robert Lowell and Back Again*. New York: Faber and Faber, Inc., 2014. Print.

Additional readings will be posted on the My/ASU Blackboard website or given out in class. Author names are listed in the course schedule.

A two-pocket folder that will be used to accumulate your written and oral performance comments and grades. **Important:** Keep all submitted and returned materials in this folder, and bring it to class every time we meet. Do not use this folder for class notes or assignment handouts.

USEFUL SOURCES:

Your classroom, The Empty Space, is the creative workshop space for The Hugh Downs School of Human Communication. It is available to faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students who are interested in presenting performance scholarship to the public. See me if you are interested in getting involved in performance projects at The Empty Space this semester. You are required to see at least one of your outside events at The Empty Space.

You will find more information about performances at The Empty Space by visiting our website: <http://humancommunication.clas.asu.edu/content/current-performances>

Check Blackboard for additional outside performance opportunities.

GRADING: POLICIES AND POINTS

Your grade in this course is dependent upon your level of commitment to reading, responsible in-class participation, effective analysis and writing and performance choices. Creative work challenges you as well as the class, offers insight into your growth as a thinker and a learner, and confirms your goals as an effective aesthetic communicator. Responsible work shows me that you are a capable and well-meaning college student. Written work should reflect ethical research and elevated levels of thinking. Your interactions with your classmates, and me should be mature and useful.

For clarity on how I grade please review the following:

A+: A remarkable grade! Perfect work. Very difficult to earn (but not impossible).

A & A-: “A” work is superior work. I expect polished and unflawed performance technique, powerful written analysis offering exceptional ideas in connection to course material, fully prepared participation in the classroom experience.

B+, B, B-: “B” work is good work. I expect obvious effort and confidence in performance, clever and insightful papers, and participation above the norm.

C+ & C: “C” work is average. I expect completion of performance assignments with an attempt to meet requirements, written work that reflects some thought, minimal participation in class discussion.

D: “D” work is poor. Performance at this level is not prepared or presented adequately, writing is narrow or does not use perspectives taken from the course material, and participation or attendance is poor.

E: “E” work is failing. Performance is not done, written work is not turned in for evaluation, and I don’t see your face in my class for extended periods of time.

Points:

Attendance:	50 points
Participation:	50 points
-see p. 4 for ways to earn/lose participation points	
Quizzes (4@ 25 points each)	100 points
2 Outside Event critiques (25 ea.)	50 points
Performance of poetry	100 points
Performance of prose	100 points
Performance of drama	100 points

Total points = 550

A+=539-550 A=506-538 A-=495-505 B+=484-504 B=446-483 B-=440-445
C+=429-439 C=385-428 D=330-384 E=329-below

I will not discuss grades during class time. You are welcome to visit or call me during office hours to talk about your grade. I reserve the right to ask for your grade concerns in writing and to raise or lower a grade only after a discussion.

PERFORMANCES:

You will be asked to prepare three performances this semester. In addition to your performance, you will write an essay using the criteria explained in the assignment handout. This handout will include instructions on performance conceptualization; guidelines for the written analysis, time limitations, presentation format, due dates, etc.. You have the choice of submitting a group paper or individual papers if you are working with a partner on a performance.

First Performance(100 points):

You will work with a partner to perform selected poems from *The Collected Poems of Audre Lorde*.

Second Performance (100 points):

You will perform a short story from *Homeland and Other Stories* by Barbara Kingsolver. You may work alone, in a dyad, or a group of three.

Third Performance (100 points):

You will script a performance using original text developed in class and *Dear Elizabeth: A Play in Letters from Elizabeth Bishop to Robert Lowell and Back Again* by Sarah Ruhl. You must work alone on this performance.

Do **not** miss class on the day of an assigned performance. You are responsible for trading dates with someone if you have a conflict. I will give you a zero on the assignment if I do not have knowledge of your absence ahead of time. Only students with **documented** and **absolutely unavoidable** reasons for missing a performance will be given an opportunity to make up the performance at a reduced grade.

READING:

You are expected to read the assigned literature and academic articles posted on Blackboard and given to you in class. Most of the classroom discussion will center on this assigned reading and the quizzes will require your understanding of this material. You may also need to do outside reading to prepare your essays for the performance assignments.

Quizzes:

You have four quizzes in this class. For each quiz, I will provide a brief review to help guide your studies.

WRITTEN WORK:

Papers are due on the day of your performance and must be submitted in your class folder. Papers turned in after the class period will be considered late and will receive an initial 10% deduction. For each additional day that your paper is late (including weekend days), I will deduct 5%. I will not accept late papers beyond one week. All papers must be typed, double-spaced, utilize Times New Roman 12 pt font and provide proper citation of all sources (including the reading packet articles and literature). You may use *either* MLA or APA. **Important:** I will not accept an emailed paper unless I have ok'd that with you in advance. Therefore, your paper will be considered late.

Outside Performance Critique (25 points). You are required to attend two outside performance events and write a 3-4 page (typed/double spaced) description and critical evaluation of each performance. At least one of the events must be at The Empty Space. Your critique will evaluate the text using course readings, concepts, and lecture. Further details for this assignment will be posted on Blackboard. Critiques must be turned in on the due date posted in the syllabus. Attach your ticket or program to your essay. Check the course Blackboard site for approved outside performance events. I strongly recommend that you do not procrastinate on this assignment!

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:

I believe attendance and participation are very important! You are allowed one absence without any point penalty. After that, you will lose 5 points each for your second and third absence. You will receive a 10 point deduction for each additional absence beyond your third absence. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have put your name on the attendance sheet each class period. So, if you are late to class, be sure that you do so at the end of class. An absence is an absence. I do not differentiate between illness, car trouble, out of town obligations, jury duty, family emergencies, etc.. The only absence that will not be counted is one that involves a university sanctioned event. I require documentation of these types of absences.

Participation points are given for the following: following the syllabus correctly, speaking up during class discussion, having a positive attitude, putting effort into class exercises, showing proper audience etiquette, demonstrating knowledge of the assigned reading, keeping all graded work in your folder, not being late to class, etc...

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:

Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** *Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.*

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Important: The content of this course may contain adult language, sexual situations, violence, or some material that may be considered offensive by some individuals. You should review the course syllabus readings to determine if you are comfortable with this material. Your continued enrollment in the course indicates to me that you have done so.

A Scholarship Opportunity in Performance Studies!!

The Kristin Bervig Valentine Endowed Scholarship in Performance Studies is awarded annually to an undergraduate student who has successfully completed at least one performance studies class and has shown significant interest in additional performance research, creative activity, or community service. Apply for this scholarship at <http://humancommunication.clas.asu.edu/undergraduate/scholarships>