



2. Recall, identify, and use fundamental concepts of literary study to read and discuss texts:
  - a. Standard literary terminology
  - b. Modes/genres of literature
  - c. Elements of literary genres
  - d. Literary periods (dates, writers, characteristics, and important developments)
  - e. Extra-literary research
3. Connect the works with their own lives and with the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the works and their authors.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

*The Best American Essays 2017*, Edited by Leslie Jamison and Robert Atwan  
**ISBN-13:** 978-0544817333

Additional readings will be posted to Canvas—you will need to print these out and bring them with you to class the day they are assigned so that you can access the documents in class during discussion. If you print double-sided, and more than one .pdf page per printed page, this will lower the printing cost for you this semester. I would recommend getting a 3-ring binder to organize the essays posted to Canvas.

Please bring a notebook and writing utensil to each class to take notes, as well as the textbook/assigned essays that will be discussed for that class period.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### *Reading/Reading Quizzes:*

Dates for the readings are clearly indicated on the schedule. Complete all reading prior to the class session when the text will be discussed. You will be expected to read and annotate (take notes in the margins) all assigned course readings. Reading quizzes will total 200 points, but there is no set number of quizzes planned: rather, the quiz grades will be totaled across the semester and then the percentage will be taken out of 200. Example: 15 reading quizzes in a semester and you get 80% total on them. You would then score 160/200.

### *Discussion:*

The success of the course will be directly related to the quality of daily discussions. Each of you must feel comfortable contributing to discussions. And each of you should bring any questions you have about the reading to our attention during the course of our discussions.

### *Writing:*

Each student will complete a mid-term exam and a final exam in class, and a reflection essay written outside of class. Students cannot pass the course without completing each of these major assignments. See **TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS** for info on late work.

### *Group Presentation:*

In groups no larger than five, students will present on an essay outside of what we've read as a class, and present the work to the class. Each presentation will be 12-15 minutes

in length. A group grade will be given for the presentation. Each student will turn in a detailed breakdown of how each group member contributed to the presentation.

*Attendance:*

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings [for this course, that's more than 2 class periods], the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent [for this course, that's 4 class periods], the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

## **MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the midterm and final examinations **on their scheduled days**. The final examination schedule is posted on the Class Schedules site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

## **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

This class is interactive and discussion-based. So you'll need to come to class prepared to talk and write about the literary texts we're reading and contribute to and lead discussions, small groups, and peer reviews. You will not understand what is happening during our classes if you haven't done the reading and you will miss out on valuable perspective and insights from your classmates if you do not attend class. Students who attend regularly, stay engaged in the class activities, and keep up with all of the assigned reading and writing usually succeed in this course.

## **GENERAL COURSE POLICIES**

### **CANVAS**

Throughout this course, students will be required to utilize Canvas to post homework responses, receive course grades, and access any changes to the *Course Schedule* throughout the semester. If the *Course Schedule* is updated, students will be notified well in advance, but will need to download the updated schedule which the instructor will post on Canvas.

### **CANVAS SUPPORT**

If you have questions about the content you find in my Canvas course or need clarification on assignment instructions please let me know. If you are unsure how to use any given feature in Canvas you will find the Canvas Guides to be a very helpful resource. If you cannot access something in my Canvas course or it appears that some part of the course is not working properly, please contact the Office of Instructional Technology for support at oit@pointloma.edu. Include specific information in the request (course ID, section, assignment or module name, etc.) to expedite the troubleshooting process. Screenshots are super helpful!

## PLNU EMAIL

Students must regularly check their PLNU email account for updates on assignments and scheduling.

## RESPECT

Practice basic respect and consideration toward your peers and professor. There will likely be some tricky moments in this class because the literature we read may bring up some conversations about sensitive issues, topics, and language. Remember that we are interested in inquiry, especially critical inquiry, not in offending or battering other people into compliance. Please do not sleep, carry on private conversations, text, or work on assignments for other classes. Students who do so are not actively present in class and will lose participation points.

## TECHNOLOGY

Refrain from using cell phones, laptops, iPads, and other electronic devices during class time unless a classroom activity calls for it to be used. More often than not, these create a distraction, rather than being useful. Taking notes by hand has been shown to aid long-term comprehension much more than typing notes, so *please take handwritten notes* throughout this class. Use of technology during class will result in lost participation points.

## TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments must be turned in on Canvas *before the class period on the day they are due*.

Late essay assignments are those turned in any time after class on the due date. Late essays will lose a letter grade for each calendar day they are late (so an A becomes a B after one calendar day, and so on). Late essays will not be accepted after a week from the due date. It is your responsibility to ensure that your essay is uploaded to Canvas on the day it is due. **Missed in-class work and quizzes cannot be made up.**

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

## PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

## PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at [DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu). See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

## PERSONAL NEEDS

Counseling is available in the Wellness Center for undergraduate students at PLNU. They are open Monday through Friday during the academic school year to offer morning, afternoon, and evening appointments. Please call (619) 849-2574 to schedule a counseling appointment.

## PARTICIPATION

Coming to class well-prepared is critical in a discussion-based course like this one. I expect you to come to each class prepared—that means not just doing the reading, thinking about it, and digesting it, but also *bringing your book/assigned essays to class* because we will often reference the text during class. Coming to class without the assigned reading for the day will result in a loss of participation points. You should also be prepared to actively engage in class discussions and other in-class activities. I expect you each to meaningfully engage with the coursework and with one another.

