

Point Loma Nazarene University
 Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages
Women Writers
Special Topic: Black Women Writers in the U.S.
LIT 353 (3 units)

Section 1: MWF, 8:30-9:25 a.m.
Section 2: MWF, 11:00-11:55 a.m.

Spring 2018
Location: Bond 103

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

Please turn off your cell phone, laptop, and other devices when you enter the classroom. Thanks!

PLNU Mission Statement: 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.

LJWL Department Mission Statement: Welcome to the Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages. Embodying the core values of a Christian liberal arts education in the Wesleyan theological tradition, and focusing on the power of language and story to shape us and our world, the LJWL Department and programs will provide students with knowledge, skills, and experiences to equip them to understand, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create texts as linguistic and/or artistic expressions of diverse human experiences. We value reading, writing, researching, speaking, and discussing as profound means of participating in the redemptive work of God in all of creation. The following document will provide you with the information sources and information guidelines to University and Departmental policies that apply to all courses taken in this Department.

Catalog Entry: An advanced study of selected works written by women; themes and genres studied may vary. The course focuses on questions related to gender, class, and race. Prerequisite(s): Fulfillment of the College Composition requirement, LIT 200, and Junior and Senior standing.

Course Description: When we read literature, we might find ourselves taken inside experiences that we could never have in our own lives, or we might find our own feelings and experiences articulated by someone else. Studying literature can make us more informed and compassionate human beings. Throughout the semester, we will be studying literature by Black women writers in the United States. We will learn some literary terms and theories to help us speak and write about literature, and we will work together as a class to understand the mechanics of these texts, their original contexts, and our own approaches to analyzing them. We will also take time to enjoy the artistry of the writing that we read together.

Required Materials

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *We Should All Be Feminists*. ISBN: 9781101911761.

Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen: An American Lyric*. ISBN: 9781555976903.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. ISBN: 9780156031820.

Additional readings and resources will be available in class and/or posted on Canvas.

The obvious things: pen/pencil, loose-leaf paper, folder for storage, etc.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to...	Related IDEA Outcomes	Assignments
Identify representative writers and texts in the English language tradition.	Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity	Readings, Reading Quizzes, Reflections, Creative Analysis, Recitation, Final Essay, Exams
Make observations about, respond creatively to, and analyze literature.	Developing creative capacities; Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing; Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view	Class Discussions, Reflections, Creative Analysis, Final Essay, Exams
Apply important literary terms and theories to speak and write about literature.	Gaining factual knowledge	Reading Quizzes, Class Discussions, Reflections, Creative Analyses, Final Essay, Exams
Articulate some intersections between literature and culture.	Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity; Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing;	Reflections, Creative Analyses, Final Essay, Exams

Diversity Statement: Point Loma Nazarene University is committed to diversity in the classroom, in its publications and in its various organizations and components. Faculty and staff recognize that the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of their colleagues and students are best served through respect toward gender, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture and other personal characteristics. In addition, the Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages is committed to taking a leadership position that calls for promoting a commitment to diversity in and out of the classroom and in the practices of writing, journalism, and the study of literature and languages.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Policy: In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by distributing all grades and papers individually. Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have

designated others to receive it in the “Information Release” section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the undergraduate student catalog.

PLNU Academic Accommodations: If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU’s Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class 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.

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. 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.

For our class’s purposes, writing is collaborative, and creative 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.

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 Attendance and Participation Policy: 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, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, 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.

CLASS POLICIES

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

Creative Analysis (30)	10% - 20 pts
Reflections (30 each)	20% - 40 pts
Reading Quizzes	15% - 30 pts
Recitation	10% - 20 pts
Midterm Exam	15% - 30 pts
Final Essay	15% - 30 pts
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>15% - 30 pts</u>

Total (approximate)

100% - 200 pts

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

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.

Attendance & Participation: Because discussion will be an important part of our class, your regular attendance and participation are required for you to be successful. Your first two absences will not count against your grade, but use them wisely. For each additional absence, your total grade will be lowered by 5%; if you miss class more than 6 times (over 2 weeks), you will automatically fail this course. Coming to class unprepared, staring at a screen, or being disruptive in class will also count as an absence. If you already know that you'll be missing many classes due to some pre-existing schedule conflict, you should not take this course at this time. Also, since arriving late to class is distracting to your classmates (and to me), you are expected to arrive on time. Two late arrivals will count as one absence. Truly perfect attendance (with no tardies or absences of any kind—you were literally present for all of every class meeting) will earn you 1% of extra credit at the end of the semester.

