

Point Loma Nazarene University
 Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages
Poetry Workshop
WRI 6021 (3 units)

Retelling the Bible:
A Graduate Poetry Workshop

Section: 1
Time: M, 7:00-9:45 p.m.

Fall 2025
Location: Bond Lounge

Instructor: Dr. Katie Manning, kmanning@pointloma.edu
 Phone: 619-849-2432
 Office: Bond 124
 Office Hours: TR, 9:00-10:30 a.m., and other times by appointment
 Course Website: <https://canvas.pointloma.edu>

Catalog Entry: Advanced instruction and guided workshop in writing poetry. Attention is also given to methodology in teaching poetry writing and to finding publication.

Course Description: This graduate-level poetry workshop will focus on responses to and retellings of Scripture. We will read and discuss recent poetry collections that engage with Scripture in a wide variety of ways by poets who are Christian, Jewish, and post-religious/unaffiliated (and one author will be our Poetry Day guest in November!). You will write and revise new poems throughout the semester, and we will spend a good amount of time in workshop, discussing new poems by writers in our class and giving each poet feedback for revision. We're going to have a good time!

Required Materials

9781556594571 *New Testament* by Jericho Brown
 9781786223937 *The Backwater Sermons* by Jay Hulme
 9781954245822 *unalone* by Jessica Jacobs
 9781643173511 *General Release from the Beginning of the World* by Donna Spruijt-Metz
 9781725260818 *Madonna, Complex* by Jen Stewart Fueston
 9781612618579 *What Will Soon Take Place* by Tania Runyan
 9781680033076 *Eschatology in Crayon Wax* by Joshua Robbins
 9798989855865 *This Voice Has an Echo* by Emma McCoy
Un-becoming by Charnell Peters (on Canvas)

More readings and resources will be posted on Canvas and available online.

Self-selected readings and resources.

Things writers need: laptop/tablet, pen/pencil, paper/journal, etc.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who complete WRI 5021/6021 will be able to:

1. identify advanced aspects of theory, style, and structure in works of poetry;

2. analyze poetry written by professionals and peers to determine authors' writing techniques in relationship to target audiences and genre conventions;
3. employ advanced research techniques as necessary to meet the demands of poetic craft and content;
4. craft poems using advanced techniques specific to genre to create descriptive and evocative language;
5. apply advanced workshop techniques for constructive criticism of peers and in turn take criticism and use it to improve their own work;
6. format texts in a genre-appropriate and professional manner for submission to workshop and publication;
7. present written work to live audiences, demonstrating advanced strategies for audience engagement and oral communication.

CLASS POLICIES

Grade Distribution: In order to receive credit for the course, all of the following must be completed.

Attendance & Discussions	150	30%
Seminar Talk	50	10%
Poems	100	20%
Workshops	100	20%
Final Portfolio	50	10%
<u>Final Reading</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>10%</u>
<i>Total</i>	500	100%

A = Phenomenal work that far exceeds the minimum requirements of the assignment; excellent logic, structure, and organization; virtually no grammar and punctuation errors.

B = Good work that exceeds the minimum requirements of the assignment; no major problems with logic, structure, and organization; very few grammar and punctuation errors.

C = Average work that meets the minimum requirements of the assignment; may have minor problems with logic, structure, and organization; may have some grammar and punctuation errors.

D = Poor work that does not fully meet the minimum requirements of the assignment; may have some problems with logic, structure, and organization; grammar and punctuation errors may hinder meaning.

F = Poor work that does not fulfill the assignment; may have serious problems with logic, structure, and organization; grammar and punctuation errors may obscure meaning.

Grading Scale & Definitions:

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

Attendance & Participation: Because we meet once a week and this course's work is heavily based on collaboration, attendance and participation are enormously important. Please do all that you can to be present and on time. We will take a break together mid-class.

According to PLNU's policy: if a 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.

Seminar Talk: On your assigned day, please come to class prepared to teach us about an element of poetic craft/form that is relevant to our assigned reading. (You'll sign up for a date/topic in advance). Your talk will include both a brief lesson and a writing exercise, and the entire presentation (including the exercise) should run between 10-15 minutes. A little practice in advance goes a long way. This presentation should be concise, well-prepared, and *engaging*. Use of media is welcome but not required.

