

Lit 257 American Writers II

Spring 2019 Course Policies

Section 1 (MWF 8:30-9:25 AM,
Cabrillo Hall 101)
3 Units / LJWL Department

Professor: *Robbie Maakestad*
Office: *Bond Academic Center, 119*
Office Hours: *[MTRF 9:30-12:00]*
or by appointment

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“Art is a mystery and our critical prose only begins to penetrate it.” –Gerald Stern, Introduction to *Rose*

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 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.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Literature 257 is designed to provide students with an in-depth survey of American literature—represented by all its major genres—from the end of the Civil War until the present. Because the course provides a general survey, special attention will be given to the literature’s cultural context.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Closely read and critically analyze texts in their original languages and/or in translation.
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.
4. Create detailed and informed textual analysis of literary works that examine several of the fundamental concepts of literary study.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Bad Feminist by Roxane Gay **ISBN-13:** 978-0062282712

Black Panther: Long Live the King by Nnedi Okorafor **ISBN-13:** 978-1302905385

Citizen by Claudia Rankine. **ISBN-13:** 978-1555976903

Fun Home by Alison Bechdel. **ISBN-13:** 978-0618871711

Passage to Ararat by Michael J. Arlen. **ISBN-13:** 978-0374530129

Rose by Li-Young Lee. **ISBN-13:** 978-0918526533

The Dream of Water by Kyoko Mori. **ISBN-13:** 978-0449910436

The Way to Rainy Mountain by N. Scott Momaday. **ISBN-13:** 978-0826304360

Buy a \$5 student ticket ASAP for the Nnedi Okorafor Interview:

<https://bit.ly/2R3CDJi>

Additional readings may be posted to Canvas and shared with you (you'll need to print these out and bring them with you to class the day they are due)

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

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading:

Dates for the readings are clearly indicated on the schedule. Complete all reading prior to the class session when the text will be discussed.

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, a final exam, and two 3-5 page essays written outside of class. Students cannot pass the course without completing all of these major assignments. Late essays will receive a ten percent daily deduction and will not be accepted after one week.

Oral Presentation:

Individually, students will read a creative work by an American writer (Civil War to present) that has not been assigned in this course and present it to the class at the end of the semester. The presentation will be between 7-10 minutes in length. Each student will turn in a sixth reading journal on the work that they selected.

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 4 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 8 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.

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. 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. The same goes for the writing assignments: they are designed to increase your understanding of the texts and make class more productive. 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.

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 are going to 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. Offensive language, personal attacks, and disparagement of others' ideas will not be tolerated. 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 technology during class time unless a classroom activity calls for it to be used. This means cell phones, laptops, iPads, and other electronic devices. 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 so than typing notes, so by all means, *please take handwritten notes* throughout this class. Use of technology during class will result in lost participation points.

TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS

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

All **smaller assignments** must be posted to our class Canvas page *before the start of class 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 class period, and so on). Late essays must be brought to the next class period, though keep in mind the above penalty for each day late. Late essays will not be accepted after a week from the due date. It is your responsibility to ensure that I receive your essay on the day it is due. If you know you won't be in class on a day a major assignment is due, it's your responsibility to turn it in ahead of time. **I will not accept late homework, and 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. 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.

READING JOURNALS

For each assigned book, you'll have the option of writing one **Reading Journal** entry of two full pages (2 pages = onto page 3) that critically engages with some aspect of the text, and formulates a brief literary argument. You will be required to turn in **FIVE Reading Journals for the EIGHT books that we read**, so it's up to you which five you respond to. Journal entries must be posted to your Reading Journal page on the class Canvas page any time *before the start of class on the day they are due*. If some part of one of our readings speaks to you or you think of something interesting in chapter two, feel free to post your journal in advance of the deadline. Please see the Course Schedule for due dates. Each of the five journals will be worth 20 points, totaling 100 points.

NOTE: An additional (sixth) reading journal will be turned in as part of the Oral Presentation.

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 to 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, peer reviews, 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 1 point, up to a max of 40 points (40 non-exam MWF meetings). You can miss three classes without it affecting your grade (any points above 37 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 60 points of your participation grade, you'll earn a 40 if you're doing the basics of engaging with the class; you'll earn a 50+ if I see you regularly leaping in and making strong contributions; you'll earn a 39 or lower if you are frequently late, unprepared, inattentive, or disruptive.