Readings: Readings are due on the date they're listed in the course outline. As often as possible, bring your copy of the assigned reading to class with you for use in discussion. Read actively and make notes directly on the text and/or on the side (especially make extensive notes about the readings on Canvas).

Reading Quizzes: On days when reading assignments are due, I will often give brief quizzes at the very beginning of class. They will require short answers to a couple of questions or a longer answer to one question. This will motivate you to do the assigned reading, and it is extra incentive to get to class on time. These quizzes cannot be made up. You should keep all quizzes in a notebook or a folder, along with all of your class notes and other assignments. **Save everything** throughout the semester so that you can look back on previous work and build upon

it. This will also allow you to keep track of your grade in the class and to ensure that my final calculations are accurate.

Reflections: During this semester, you will complete two reflections that will serve as a springboard for class discussion. These reflections will contain the following:

1. Copy one poem or half-page of prose from that day's reading *twice by hand*.
2. Type a 1-2 page reflection: What stood out to you or changed for you when you slowed down and wrote by hand? What features of literary artistry are important in this piece? Read more about the author and her context online (let Wikipedia lead you to a more reliable source; don't write a summary of the author's bio or historical moment, but let those inform what you're saying about the literature.) Look up any words or cultural references that you don't know. This should mostly be your own thoughts and observations, but be sure to cite your sources if you do use any information or ideas from elsewhere.
3. Type up three final questions that might be useful for us to discuss together in class. These questions should be specific to the piece (not generic questions that you could ask of any piece of literature).

You will sign up for reflection due dates at the beginning of the semester. You need to be present in class on the days when your reflections are due.

Creative Response: You will turn in a creative response to one assigned text of your choice at mid-semester. Each creative response will have two distinct parts:

1. *Creative piece*: Write a poem or a short piece of prose that somehow responds to one of our assigned texts. You might write a 21st century version of an older poem or an additional scene for *The Color Purple*, for example.
2. *Artist's statement*: Include a 1-paragraph artist's statement that discusses your writing process and choices, including any insights you gain about the original piece of literature.

Paper Format: All papers must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins, and in MLA format. (The only exception is the handwritten portion of your reflections.) See the MLA Format handout on Canvas for specific formatting guidance. Electronic submissions will not be accepted, except when approved by me or as required by the assignment.

Recitation: Because poems especially demand to be heard and remembered, you will memorize and recite for the class one of our assigned poems (or two very short poems, or see me to make arrangements for reciting part of an especially long poem). Your recitation should be practiced and nearly perfect. After your recitation, turn in a 1-2 page write-up about the poem and your experience of memorizing and reciting it: What new things did you notice? How did memorizing the poem affect your understanding, interpretation, and/or appreciation of the poem or poetry in general?

Exams: You will take a midterm exam and a final exam to demonstrate your knowledge of important authors, works, terms, and ideas covered in our class. If you read the literature closely,

take notes in class regularly, and study the texts and notes, you should have no problem passing. If you do not take one or both of these exams, you will automatically fail the course.

Final Essay: You will write a final essay for this course that will be due during the last week of classes. You will need to upload this essay to LiveText and bring a hard copy to class. More instructions will be provided later in the semester.

Due Dates: Dates when assignments are due are listed on the attached course outline; all written assignments are due at the beginning of class. I highly encourage you to visit with me one-on-one during office hours to run topics, thesis statements, or drafts by me. Once an assignment receives a grade, there will be no further opportunities to revise for a new grade. **Late work is not acceptable.** If unusual circumstances will keep you from completing an assignment on time, please make arrangements with me for an extension BEFORE the due date (or if you wake up sick, please email me ASAP with your assignment so it will not be counted late). Special arrangements can only be made in advance, not after a due date, except in the case of a real emergency. Please complete all readings on time as well. All coursework must be completed by the end of our final exam period.

Extra Credit: You may earn extra points in two ways (in addition to perfect attendance):

1. Visit the Tutorial Center to get feedback on your Reflections or Final Essay. Turn in a brief write-up telling me what you worked on, with whom, when, and how it has affected your writing. Turn this in with an assignment for up to a 2% grade boost on that paper.
2. Writing events go on frequently at PLNU and in our larger San Diego community (check out www.poetryinsandiego.com). Attend an author lecture, reading, or workshop and write a 1-2 page critical reflection over what was said and how you can apply it to your reading and/or writing of literature. Due within one week of the event. This will earn you a 1% grade boost in the class (up to 2 times).