Poems: You will turn in several early drafts of poems. You will get some prompts in class from me and from each other to help you get ideas, but these will ultimately be self-assigned. Please follow the Canvas modules closely and submit pieces on the day they are due. These early drafts need not be masterpieces, but they should not be sloppy. It should be clear that you worked on them.

Workshops: We will do workshops as a whole class throughout the semester. The week before your workshop, you will post your piece on Canvas (please use .doc file format) and bring hard copies for each person in the class. (Your workshop piece might be different than the new poem that's due on Monday; be sure to post it in the right spot for the workshop!) For each workshop, everyone will be responsible for reading all pieces before class, writing initial comments (in the form of a brief letter to the author), and posting the letter on Canvas. Everyone should also bring the reading and feedback letters to class in hard copy for discussion. During workshops, we will thoroughly discuss the writing to give the authors a chance to see how readers are experiencing their work and to give some feedback for revision. Your workshop grade will be based on both your verbal participation and written comments.

Final Portfolio: You will draft 10 new poems throughout the semester. Your final portfolio should include a brief (1-2 page) introduction to your work that references class readings and reflects on your engagement with poetic form, 10 well-revised poems, and a brief statement (footnote or endnote) for *each* poem on why/how you began, revised, and settled it.

Paper Format: All assignments, unless otherwise instructed, must be typed, in 12-point Times or Arial font, with one-inch margins. Poems should usually be single spaced or spaced according to the design of the author. Prose should be double spaced and include a word count in the upper right corner. Please submit electronic copies in the appropriate place on Canvas as instructed for each assignment.

Canvas: A copy of this syllabus and assignments for our course are online at <https://canvas.pointloma.edu>. You can access these course materials using your PLNU username and password.

PLNU Email: Your PLNU email account should be checked often. This is the way that I will most frequently communicate with you outside of class, and it's also the way the university distributes important information.

Public Discourse: Much of the work we will do in this class is cooperative. You should think of all your writing and speaking for and in class as public, not private, discourse. By continuing in this class, you acknowledge that your work will be viewed by others.

This syllabus is a contract. If you continue in this course, then you agree to comply with the class policies as stated here.

Lesson Plans – Tentative Schedule Fall 2025

Week 1 Sep 8	Welcome! Introductions (bring a favorite poem) Discuss course Foundational terms: poetry, midrash, theopoetics Writing exercise
Week 2 Sep 15	Opening Survey Seminar Talk Sign-up Read Peters, <i>Un-becoming</i> (on Canvas) Read Keefe-Perry, "Theopoetics: Process and Perspective" (on Canvas) Poem 1 due Discussion Workshop 1A
Week 3 Sep 22	Read Jacobs, <i>unalone</i> (1-91) Read Wargacki, "Emily Dickinson's Midrash of Jacob and the Angel" (on Canvas) Poem 2 due Seminar Talk 1 Discussion Workshop 2B

Week 4 Sep 29	Read Jacobs, <i>unalone</i> (93-end) Poem 3 due Seminar Talks 2 & 3 Discussion Workshop 3C
Week 5 Oct 6	Read McCoy, <i>This Voice Has an Echo</i> Poem 4 due Seminar Talk 4 Discussion Workshop 4A
Week 6 Oct 13	Read Robbins, <i>Eschatology in Crayon Wax</i> Poem 5 due Seminar Talk 5 Discussion Workshop 5B
Week 7 Oct 20	Read Fueston, <i>Madonna, Complex</i> Poem 6 due Seminar Talk 6 Discussion Workshop 6C
Week 8 Oct 27	*Attend Mitch Albom events today!* 3-4 p.m. – Workshop with Mitch Albom (more info TBD) 7-8 p.m. – Interview with Mitch Albom
Week 9 Nov 3	Read Spruijt-Metz, <i>General Release from the Beginning of the World</i> Poem 7 due Seminar Talk 7 Discussion Workshop 7A