Class participation will be graded out of 100. Each class day is worth 2 points, up to a max of 40 points (20 non-exam MWF meetings). You can miss two classes without it affecting your grade (any points above 36 will be counted as extra credit)—but you are still responsible for the readings/homework due on the days you're absent. If you miss class or are significantly unprepared for class, you'll earn a zero for that day. **Each absence above three will result in 5 points being subtracted from the participation category.**

For the remaining 64 points of your participation grade, you'll earn a 50 if you're doing the basics of engaging with the class and participating in discussion; you'll earn a 50+ if I see you regularly leaping in and making strong contributions; you'll earn a 49 or lower if you are frequently late, unprepared, inattentive, disruptive, or do not regularly participate in discussion.

I expect you to attend class and to arrive on time—but I also understand that things come up. In the case of an emergency, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss what arrangements can be made.

## COURSE GRADING OVERVIEW

200 points – Reading Quizzes  
200 points – Midterm Exam  
300 points – Final Exam  
100 points – Reflective Essay  
100 points – Group Presentation  
100 points – Class Participation

## LETTER GRADE GUIDELINES

		920 - 1000 points	A	900 - 919 points	A-
880 - 899 points	B+	820 - 879 points	B	800 - 819 points	B-
780 - 799 points	C+	720 - 779 points	C	700 - 719 points	C-
680 - 699 points	D+	620 - 679 points	D	600 - 619 points	D-

## WHAT ESSAY EXAM GRADES ACTUALLY MEAN

**A: Exceptional Work:** complex understanding and insightful application of skills and concepts; sophistication and depth in interpretation and style; proficiency in standard grammatical form and documentation conventions; high competence in all or almost all categories of the grading rubric.

**B: Very Good Work:** clear, thoughtful understanding and sound application of skills and concepts; correct written presentation; high competence in most categories of the grading rubric.

**C: Adequate Work:** obvious, general, or vague understanding and application of skills and concepts; acceptable written presentation; basic competence in many categories of the grading rubric.

**D: Less-than-Satisfactory Work:** limited understanding and weak application of skills and concepts; poorly presented written work; low competence in many categories of the grading rubric.

**F: Unsatisfactory Work:** inadequate understanding and incorrect application of skills and concepts; unacceptable written presentation; incompetence in most categories of the grading rubric.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	READING	ASSIGNMENTS DUE (in bold)
<b>WEEK 1—INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAY</b>		
Wednesday, Sept. 4	First Day of Class; <i>Best American Essays (BAE)</i> : Foreword and Introduction	
Friday, Sept. 6	[ <i>Canvas</i> ]: Monson’s “Essay as Hack,” Sullivan’s “The Ill-Defined Plot,” and Heman’s “The Aquarium”	
<b>WEEK 2</b>		
Monday, Sept. 9	[ <i>Canvas</i> ] Riederer’s “The Patient,” Walker’s “Beauty: When the Other Dancer Is the Self, and [ <i>BAE</i> ] O’Gieblyn “Dispatch from Flyover Country”	
Wednesday, Sept. 11	[ <i>Canvas</i> ] Doyle’s “Leap,” Chelminski’s “Turning Point,” Junod’s “Falling Man,” and Mayblum’s “The Price We Pay”	
Friday, Sept. 13	[ <i>Canvas</i> ] Schmidle’s “Getting Bin Laden” and [ <i>BAE</i> ] Arment’s “Two Shallow Graves”	
<b>WEEK 3</b>		
Monday, Sept. 16	[ <i>BAE</i> ] Resnick’s “H.”	
Wednesday, Sept. 18	[ <i>BAE</i> ] Maloney’s “Cost of Living” and Golbach’s “White Horse”	
Friday, Sept. 20	[ <i>Canvas</i> ] Iyer’s “Chapels,” Brenner’s “Strange Beads,” and [ <i>BAE</i> ] Alia Volz’s “Snakebit”	
<b>WEEK 4</b>		
Monday, Sept. 23	[ <i>BAE</i> ] Kushner’s “We Are Orphans Here” and Jackson’s “The City that Bleeds”	
Wednesday, Sept. 25	[ <i>Canvas</i> ] Hamilton’s “Capturing Dementia’s Voice” and [ <i>BAE</i> ] Sellers’s “Haywire”	
Friday, Sept. 27	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	
<b>WEEK 5</b>		
Monday, Sept. 30	[ <i>BAE</i> ] Moore’s “The Book of the Dead”	

Wednesday, Oct. 02 [Canvas] McAllister “What To Do With My Body in the Event that I Die in a Mass Shooting,”  
Tempest William’s “The Clan of One-Breasted Women,” and  
Greathouse’s “The Constituent Parts”

Friday, Oct. 04 [Canvas] Charles Mann’s “1491” and  
Updike’s “Extreme Dinosaurs”

**WEEK 6**

Monday, Oct. 07 [Canvas] Jamison’s “The Digital Ruins of a Forgotten Future” and  
O’Gieblyn’s “Ghost in the Cloud”

Wednesday, Oct. 09 [Canvas] Foster Wallace’s “Consider the Lobster” and  
[BAE] Lightman’s “What Came Before the Big Bang?”

Friday, Oct. 11 [Canvas] Baldwin’s “Stranger in the Village,” and  
[BAE] Ghansah’s “The Weight of James Arthur Baldwin”

**WEEK 7**

Monday, Oct. 14 [BAE] Palmer’s “The Reader Is the Protagonist” and  
Marshall’s “If I Only Had a Leg”

Wednesday, Oct. 16 [Canvas] Cantu’s “Bajadas,”  
Cantu’s “Seeking Refuge, Legally, and Finding Prison,”  
and Lee’s “Track Changes in English”

Friday, Oct. 18 **Presentations**  
**\*\*\*FINAL DAY TO TURN IN REFLECTIVE ESSAY\*\*\***

**WEEK 8**

Monday, Oct. 21 **Presentations; Turn in Annotation and Breakdown of Group  
Work; Course Evaluations**

Wednesday, Oct. 23 **FINAL EXAM**