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

- 150 points – Essay 1
- 150 points – Essay 2
- 100 points – Reading Journals
- 200 points – Midterm Exam
- 200 points – Final Exam
- 100 points – Oral 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)
WEEK 1		
Tuesday, Jan. 8	First Day of Class; Khaadzi Ghansah’s “A Most American Terrorist: The Making of Dylann Roof”	[Canvas .pdf]
Wednesday, Jan. 9	Arlen’s <i>Passage to Ararat</i> , pgs. V-54	
Friday, Jan. 11	Arlen’s <i>Passage to Ararat</i> , pgs. 55-99	
WEEK 2		
Monday, Jan. 14	Arlen’s <i>Passage to Ararat</i> , pgs. 100-154	
Wednesday, Jan. 16	Arlen’s <i>Passage to Ararat</i> , pgs. 155-201	
Friday, Jan. 18	Arlen’s <i>Passage to Ararat</i> , pgs. 202-250	
WEEK 3		
Monday, Jan. 21	MLKJ DAY—NO CLASS	
Wednesday, Jan. 23	Arlen’s <i>Passage to Ararat</i> , pgs. 251-293	

Friday, Jan. 25	Mori's <i>The Dream of Water</i> , pgs. 1-60	Turn in Reading Journal
WEEK 4		
Monday, Jan. 28	Mori's <i>The Dream of Water</i> , pgs. 61-100	
Wednesday, Jan. 30	Mori's <i>The Dream of Water</i> , pgs. 101-151	
Friday, Feb. 01	Mori's <i>The Dream of Water</i> , pgs. 152-204	
WEEK 5		
Monday, Feb. 04	Mori's <i>The Dream of Water</i> , pgs. 205-275	
Wednesday, Feb. 06	Excerpt [on Canvas] from Scott McCloud's <i>Understanding Comics</i> ; and <i>Black Panther: Long Live the King</i> , "Blackout"	Turn in Reading Journal
Friday, Feb. 08	<i>Black Panther: Long Live the King</i> , "The Sacrifice" and "Obinna's Folly"	
WEEK 6		
Monday, Feb. 11	<i>Black Panther: Long Live the King</i> , "Keep Your Friends Close: Parts 1 & 2"	
Wednesday, Feb. 13	<i>Black Panther: Long Live the King</i> , "Under the Bridge"	
Friday, Feb. 15	Lee's <i>Rose</i> , pgs. Foreward-19	Turn in Reading Journal
WEEK 7	WRITER'S SYMPOSIUM BY THE SEA	
Monday, Feb. 18	Lee's <i>Rose</i> , pgs. 20-33	Essay #1 Due
Tuesday, Feb. 19	Mandatory: Nnedi Okorafor Interview: 7:00pm Brown Chapel: https://bit.ly/2R3CDJi (student tickets are \$5)	
Wednesday, Feb. 20	Lee's <i>Rose</i> , pgs. 37-45	
Friday, Feb. 22	Lee's <i>Rose</i> , pgs. 46-58	
WEEK 8		
Monday, Feb. 25	Lee's <i>Rose</i> , pgs. 59-69	Turn in Reading Journal
Wednesday, Feb. 27	Momaday's <i>The Way to Rainy Mountain</i> , pgs. 1-35	
Friday, Mar. 01	MID-TERM EXAM	
WEEK 9		
Mar. 04-Mar. 08	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS	
WEEK 10		
Monday, Mar. 11	Momaday's <i>The Way to Rainy Mountain</i> , pgs. 36-64	
Wednesday, Mar. 13	Momaday's <i>The Way to Rainy Mountain</i> , pgs. 65-89	
Friday, Mar. 15	Gay's <i>Bad Feminist</i> , pgs. ix-43	Turn in Reading Journal
WEEK 11		
Monday, Mar. 18	Gay's <i>Bad Feminist</i> , pgs. 61-82, 128-153	
Wednesday, Mar. 20	Gay's <i>Bad Feminist</i> , pgs. 177-191, 207-253	
Friday, Mar. 22	Gay's <i>Bad Feminist</i> , pgs. 267-318	
WEEK 12		
Monday, Mar. 25	Bechdel's <i>Fun Home</i> , pgs. 1-23	Turn in Reading Journal
Wednesday, Mar. 27	NO CLASS—Make up for Okorafor Interview	
Friday, Mar. 29	NO CLASS—Presentation Work Day	
WEEK 13		
Monday, Apr. 01	Bechdel's <i>Fun Home</i> , pgs. 24-86	
Wednesday, Apr. 03	Bechdel's <i>Fun Home</i> , pgs. 87-150	
Friday, Apr. 05	Bechdel's <i>Fun Home</i> , pgs. 151-232	Essay #2 Due
WEEK 14		

Monday, Apr. 08
Wednesday, Apr. 10
Friday, Apr. 12

WEEK 15

Monday, Apr. 15
Wednesday, Apr. 17
Friday, Apr. 19

WEEK 16

Monday, Apr. 22
Wednesday, Apr. 24
Friday, Apr. 26

FINALS WEEK

Friday, May 3

Rankine's *Citizen*, pgs. 1-38
Rankine's *Citizen*, pgs. 39-80
Rankine's *Citizen*, pgs. 81-119

Rankine's *Citizen*, pgs. 120-161

Presentations

EASTER BREAK—NO CLASS

EASTER BREAK—NO CLASS

Presentations

Presentations; Course Evaluations

7:30-10:00 AM FINAL EXAM

Turn in Reading Journal

Turn in Reading Journal

**Turn in Presentation
Written Component**