

# POETICS OF SUSTAINABILITY

## ENVIRONMENT & RACE

### Field Trips & Volunteer Activities

Volunteer day at Aluma Farm in Southwest Atlanta: Friday June 28 (time TBA); students will volunteer at a successful urban farm on the BeltLine's Westside Trail at the nexus of the West End, Adair Park, and Capitol View neighborhoods.

Visit to The Center for Civil and Human Rights: Monday July 8 in conjunction with students' work on Artifact 2.

### Course Texts

*alphabet* by Inger Christensen (trans. Susanna Need)—PDF on Canvas

*Citizen: An American Lyric* by Claudia Rankine

*Song for His Disappeared Love* by Raúl Zurita (trans. Daniel Borzutzky)

### Course Description

Utilizing our WOVEN curriculum, this course will explore the intersections of race and the environment as urgent social, political, and ecological issues through the lens of poetry. By reading across a global lineage of poets, including writers and artists from Chile, Denmark, and the United States, students will learn about the historical and contemporary intersections of race and environmental issues in order to create multimodal artifacts that engage with what we will refer to as a “poetics of sustainability.” One of the course’s primary questions will be: How do these writers and artists allow us to articulate a more equitable future for communities facing challenges related to racial injustice, inequity, environmental crises, and environmental racism? What does environmental injustice look like here in Atlanta? Where and how do issues of race and the environment overlap as we consider rhetorical strategies for articulating our questions, ideas, and solutions related to identity, nationality, nature, and culture?



## Artifact 1

**Experimental Indexes:** In groups, students will create experimental indexes for Inger Christensen's *alphabet* that track the sequence's references to science, metaphysics, time, the human, and the nonhuman.

## Artifact 2

**Poetics of Civil and Human Rights:** In groups and in conjunction with a field trip to The Center for Civil and Human Rights, students will produce websites that present a multimodal digital exhibit related to the poetry of Claudia Rankine and Raúl Zurita.

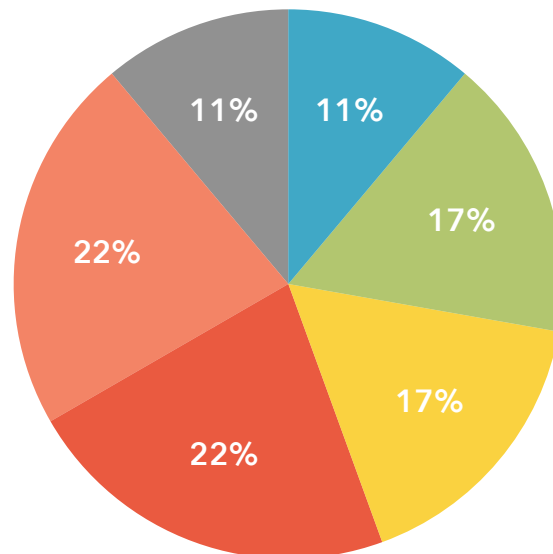
## Artifact 3

**Research Project:** For this group research project, students will utilize the digitized Ivan Allen Mayoral Records to create websites that explore how issues of race and the environment have historically intersected in Atlanta's Westside neighborhoods. Note: This artifact will possibly be in conjunction with a guided field trip to the Proctor Creek/Gun Club Park area in Northwest Atlanta directly northwest of Georgia Tech's campus.

# Assignments

Students will complete three primary artifacts, a final reflective portfolio, and participate in a set of linked events both for the iGniTe program and for this course. Assignments will include individual work and group collaboration, pairing our in-class discussion of critical and creative texts with our real-world participation in conversations about development, equity, and sustainability.

- Artifact 1: 100 points
- Artifact 2: 150 points
- Artifact 3: 150 points
- Reflective Portfolio: 200 points
- Participation: 200 points
- Questionnaires: 100 points



Along with the reflective portfolio, which functions as the final exam for this course, students' participation grade is a significant portion of the total grade. The participation grade includes students' attendance at all SLS-sponsored iGniTe events, the end-of-semester student showcase, and guest lectures and field trips associated with this specific course, including volunteering for Alumna Farm and a visit to The Center for Civil and Human Rights. A series of assignments associated with these events and volunteer responsibilities, as well as with required course readings, will be graded based on attention to instructions and timely completion.

