



**Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages
College of Arts and Humanities**

ENG 3052 Diverse Voices of American Literature (GE) (3 Units)

Section 1

Fall 2025

Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30-2:45p

Latter 102

Final Signature Assignment Papers due: December 15th

Instructor title and name:	Alex Wirth (he/him)
Email:	awirth@pointloma.edu
Office hours:	Drop-in Tue 12:30-1:30 or by appointment.
Office Location	Bond (BAC) 127

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.

General Education Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

Course Description

An advanced study of selected works written by Americans who have lived on and written from the margins of American society.

Extended Course Description

Huck Finn Reimagined from the Margins. Mark Twain's stories are considered classics of American Literature, especially *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. However, the novel is often considered controversial and complex to read today. Despite this, numerous contemporary authors from the margins often take Twain's tale as a jumping off point to tell their own diverse stories (Percival Everett's *James* is a current popular example that we'll read.) In this class, we'll explore *Huck Finn* and a selection of reimaginings of this text from diverse voices to find out what makes it such a compelling story to tell and retell from so many diverse perspectives.

Program and Course Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Closely read (comprehension, analysis) and critically analyze (analysis) texts in their original languages and/or in translation. (GELO 2c)
2. Recall (knowledge), identify (knowledge), and use (application) fundamental concepts of literary study to read and discuss texts. (GELO 2c)
 1. Standard literary terminology
 2. Modes/genres of literature
 3. Elements of literary genres
 4. Literary periods (dates, writers, characteristics, and important developments)

Connect (synthesis) the works with their own lives and with the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the works and their authors. (GELO 2c)

General Education Learning Outcomes

GELO 2c. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the complex issues faced by diverse groups in global and/or cross-cultural contexts.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class. All books for the class are available from LOMABooks. Supplemental materials will be posted on Canvas

We will focus on these novels in this class. Please bring the novel we are reading to class with you because we will be working with the text directly together. Keep your texts for the entire semester as you will need them for the final project.

1. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain: Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition, 2009.
2. *James* by Percival Everett: Doubleday, 2024.
3. *My Jim* by Nancy Rawles: Three Rivers Press, 2005.
4. *Adventures of Mary Jane* by Hope Jahren: Delacorte Press, 2024.
5. *The Ballad of Huck and Miguel* by Time DeRoche: Red Tail Press, 2018.

Note about format:

It is my preference that you read these novels in physical book format. It is better for your reading brain to read a paper book. Engaging with the physical object of a book has many benefits: Less distractions and better reading comprehension. You can easily highlight and mark with a pencil. You can use your spacial memory to remember where passages in the text are in order to re-read them. Physical books never run out of battery, send you notifications or try to sell you anything. For this class, where most of your homework will be reading, reading a physical book is top tier.

That being said: I also believe that all reading is good reading. If reading on a device is the only way you will complete the reading for the class, if you can really engage with the text and not get distracted reading on a kindle/tablet/phone, then that is ok. For this class, reading on a device is acceptable, second tier.

Same goes for audiobooks if that is the only way the reading will get done for you. It is hard to take notes and engage your visual/spacial brain in your reading with audiobooks. Focusing can be a challenge as well but if listening to the reading for this class is the only way it will get done with how your life works, I can understand that. You will still need a copy of the text that you can work with in class that isn't audio. For this class, listening to audiobooks is allowed but not encouraged, third tier.

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

Assessment and Grading**“Chipping In”- Class Participation Grade and Attendance Grade**

This class depends on the full participation of the entire class every time we gather together. I firmly believe that, in order to fully read, understand and make meaning of these texts and their contexts, we need every one in the class's brain power focused and present when we gather to learn. This means we need a mechanism to make sure we've all done the reading and are undistractedly present and focused in class. The basic way to do this is reading quizzes but I have a different idea...

Each student will have a token with their name on it that they will collect at the beginning of class. When the student “chips in” by answering a question, participating in discussion or otherwise outwardly engaging in the class, I will collect their token as evidence that they participated meaningfully in class that day.

You will get 5 points for collecting your token at the beginning of class. This is how we will take attendance. There are 29 class periods this semester so 100% perfect attendance is worth 145 points (A+

attendance grade.) Missing two classes drops your attendance grade to 135 or 93% of 145 (A attendance grade.) Four absences=125 or 86% (and a written warning of de-enrollment from the class. See Below.) And your attendance grade goes down from there.