Week 10 Nov 10	Read Brown, <i>New Testament</i> Poem 8 due Seminar Talk 8 Discussion Workshop 8B
Week 11 Nov 17	No Class on Monday *Attend POETRY DAY on Thursday!* 3-4 p.m. – Workshop with Jessica Jacobs in Fermanian (more info TBD) 7-8 p.m. – Reading with Jessica Jacobs in Fermanian
Week 12 Nov 24	Read Hulme, <i>The Backwater Sermons</i> Poem 9 due Seminar Talk 9 Discussion Workshop 9C
Week 13 Dec 1	Read Runyan, <i>What Will Soon Take Place</i> Poem 10 due Seminar Talk 10 Discussion Workshop 10 (TBD)
Week 14 Dec 8	Final Portfolio Master Discussion Final Exam: Reading (private salon)
Week 15	*Combined public reading with Advanced Workshop. Details TBD.

Important Statements & Policies

PLNU Mission Statement

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 becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

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 [Class 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.

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 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 [Graduate Academic and General Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Note: For our class's purposes, writing is collaborative, and writers share and borrow from each other all the time. There are ways to do this that are acceptable (such as taking suggestions from professors and peers), but there are also ways to use other people's ideas or words in a way that is considered plagiarism (such as passing off somebody else's work as your own). We will discuss this further in class.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Most publications do not currently allow use of AI in submitted works. Most of the current AI tools (e.g, ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) encourage people to outsource deep thinking and critical thought in favor of quick idea generation and bland text, and the results are too often factually incorrect. These platforms were built on texts without authors' permission, and they also have [a negative environmental impact](#). Because of this, and due to the fact that using ideas and language that are not your own is a form of plagiarism, these AI tools are not permitted for our class assignments. If you've got an incredibly compelling reason to use one, please seek approval in advance from me and cite the AI tool appropriately. Any unapproved usage of these

tools will be treated as plagiarism. Putting another person's writing into an AI tool (a.k.a. handing over another person's intellectual property without permission) is a serious offense and will result in an F in this course.

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.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. Therefore, regular attendance and participation in each course are minimal requirements.

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.

Students who anticipate being absent for an entire week of a course should contact the instructor in advance for approval and make arrangements to complete the required coursework and/or alternative assignments assigned at the discretion of the instructor. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the instructor and does not waive attendance requirements.

Refer to [Academic Policies](#) for additional detail.

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 or as shown in the PLNU Spiritual Care section of this syllabus.

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

Spiritual Care

PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as a whole person. To this end, we provide resources for our Graduate students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. If you have questions for or a desire to meet or share any prayer requests with the [Graduate chaplain](#), you may email Dr. Sylvia Cortez Masyuk at scortezm@pointloma.edu or contact the [Office of Student Life and Formation](#).

GPS Academic Resources

PLNU offers the following free academic resources virtually for Graduate Professional Studies (GPS) Students. Visit myPLNU through the links below for more information.

- [The GPS Writing Center](#) offers:
 - **Zoom Writers Workshops** offered each quad on a variety of helpful topics
 - **One-to-one appointments** with the Writing Coach

- **Microlearning YouTube Video Library** for helpful tips anytime
- **[Research Help Guide](#)** to help you start your research
- The physical office is located on the third floor of the **[Mission Valley Regional Center](#)** off the student lounge
- **[Academic Writing Resources Course](#)**: Found on your Canvas Dashboard, this course is non-credit with 24/7 access, no time limits, and self-paced content. **[Watch a quick video run-through](#)** and take time now to explore!
- **[Grammarly](#)**: Students have unlimited FREE access to Grammarly for Education, a trusted tool designed to help enhance writing skills by providing real-time feedback, identifying areas for improvement, and providing suggestions. Grammarly's Generative AI is NOT available with our student accounts.
- **[Tutoring](#)**: Students have access to 24/7 live or scheduled subject tutoring through Tutor.com, including a Paper Drop-Off Service with feedback within 12 hours.

We are here to support you! Contact us anytime: **GPSWritingCenter@pointloma.edu**

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.