## COURSE SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE OR UPDATE AT ANY TIME

Week 1	IN-CLASS	WHAT TO DO
Wednesday, June 19	Introduction to course; Watch "Plastic Bag" in class	Acquire required texts ASAP
Thursday, June 20	Discuss course vocabularies	Read poem packet
Week 2		
Monday, June 24	Discussion and collaborative exercises for <i>alphabet</i> ; Artifact 1 groups assigned	Read <i>alphabet</i> by Inger Christensen; <b>DUE:</b> Questionnaire #1
Tuesday, June 25	Continue discussion of <i>alphabet</i>	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 1 process
Wednesday, June 26	Continue discussion of <i>alphabet</i> in relation to articles; Artifact 1 work cont.	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 1 process
Thursday, June 27	Discuss articles; Introduction to local sustainable farming practices in Atlanta; In-class work on Artifact 1	Read "How the Netherlands Feeds the World" by Viviano (link), "Can Dirt Save the Earth?" by Velasquez-Manoff (link)
Friday, June 28	<b>Volunteer day at Aluma Farm</b>	<b>DUE:</b> Artifact 1; Meet at farm TBA
Week 3		
Monday, July 1	Artifact 1 reflection; Discuss Zurita and relationship to disaster; Artifact 2 groups assigned	Read <i>Song For His Disappeared Love</i> by Raul Zurita; <b>DUE:</b> Questionnaire #2
Tuesday, July 2	Continue discussion of Zurita	Read <i>Citizen: An American Lyric</i> by Claudia Rankine; <b>DUE:</b> Questionnaire #3
<b>Extra Credit Event; register <a href="#">here</a></b>	"Connecting Civil & Human Rights" by Prof. Carol Anderson	@ The Center for Civil & Human Rights 6:30-8:30pm, free
Wednesday, July 3	Discuss Rankine and Zurita	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 2 process
Thursday, July 4	Independence Day Holiday	NO CLASS
Week 4		
Monday, July 8	<b>NO CLASS: Visit to The Center for Civil &amp; Human Rights</b>	Open 10am-5pm (last entry at 4pm but plan to spend ~2 hours at the museum)

Tuesday, July 9	Discuss visit to CCHR; In-class work on Artifact 2	<b>DUE:</b> Questionnaire #4
Wednesday, July 10	In-class work on Artifact 2	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 2 process
Thursday, July 11	Peer review and in-class group work on Artifact 2	<b>DUE:</b> Artifact 2 <i>FRIDAY</i> July 12
Week 5		
Monday, July 15	Artifact 2 reflection; Introduction to Artifact 3	Read assigned exhibits from Ivan Allen Mayoral Records digital archive
Tuesday, July 16	In-class work on Artifact 3	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 3 process
Wednesday, July 17	In-class work on Artifact 3	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 3 process
Thursday, July 18	Peer review and in-class group work on Artifact 3	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 3 process
Friday, July 19	<b>TBA: Possible field trip to Proctor Creek/Gun Club Park</b>	
Week 6		
Monday, July 22	In-class work on Artifact 3	Collaborate w/group on Artifact 3 process
Tuesday, July 23	Discuss Reflective Portfolio	<b>DUE:</b> Artifact 3
Wednesday, July 24	Final Instructional Day; Continue discussion of reflective portfolio	Complete initial formatting of Canvas portfolio & prepare draft of reflective essay thesis
Thursday, July 25	Reading Period; iGniTe Closing Showcase 10am-noon	NO CLASS
Week 7		
Wednesday, July 31		<b>DUE:</b> Final Reflective Portfolio by 8am

## Serve-Learn-Sustain

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This course is part of Georgia Tech's Serve-Learn-Sustain (SLS) initiative, uniting classroom learning with community action. SLS works with all six colleges to offer courses and programs connecting sustainability and community engagement with real-world partners and projects, allowing students to use their disciplinary expertise related to science and technology to help "create sustainable communities" where humans and nature flourish, now and in the future, in Georgia, the U.S., and around the globe. More information about SLS can be found at [www.serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu](http://www.serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu). Visit the website to sign up for the [SLS Email List](#), view the full list of [affiliated courses](#), and find links to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

### SLS Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify relationships among ecological, social, and economic systems
- Students will be able to demonstrate skills needed to work effectively in different types of communities.
- Students will be able to evaluate how decisions impact the sustainability of communities.
- Students will be able to describe how they can use their discipline to make communities more sustainable.

