



**HIS 3020: UNITED STATES HISTORY, 1815-1914**

History & Political Science Department

Point Loma Nazarene University

4 Units

Fall 2025

**Meeting days:** MWF

**Meeting times:** 10:55-12:05

**Meeting location:** Colt 120

**Final Exam:** Wed., 10:30am-1:00pm

**Professor:** Dr. Kelli McCoy

**Phone:** 619-849-2438

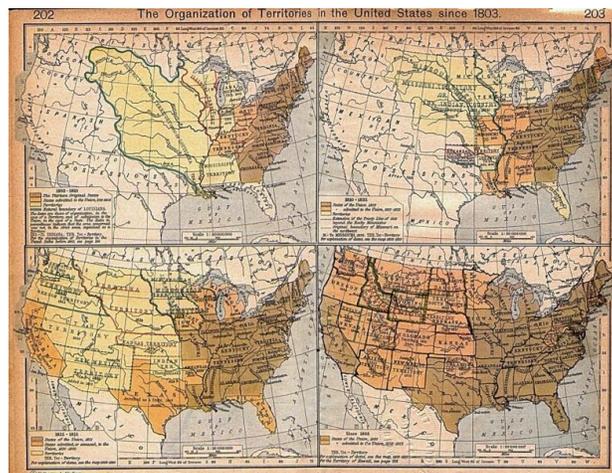
**E-mail:** KelliMccoy@pointloma.edu

**Office:** Colt 114

**Office hours:** After class or by appointment.

**Course Description:**

This course examines the major social, political, economic, and ideological conflicts and changes of the United States from 1815-1914. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the U.S. experienced profound changes, including industrialization, immigration, westward expansion, slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction. This course includes an analysis of the political leadership of Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln; the ideas of liberalism, nationalism, expansion, and industrialization; the social impact of religious revivals, slavery, and feminism; and the cataclysmic impact of the U.S.-Mexican, Civil, and Spanish-American wars as the nation hurtled toward world power status after World War I.



From *The Historical Atlas* by William R. Shepherd, 1923. Public domain.

**PLNU Mission:** 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.

### **History Program Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to...

- Complete a substantial historical project autonomously. (Assessed with the research paper.)
- Present and analyze, in written or oral presentation, different perspectives on an event from the past. (Assessed with the research paper, essays on exams, and Primary Source Discussion leadership.)
- Find appropriate materials online, in a library, or in the community and know how to cite them. (Assessed with the research paper.)

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to...

- Analyze the major events that shaped the United States from 1815-1914.
- Evaluate various types of primary and secondary sources.
- Write a research paper that exhibits their own original analysis of the sources.
- Explain the experiences of a diverse range of nineteenth-century Americans, including Black Americans, immigrants, Native Americans, and women.

### **Required Texts:**

**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](#)

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. (Any edition. Print version highly recommended, but also available for free online.)
- Jennifer Graber, *The Gods of Indian Country: Religion and the Struggle for the American West*

- James McPherson, *This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War*
- Pauli Murray, *Proud Shoes*
- Other readings will be accessed through Canvas

**Assessment and Grading:**

Please contact me at any point during the semester if you have questions about your grade.

Assignment distribution by percentage:		Letter grades assigned as follows:	
Reading/ Film Responses	10%	A=93-100	C=73-76.99
Participation	10%	A-=90-92.99	C-=70-72.99
Primary Source Discussion	10%	B+=87-89.99	D+=67-69.99
Research Paper Proposal	5%	B=83-86.99	D=63-66.99
Research Paper	20%	B-=80-82.99	D-=60-62.99
Midterm Exam:	20%	C+=77-79.99	F=0-59.99
Final Exam:	25%		

**Reading/ Film Responses:**

These are a way of rewarding you for thinking thoughtfully and critically about the reading assignments and helping to prepare you for participation in class discussions. **Responses must be submitted via Canvas before the time class starts.**

- 2 pages typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font
- I do NOT want a summary generated by AI. I want you to tell me your own thoughts about what you read/watched, how it affected you and/or what it made you think about.
- If I have specific questions I want you to answer, I'll list them in Canvas.
- The responses are to prepare you for our in-class discussions.
- Your written response can be about any of the readings assigned for that WEEK. You do not have to address every one of your reading assignments, but the reading(s) you discuss should be substantial ones (i.e. you're trying to show me that you did do the reading!).

**Participation**

Your engagement in class makes this course more fun and interesting for all of us! It also helps you and your classmates to learn the material better. Your participation grade includes your active contributions to our class discussions, your regular attendance (without which you can't participate, of course), and any online quizzes or discussions.

**Primary Source Discussion**

There will be one day where you are in charge of our class! You will select 3-4 primary sources that fit together and help us better understand the events we're studying. You will lead a discussion about the sources in class. You will explain the context and the authors of the sources,

and then guide the class in reading/viewing and discussing them. The sources must fit together thematically and provide an opportunity for analysis and comparison, as well as deepening our understanding of 19<sup>th</sup> century events. More instructions will be given in class and on Canvas.

### **Research Proposals and Papers**

You will write a 12-15 page research paper about a course-related topic of your choosing. Detailed guidelines will be handed out in class and posted on Canvas.