You will get 10 additional points when you “chip in” during class. Full participation over the course of the semester means that you chipped in 86% of the class periods (24 out of 28 classes) for a total of 240 points (A+ participation grade). Chipping in during 21 classes will get you 210 points (B participation grade). Chipping in during 19 classes gives you 190 points (C participation grade.)

In other words, you can not chip in during 4 classes with no reduction to your grade. After that each class you don’t chip in for lowers your participation grade by 3.5%.

I will keep track of all of this in the Canvas attendance tab and gradebook so you know where you are at. Because this is something new that I am trying for attendance and participation, I reserve the right to modify this system as you use it though out the semester.

Reading Journal- 15 points each

Reading Journal Entries are due every Thursday at the beginning of class. Entries should be between 300 -450 words, are worth 15 points each and will be graded complete (meets word limit, evidence of reading, engagement with the text and/or class concepts) or incomplete (not turned in on time without communicating with the professor, below word limit, doesn’t show evidence of doing or engagement with the reading). I will drop two incomplete reading journals from your final grade.

These entries are designed to get you thinking more deeply about the texts that we are reading so that our in-class discussion of the text will be richer. You can write about anything you want as it pertains to the reading for that week. Here are somethings you might consider: Highlight patterns or themes you notice in a text. Note beautiful or interesting uses of language in the text. Frame out several questions you have about a certain passage you hope to ask in class. Write down any words you didn’t understand in the text, write out a definition and write about how the word functions in the passage you found it in. Compare a passage from one class text with another. etc.

In-Class Writing- 10 points each

Some classes for this course will include an in-class writing prompt to be turned in on Canvas by the end of class. Entries should be about 150 words, are worth 10 points each and will be graded complete if they answer all parts of the prompt or incomplete if they do not. Prompts will be based on concepts from the reading and lectures/discussions in class. These can be made up if you miss class but only if you communicate effectively with your professor about missing class. I will drop two incomplete in-class writings from your final grade.

Parallel Perspectives Presentation- 50 points

Find a parallel passage in Huck Finn to the inspired text. Show how they follow each other and/or how they diverge. Talk about why you think the author chose to diverge from Huck Finn in the way that they did. What was it about the Huck Finn passage that let the author craft their own version of the story? What did they change/ what did they keep the same and why? How does the author’s differing perspective from Mark Twain’s influence the way they write their version of the story.

We will sign up for these the second week of class and they will begin week 4 of the semester once we have finished reading *Huck Finn* and moved on to the novels inspired by it. We will have two of these presentations per class. They should be 5-7 minutes in length include selections from both texts, a short presentation, and the facilitation of a short discussion with the class. These will be graded based on the rubric on Canvas.

Two Part Final Exam- Due December 15th

Part 1: GE Signature Assignment- 100 points

This signature assignment is a formal, but personal, essay due by December 15th. This essay will require you to reflect on your interpretive reading and as such will rely solely on the literary text and your own thoughts and perspectives. Further instructions will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas.

Part 2: Considering Your Own Perspective on Huck Finn -100 points

You'll be asked to imagine that you've been inspired by Twain's original version of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and all the other versions of the story we've read in this class, to write your own version of the story from your own perspective. Of course, you won't be asked to write a full novel or story, just to imagine what your version of the story would look like. You will then answer questions based on your imagined story about elements like characters, setting, relationship to Twain's original, social context, etc. and submit them on Canvas.

Grades will be based on the following scale:

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.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no scheduled final exam for this course. The final for this class is a two part written assignment that is due December 15th.

CONTENT WARNING

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In ENG 3052, all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include racism, racist language, racial violence, violence against women and children, rape, torture and death. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual and compassionate engagement in the human story, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

TRIGGER WARNING

The experience of being triggered versus being intellectually challenged is different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. I will do my best to alert you prior to reading content that may be triggering. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual and compassionate engagement in the human story, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances. Communicate your need to turn in late work with the professor as early as you can.

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](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer

distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

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.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas, but you are not allowed to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

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 619-849-2533). 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. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

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 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 other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

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 (that is 4 for this class), the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (8 for this class), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

HOW TO ACTUALLY BE PRESENT IN CLASS

This class doesn’t work unless you are actually present in class. Like, PRESENT present. That means that you need to be physically and mentally in the classroom, having read the required reading, and ready to share your ideas, discuss, and answer questions. I will take attendance every class. Missing too many classes can hurt your grade or get you de-enrolled from the class (see above.)

