



Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages

Fall 2025

ENG2060 American Writers I (3 units)	Bond 102, TR 9:30-10:45am
Ben Cater, PhD, Colt Hall 208 Office Hours: MWF 1-3pm, TR 3-4pm, and by appointment	Email: bcater@pointloma.edu Phone: Ext. 2932
Final Exam: Tues. 12/16, 10:30am-1pm	

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description

A survey of American writers from the colonial period to the mid-19th century within their cultural contexts. Considers the lasting influence of these works on modern American culture and literary canons.

Program Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the program in English - concentrations in English Education, Literature, and Writing, will be able to:

1. Integrate literary studies and/or craft development with ongoing reflection and hospitable engagement with a diverse world. (Integrative Learning, Foundation Skills for Lifelong Learning)
2. Analyze and critique diverse forms and genres of literature situated within historical and cultural contexts. (Critical Thinking)

3. Employ strong research, close reading, and analytical skills in writing as appropriate for literary form and genre conventions. (Information Literacy, Critical Thinking)
4. Develop creative or analytical works in various forms of writing. (Written Communication)
5. Present creative and/or analytical writing to formal audiences, demonstrating strategies for audience engagement and oral communication. (Oral Communication)

Course Learning Outcomes

At the Conclusion of the Course Students will be able to:

- Closely read and critically analyze texts in their original languages and/or in translation.
- Recall, identify, and use fundamental concepts of literary study to read and discuss texts
 - Standard literary terminology
 - Modes/genres of literature
 - Elements of literary genres
 - Literary periods (dates, writers, characteristics, and important developments)
 - Contemporary critical approaches
 - Extra-literary research
- Analyze the social, cultural, ethnic, gendered, and/or historical contexts of the works and their authors, and connect the texts with their own lives.
- Create detailed and informed textual analysis of literary works that examine several of the fundamental concepts of literary study.

Required Texts

The Norton Anthology of American Literature: Volume A: Beginnings to 1820, 10th Edition

The Norton Anthology of American Literature: Volume B: 1820-1865 10th Edition

Course Assignments

Reading: Dates for the readings are indicated on the schedule. Read daily if possible and complete all reading on time.

Reading Responses: Seven times during the semester—but never more than once a week—each student will write a response to the daily reading in class. Together, these seven responses will constitute 7% of the total grade. Details concerning the responses will be provided by Dr. Cater or on Canvas. Responses will help inform our class discussion about the assigned reading.

Reading Reflection: Once during the semester, I would like you to revisit a text from earlier in the semester in light of something else you have read and reflect on how your later reading changed your reaction to the earlier work. Your response should be about two paragraphs in length. This response will constitute 1% of the total grade.

Personal Response: Some time during the semester, select two works that reveal an aspect of American culture you wish to either celebrate or lament. Write one celebratory response and one lament. Your responses should be about two paragraphs in length and will constitute 2% of the total grade.

Discussion: The success of the course will be directly related to the quality of daily discussions. Each of you should 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, a final exam, and two 3-5 page essays written outside of class. Each of the exams will include a written portion. The final exam will contain comprehensive elements. Students cannot pass the course without completing all four of these major assignments. Late essays will receive a ten percent daily deduction and will not be accepted when the value would be zero.

Oral Presentations: Once during the semester students will give an oral presentation on a prose writer. And once during the semester each student will give an oral presentation on a poem in the anthology but not a part of the readings assigned to the entire class. Details for both assignments will be posted on Canvas.

Assessment and Grading

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Essay #1	15%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Essay #2	15%
Prose Presentation	4%
Poetry Presentation	1%
Final Exam	30%
Discussion/Participation	5%
Responses/Reflections	10%

Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

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 Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

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. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced a bias incident regarding language, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

Loma Writing Center

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you’re in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- Appointment Calendar: <https://plnu.mywconline.com/>
- Website: <https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center>
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

COURSE SCHEDULE

READING SCHEDULE FOR ENG 3060: AMERICAN WRITERS I

Tues 9/2 Introduction to the Course and Syllabus Review

Thurs 9/4	"Beginnings to 1820," 3-28
Tues 9/9	Native American Oral Literature, 29-52
Thurs 9/11	Columbus, 53-61; de Las Casas, 61-66; and de Vaca, 66-75 Reading Response #1 due in-class
Tues 9/16	William Bradford, 125-62; and Cotton Mather, 325-26 and 332-38
Thurs 9/18	John Winthrop, 171-84; Cotton Mather 338-52; The Bay Psalm Book, 193-96; and Roger Williams, 197-98 and 209-11 Essay #1 Assigned Reading Response #2 due in-class
Tues 9/23	Anne Bradstreet, 211-42 and the poem posted on Canvas
Thurs 9/25	Michael Wigglesworth, 242-59; and Samuel Sewall, 313-24 Reading Response #3 due in-class
Tues 9/30	Mary Rowlandson, 260-93 and at least two of the entries from "Captivity and Gender in Mary Rowlandson's <i>Narrative</i> "
Thurs 10/2	Jonathan Edwards, 360-61, 394-406 and either 362-80 or 381-94 Reading Response #4 due in-class
Tues 10/7	"American Literature and the Varieties of Religious Expression," 407-29
Thurs 10/9	Ben Franklin 429-520 Essay #1 due on Canvas
Tues 10/14	John Adams/Abigail Adams 582-98; Thomas Paine 599-607; Thomas Jefferson 620-28
Thurs 10/16	Occom, 521-30 and Phillis Wheatley, 713-25 Reading Response #5 due in-class
Tues 10/21	Olaudah Equiano, 649-95
Thurs 10/23	Fall Break
Tues 10/28	"American Literature 1820-1865," 3-24 and Washington Irving, 25-62
Thurs 10/30	Mid-Term Exam
Tues 11/4	Ralph Waldo Emerson, 158-61, 190-233
Thurs 11/6	Henry David Thoreau, 928-1000 Reading Response #6 due in-class
Tues. 11/11	Stanton, 672-76; Fuller, 693-731
Thurs 11/13	Edgar Allan Poe, 556-59, 579-92, and 562-565 Reading Response #7 due in-class
Tues 11/18	Nathaniel Hawthorne, 304-07, <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , 406-51 (Chapters I-IX)
Thurs 11/20	Hawthorne, <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , 451-523 (Chapters X-XXIV) Essay #2 Assigned Celebration Assignment due on Canvas
Tues 11/25	Harriet Jacobs, 860-909
Wed 11/26	Lament Assignment due on Canvas

Thurs 11/27 **Thanksgiving**

Tues 12/2 Frederick Douglass, 1064-1133

Thurs 12/4 Herman Melville, 1263-66 and 1322-48

Essay #2 Due on Canvas

Reading Reflection Assignment due on Canvas

Tues 12/9 Walt Whitman, 1148-51 and 1168-1212

Thurs 12/11 Emily Dickinson, 1508-48

Fri. 12/16 10:30am-1pm Final Exam