Course Title: They Are All of Me: Writing Poems on Family  
Course Code: Poet 27 W  
Instructor: Esther Lin

Course Summary:

For our ten weeks together, we will work on discovering, coaxing, and developing our individual voices as writers. Since we will focus on writing about family and ancestry, learning what conveys me and my own is particularly vital. Writers write alone, but benefit from a community of people of similar goals and different backgrounds. You will write five poems, which we will workshop together as a class. We will also closely read each others’ drafts and write about them. Perhaps most importantly, we will learn from other poets who have successfully written from within difficult families, complicated dramas. In total, we will learn to be practitioners of reading as a writer, and writing alone—among a community.

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.

Grade Options and Requirements:
- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  - Students must participate in at least 70% of weekly discussions and/or Zoom sessions.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  - Students must participate in at least 70% of weekly discussions and/or Zoom sessions, and complete written work—five poems and descriptive commentary on each others’ drafts (to be discussed further in class).

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Tentative Zoom Schedule:

We will meet on Zoom for one hour a week at a pre-determined time, depending on everyone’s schedules. Ideally this will be a fixed time that will not vary week to week.
Tentative Weekly Outline:
*Listed Reading assignments will be supplemented by poems that can be found online. Links will be provided. Students will also be expected to read each other’s work and provide feedback in written posts and Zoom meetings. Lectures will take the form of written posts, and video or audio recordings.*

Week 1: Introduction; Workshop expectations and letters
Reading: Selections from Oliver’s *A Poetry Handbook*; selection of individual poems
Writing poem 1

Week 2: Who gets to talk? The family as a unit; Imagery
Reading: Selection from Oliver, selection of individual poems
Writing descriptive workshop comments

Week 3: Complicated parents, complicated ancestors; Imagery
Reading: Selection from Trethewey’s *Native Guard*
Writing poem 2

Week 4: Where’s my inheritance?; The line and line break
Reading: Selection from Oliver; selection from Trethewey
Writing workshop

Week 5: Who’s right? Big sisters, little brothers; Sound
Reading: Selection from Oliver; selection from Howe’s *What the Living Do*
Writing poem 3

Week 6: Death in the family; Sound continued
Reading: Selection from Oliver; selection from Howe and individual poems
Writing workshop

Week 7: Now we are grown
Reading: Selection from Oliver; selection from Li-Young Lee’s *Rose* and individual poems
Writing poem 4

Week 8: Lovers and marriage
Reading: Selection from Oliver; selection from Lee and individual poems
Writing workshop

Week 9: For better or worse; Revision
Reading: Selection from Oliver; Selection from Olds’s *Stag’s Leap.*
Writing poem 5
Week 10: And then there was one: Divorce and final thoughts; Revision continued
Reading: Selection from Olds.
Writing workshop