## Objectives

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The Writing and Communication Program has common goals that apply to every course we teach:

- The goal of classes in the Writing and Communication Program is for students to develop competence in all communication modalities (written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal) and to understand how effective communication balances multiple modalities thoughtfully and synergistically.
- The goal in every project should help students develop deep understanding of the genre on which the project focuses and the rhetorical processes involved in creating examples of that genre.
- The goal for every student should be to create purposeful, audience-directed artifacts that present well-supported arguments using appropriate conventions of written, oral, visual, and/or nonverbal communication, regardless of the mode and medium.

In addition to these common objectives, students will:

- Develop individual processes of multimodal communication
- Develop and hone both critical thinking skills and an aesthetic awareness of critical issues
- Learn to approach all texts (visual, written, digital, etc.) through a critical lens

### Required Technology

- Laptop and Internet access

### Required Costs

- MARTA (\$2.50 regular fare) or ride-share costs for volunteer days and field trips
- Regular printing costs for assignments (if applicable)

### Approach to the Course

As a hybrid workshop-seminar that pairs daily reading and media interaction with weekly reflection and analysis, your attentive presence and active participation in class discussions is necessary to your success and, when it comes to collaborative work, your peers' success as well.

## Policies

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The Writing & Communication Program has standard policies for English 1102 which you should familiarize yourself with [here](#). These include:

- Georgia Tech General Education Outcomes for English 1101 and English 1102
- Learning Outcomes for English 1101 and English 1102
- Evaluation Equivalencies
- Evaluation Rubric
- Course Completion
- Attendance
- Required Textbook
- Dean of Students and Counseling Center
- Safety
- Participation in Class
- Non-Discrimination
- Communication Center
- Accommodations (Office of Disability Services)
- Academic Misconduct
- Syllabus Modifications
- Final Instructional Class Days and Reading Periods
- Multimodal Reflection Portfolio and Canvas

You are required to acknowledge that you have read, understood, and intend to comply with these policies. In addition to these policies, I have my own policies for this course in particular, including:

### **Late Assignments**

I am willing to grant extensions requested by email no less than twenty-four hours prior to an artifact's due date. Except for exceptional situations, granted extensions will not exceed an additional day in which to complete the artifact. Questionnaires turned in less than 12 hours late will be accepted for 50% credit. Questionnaires turned in more than 12 hours late will not be accepted.

### **Missing and Missed Assignments**

Except for absences officially exempted by the Institute or exceptional and unanticipated situations, I do not allow students to make up missed quizzes, presentations, or in-class assignments. Missing work is counted as a "zero."

### **Revision of Assignments**

Revision will constitute a significant part of our class, and play a role in each major assignment. In some cases, I may request that students engage in additional revision, beyond the requirements of the peer review process, in which case you will be notified and instructed accordingly.

### **Attendance**

In addition to the WCP Common Policies statement on attendance, please note the follow policy specific to this course: Each absence after missing three (3) classes will result in deduction of 25 points (equivalent to 5% or half a letter grade) from your final point total. Missing 6 classes results in automatic failure of the course.



**Workload**

Students should expect an average of 100 pages of reading or 6 hours of viewing/listening time (or some combination of the two) outside of class. Reading/viewing/listening loads will be significantly lighter in weeks when major assignments are the primary concern.

**Mature Themes**

Quite often, course materials and class discussions will deal with issues of sexuality, race, and violence. In such cases I expect students to be respectful and to approach both the material, your classmates, and me with the utmost maturity. If students are at any point uncomfortable with these issues, I encourage you to come speak with me as soon as possible.