Almost all of the learning in this class happens in the classroom together: a blend of my ideas and yours shared, discussed and analyzed. I am only asking you to read the novels for this class. All contextualization and critical analysis takes place in class so being a present, eyes-up and engaged learner is important. Obviously, there are times in class where you’ll need your laptop or tablet to take quizzes, complete assignments, take notes, etc. There’s basically no times that you need to have your phone out in class. I will trust you to be using your devices to facilitate your learning for our class and not doing work for other classes or engaging in other non-class related activities. You might want to consider taking notes by hand to avoid that distraction.

But there will also be times when you should consider raising your eyes from your devices, maybe turning them off, and giving your attention to the conversation and flow of ideas happening in the room. That’s why you’re in college right? I will try to encourage you to be present to your learning, your classmates and me. I employ the awkward silence strategy to get discussion going, but if I feel like you are getting immune to the awkwardness, I’ll start randomly calling on people.

Use of Technology

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

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

Lomabooks Instructions for Students

This course is part of our course material delivery program, **LomaBooks**. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.

For more information about **LomaBooks**, please go: [HERE](#)

Class Outline

Tuesdays (in general but look at Canvas for specifics) will likely include: 2 parallel perspective presentations, in class writing, lecture and discussion.

Thursdays (in general but look at Canvas for specifics) will likely include: Turning in Reading Journals, 2 parallel perspective presentations, in class writing, lecture and discussion.

Weekly Class and Reading Schedule.

Week 1:

- **Tuesday 9/2:** Class Welcome and Introduction: Make sure you have the novels for class and begin reading *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- **Thursday 9/4:** *Huck Finn* Pgs. 9-73.

Week 2: Sign ups for Parallel Perspective Presentations

- **Tuesday 9/9:** *Huck Finn* Pgs. 73-128
- **Thursday 9/11:** *Huck Finn* Pgs. 129-191

Week 3:

- **Tuesday 9/16:** *Huck Finn* Pgs. 192-251
- **Thursday 9/18:** *Huck Finn* Pgs. 252-End

Week 4:

- **Tuesday 9/23:** *James* Pgs. 9-59
- **Thursday 9/25:** *James* Pgs. 60-108

Week 5:

- **Tuesday 9/30:** *James* Pgs. 109-159
- **Thursday 10/2:** *James* Pgs. 160-213

Week 6:

- **Tuesday 10/7:** *James* Pgs. 214-260
- **Thursday 10/9:** *James* Pgs. 261- End

Week 7:

- **Tuesday 10/14:** *My Jim* Pgs. 11-39
- **Thursday 10/16:** *My Jim* Pgs. 39-71

Week 8:

- **Tuesday 10/21:** *My Jim* Pgs. 72-100
- **Thursday 10/23:** FALL BREAK NO CLASS

Week 9:

- **Tuesday 10/28:** *My Jim* Pgs. 101-133
- **Thursday 10/30:** *My Jim* Pgs. 135-End

Week 10: FRIDAY 11/7 is the last day to withdraw from classes

- **Tuesday 11/4:** *Mary Jane Synopsis of chapters 1-10 and* Pgs. 115-175
- **Thursday 11/6 :** *Mary Jane* Pgs. 176-241

Week 11:

- **Tuesday 11/11:** *Mary Jane* Pgs. 242-307
- **Thursday 11/13:** *Mary Jane* Pgs. 308-369

Week 12:

- **Tuesday 11/18:** *Mary Jane* Pgs. 307-369
- **Thursday 11/20:** *Mary Jane* Pgs. 370-End

Week 13:

- **Tuesday 11/25:** *Huck and Miguel* Pgs. 9-60
- **Thursday 11/27:** THANKSGIVING RECESS NO CLASS

Week 14:

- **Tuesday 12/2:** *Huck and Miguel* Pgs. 61-111
- **Thursday 12/4:** *Huck and Miguel* Pgs. 112-158

Week 15:

- **Tuesday 12/9:** *Huck and Miguel* Pgs. 159-214
- **Thursday 12/11:** *Huck and Miguel* Pgs. 215-End

Finals Projects due December 15 by 11:59pm.