**POETRY & SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Community-Based Learning

with Writers in Baltimore Schools,

The Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University,

And the JHU Center for Social Concern

January – May 2016

In this course, we will explore poetry as a tool to build communities, express personal truths, bear witness, advocate for change, and engage in social and political commentary.

As a participant, you will have the opportunity to develop your poetry and professional writing, as well as your analytical and communication skills through reading closely, discussing literature and social justice, writing your own poems, and conducting interviews with local poets and activists. Two student readings will take place during the semester.

Poetry & Social Justice is a college-level course comprised of 15 JHU undergraduate students and 15 WBS students and will meet both on the JHU campus and at other Baltimore locations.

This course will be facilitated by JP Allen, JHU Writing Seminars graduate student; Jaida Griffin, WBS Teaching Fellow; Dora Malech, JHU Writing Seminars professor; Shangrila Willy, WBS board member and JHU Writing Program graduate.

**SCHEDULE:**

Saturday, January 30:

Orientation

Monday, February 1:

*Who, What, Where, Why, When*: Introductions

*I Come From:* Origins

Monday, February 8:

Visiting Editors, Writers, Activists: The BreakBeat Poets –

Quraysh Ali Lansana, Tony Medina, Safia Elhillo

[BreakBeat Poets’ performance: Arellano Theater, Levering Hall,

JHU Homewood campus]

Monday, February 15:

*Weaving Our WE*: Collective/Communal Speech

Monday, February 22:

*“You, Robert McNamara”*: Calling Out, Calling In

[First Reading: Date/Time/Location TBD]

Monday, February 29:

*All that we see or seem*: Expectations of Self/Others

Monday, March 7:

Visiting Writer, Editor, Activist: Christopher Soto (aka Loma)

NOTE: No class, Monday, March 14 (JHU Spring Break)

Monday, March 21:

Visiting Writers, Musicians, Editors, Activists:

Thomas Sayers Ellis, Ailish Hopper, Randall Horton

Monday, March 28:

*maybe we can go back to then*: “If/Then” Encounters

Monday, April 4:

*Sí Se Puede* (*Yes, It Is Possible*): Creating Alternate Realities

Monday, April 11:

*In this version*: Retelling and Re-Vision

Saturday, April 16: Split This Rock Festival in Washington, DC

Monday, April 18:

*How to*: Taking “Authority”

Monday, April 25:

Celebrate, Finalize Activist/Writer Interviews,

Rehearse for Final Performance, Discuss Next Steps (Personal and Communal)

Monday, May 2:

Engaged Faculty/Community Fellows Celebration

[Final Reading: Date/Time/Location TBD]