**Conferences and Office Hours**

I will regularly hold office hours every week at the time and place listed at the top of this syllabus. Appointments can be scheduled via email in advance, and walk-in appointments are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you need to meet with me outside of my regular office hours, this will be accommodated to the best of my ability. Occasionally, I will require students to meet with me in my office individually and in groups—sign-up sheets will be distributed in advance. I encourage students to visit my office hours as frequently as you like: whether it be to discuss course materials, project ideas, revision, or just to talk about the course.

**Title IX at Georgia Tech**

The Title IX Coordinator is the designated Institute official with primary responsibility for coordinating the compliance with Title IX. This includes providing leadership for Title IX activities; providing consultation, education and training; and helping to ensure the Institute responds appropriately, effectively and equitably to Title IX issues. Contact information for the Title IX Coordinator, Marcia Bull Staderker, and Deputy Coordinators is [here](#).

**About Me**

I am a Marion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow in the Writing & Communication Program at Georgia Tech. I received my Ph.D. in Creative Writing from Florida State University in 2015, having written a dissertation titled “Another Mona Bone Jakon,” which will be published as my second book of poetry. Previously, I received a B.A. in History from the University of Akron, and an M.F.A. in Poetry from the Northeast Ohio Master of Fine Arts Program. My research interests include 20<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary American poetry and poetics, film, popular music, ekphrastic aesthetics, and pedagogy and the arts. I am particularly interested in the poets Ted Berrigan and Alice Notley, often associated with the “Second Generation” New York School poets, on whom I have published extensively, in addition to essays and reviews for a number of academic books, journals, and websites on topics as wide-ranging as Deerhunter, Amiri Baraka, broken umbrellas, and the history of Ponce de Leon Avenue.

## Participation Grade

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### How much is the participation grade and how it is evaluated?

The participation grade for this course is worth a total of 200 points, or about a quarter of your final grade. Participation is neither optional nor a kind of extra credit—along with the final portfolio it is the most significant portion of your total grade. In-class participation includes daily contribution to class discussion, productive collaboration with peers, timely completion of all assignments (including assigned readings and accompanying questionnaires), and attention to instructions on those assignments. Out-of-class participation includes all SLS special events and the events specific to this course (see list below under the third question). Participation is both tangible and ephemeral. When you turn in an assignment or concretely display your completion of a reading assignment, your participation is evaluated through the assessment of that tangible deliverable. When you speak in class, show up on time to volunteer service events and field trips, participate fully in those events and trips, and show yourself to be a willing and productive collaborator, you are earning participation points. Your presence alone in class **does not** mean you earn participation points. Participation will not be evaluated strictly numerically, but it might be helpful to consider the numbers: including all class sessions and out-of-class events, we will meet about 25 times this semester, which means that each meeting—your contributions that day, turning in assignments, being prompt and engaged—amounts to about 8 points per meeting.

### What does participation mean in this course? Why is it required?

This ENGL 1102 course, part of the iGniTe summer program, is linked with a specific set of additional summer courses through Georgia Tech's Serve-Learn-Sustain initiative. This summer's programmatic focus is on "Equitable and Sustainable Development." This unique affiliation and coordinated educational focus emphasizes that service and learning are deeply linked. For this ENGL course, that means that your participation in the classroom—in discussion, completion of readings and assignments, collaborative and individual work—and your participation outside the classroom—volunteering for Atlanta nonprofits, going on field trips, engaging with members of local communities—are evaluated together. Rather than only regularly speaking in class, participation in this course means *engagement*. It is each student's responsibility to commit to this engagement to be successful in this class.

### What events and field trips count toward my participation grade?

All SLS special events and all volunteer service events and field trips specific to this course count toward your participation grade. The service events and field trips for this course are highlighted in yellow on the course schedule and listed here:

- **Friday June 29:** Volunteer day at Aluma Farm (1150 Allene Ave SW)
- **Monday July 8:** Visit The Center for Civil and Human Rights (turn in ticket with associated assignment)
- **Friday July 19:** TBA guided field trip to Proctor Creek/Gun Club Park area
- If a student cannot attend an event due to extreme circumstances, make-up opportunities are available.