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

PLNU Email: Your PLNU email account should be checked daily. 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.

Inclusive Language Statement: Because language is powerful and shapes the way we think, all public language used in this course, including written and spoken discourse, will be inclusive. This standard is outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and is the norm in university-level work. See the section on "Appropriate Language" at *The Purdue OWL*: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/608/01>.

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 in the class.

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

COURSE OUTLINE¹

T Jan 9	Introductions and syllabus
W Jan 10	Read full syllabus (on Canvas) Read MLA handout (on Canvas) Get the books! In Class: Defining terms Sign up for reflections
F Jan 12	Read Sojourner Truth (on Canvas)
M Jan 15	NO CLASS – MLK Day
W Jan 17	Read Phyllis Wheatley & June Jordan (on Canvas) Reflection 1
F Jan 19	Read Zora Neale Hurston (on Canvas) Reflection 2
M Jan 22	Read Anita Scott Coleman (on Canvas) Reflection 3
W Jan 24	Read Mae V. Cowdery (on Canvas) Reflection 4
F Jan 26	Read Gwendolyn Brooks (on Canvas) Reflection 5
M Jan 29	Read Maya Angelou (on Canvas) Reflection 6
W Jan 31	Read Audre Lorde (on Canvas) Reflection 7
F Feb 2	Read Lucille Clifton (on Canvas) Reflection 8

¹ This schedule may be changed at the instructor's discretion.

- M Feb 5 Read Toni Morrison (to middle of pg. 13)
- W Feb 7 Read Toni Morrison (to end) & Bernice Johnson Reagon (on Canvas)
Reflection 9
- F Feb 9 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (page numbers TBA)
Reflection 10
- M Feb 12 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
Reflection 11
- W Feb 14 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
Reflection 12
- F Feb 16 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
Reflection 1
- M Feb 19 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
Reflection 2
- **Bonus events*: Writers' Symposium by the Sea – all week!
Full schedule: <http://www.pointloma.edu/experience/academics/schools-departments/department-literature-journalism-modern-languages/events/writers-symposium>
- W Feb 21 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
Reflection 3
- F Feb 23 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
Reflection 4
- M Feb 26 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
In Class: Movie
- W Feb 28 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
In Class: Movie
- F Mar 2 Read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*
In Class: Movie & Discussion
- M Mar 5 – F Mar 9 SPRING BREAK! ☺

M Mar 12	DUE: Creative Response 1 Midterm Review
W Mar 14	Midterm Exam
F Mar 16	Read Mari Evans (on Canvas) Reflection 5
M Mar 19	Read Nikki Giovanni (on Canvas) Reflection 6
W Mar 21	Read Rita Dove (on Canvas) Reflection 7
F Mar 23	CONFERENCES (required for grades below B, optional for others) *Last day to drop
M Mar 26	Read Elizabeth Alexander (on Canvas) Reflection 8
W Mar 28	NO CLASS
R Mar 29 – M Apr 2	EASTER BREAK! ☺
W Apr 4	Read Natasha Trethewey (on Canvas) Reflection 9
F Apr 6	Read Allison Joseph (on Canvas) Reflection 10 * <i>Bonus event: After-Hours Poetry Party</i> Ryan Library, 3 rd floor, 5 p.m. (Bring a poem to read! We will not let the poetry shelves stay silent during National Poetry Month...)
M Apr 9	Read Lauren K. Alleyne (on Canvas) Reflection 11
W Apr 11	Read Claudia Rankine's <i>Citizen</i> (to pg. 79)

F Apr 13	Read Claudia Rankine's <i>Citizen</i> (to end)
M Apr 16	Read Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's <i>We Should All Be Feminists</i>
W Apr 18	Read Roxane Gay (on Canvas)
F Apr 20	Read Tracy K. Smith (on Canvas) Reflection 12
M Apr 23	Recitation Party!
W Apr 25	Recitation After-Party! DUE: Recitation Write-up
F Apr 27	DUE: Final Essay In Class: Final Exam Review

FINAL EXAM

Section 1

Wednesday, May 2
7:30-10:00 a.m.

Section 2

Friday, May 4
10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

*Mandatory attendance*²

² 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.