### **POLICIES:**

#### **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.

#### **Trigger Warning:**

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In HIS 3020, we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include sexual violence and physical violence, especially as it relates to slavery—but not limited to that. These are not marked in the syllabus, because they are topics that are likely to come up in class organically during our discussions. If you would like me to try to give you a warning ahead of time, please let me know and I will do my best, but I cannot always guarantee when we will discuss those themes, depending on what questions I get from students in class. Please be assured that ANYONE is always allowed to leave class if they need to.

The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are 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. 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 engagement in the area of 19<sup>th</sup>-century U.S. history, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

**Incompletes and Late Assignments:**

Please talk with me as soon as possible if for whatever reason you are having trouble completing your work, so that we can find the best solution. All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due, unless otherwise indicated on Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances. There are no make-up exams, unless you have contacted me in advance, in which case I *may* allow it depending on the circumstances. Late assignments will generally be subjected to a 10% penalty per day. However, if you contact me *more than 72 hours before the due date* and explain your circumstances (i.e. an unusual number of assignments due in other classes that week), your request for an extension will be considered. Emergencies will be dealt with depending on the individual circumstances. Please ask me for more information if you believe you will need to turn in an assignment late.

**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:**

Students may not record lectures or class discussions without prior permission from the professor.

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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) or find a list of campus pastors at [pointloma.edu/Title-IX](http://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](http://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](#)
- [Website](#)
- Email: [writingcenter@pointloma.edu](mailto:writingcenter@pointloma.edu)

## Course Outline

**Reading and other assignments are due on the dates listed**

Week 1	Monday- 9/1	No class- Labor Day
	Wednesday- 9/3	Do assignment on Canvas (watch film)
	Friday- 9/5	<b>Film Response due</b>
Week 2	Monday- 9/8	Begin reading: <i>The Gods of Indian Country</i> : “A Note on Terms” and “Introduction”  Begin finding a topic and sources for research paper
	Wednesday- 9/10	<i>The Gods of Indian Country</i> : “1803 to 1837” and “1838 to 1867”
	Friday- 9/12	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 3	Monday- 9/15	<i>The Gods of Indian Country</i> : “1868 to 1872” and “1872 to 1875”  Remember to also be working on your research paper proposal. I encourage you to discuss it with me!
	Wednesday- 9/17	<i>The Gods of Indian Country</i> : “1875 to 1881”
	Friday- 9/19	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 4	Monday- 9/22	<i>The Gods of Indian Country</i> : “1882 to 1892”
	Wednesday- 9/24	<i>The Gods of Indian Country</i> : “1893 to 1903” and “Epilogue”

	Friday- 9/26	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 5	Monday- 9/29	Work on Research Paper Proposal  <b>** Broadway show <i>Suffs</i> at San Diego Civic Theatre on Tuesday, 9/30 at 7pm **</b>
	Wednesday- 10/1	Work on Research Paper Proposal
	Friday- 10/3	<b>Research Paper Proposal Due</b>
Week 6	Monday- 10/6	<i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> through Ch 3
	Wednesday- 10/8	<i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> through Ch 6
	Friday- 10/10	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 7	Monday- 10/13	<i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> through Ch 9
	Wednesday- 10/15	<i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> through the end (incl. appendix written by Douglass after Ch. 11)
	Friday- 10/17	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 8	Monday- 10/20	No in-person class: Assignment on Canvas
	Wednesday, 10/22	No in-person class: Take <b>Midterm Exam</b> on Canvas
	Friday, 10/24	<b>No class- Fall Break</b>
Week 9	Monday, 10/27	<i>This Mighty Scourge</i> : Preface, Ch. 1 and 2

	Wednesday, 10/29	<i>This Mighty Scourge</i> : Ch. 3-5
	Friday, 10/31	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 10	Monday, 11/3	<i>This Mighty Scourge</i> : Ch. 6-8
	Wednesday, 11/5	<i>This Mighty Scourge</i> : Ch. 9-11
	Friday, 11/7	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 11	Monday, 11/10	<i>This Mighty Scourge</i> : Ch. 12-14
	Wednesday, 11/12	<i>This Mighty Scourge</i> : Ch. 15 and 16
	Friday, 11/14	<b>Reading Response Due</b>
Week 12	Monday, 11/17	<i>Proud Shoes</i> , Intro through Ch. 4
	Wednesday, 11/19	<i>Proud Shoes</i> , through Ch. 8
	Friday, 11/21	<i>Proud Shoes</i> , through Ch. 12
Week 13	Monday, 11/24	No in-person class. <i>Proud Shoes</i> , through Ch. 16 <b>Reading Response Due</b>
	Wednesday, 11/26	Thanksgiving Break
	Friday, 11/28	Thanksgiving Break
Week 14	Monday, 12/1	Work on research papers
	Wednesday, 12/3	Work on research papers
	Friday, 12/5	Work on research papers

Week 15	Monday, 12/8	Finish Research Papers
	Wednesday, 12/10	Finish Research Papers
	Friday, 12/12	<b>Research Paper Due</b>

**Final Exam:** Wednesday, December 17, 10:30am-1:00pm