



Spring 2017

Meeting location: BAC 103	Instructor: Dr. Blessing, Professor of Literature
Meeting days: M/W/F	E-mail: CarolBlessing@pointloma.edu
Meeting times: 8:30-9:25am (sec 1) 11:00-11:55am (sec 2)	Office: Bond Academic Center 115 Phone: (619)849-2652
Final Exam: Mon. 5/1 7:30-10:00am (sec 1) Wed. 5/3 10:30-1:00pm (sec 2)	Office Hours: Mondays 2:30-3:30, Thursdays 2:00-3:00, and by appointment (email me to set up an appt.)

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.

WELCOME TO LIT 353, WOMEN WRITERS

“Women hold up half the sky.” Chinese Proverb, quoted in *The Woman Warrior*, Maxine Hong Kingston

Welcome to LIT353, Women Writers. This course presents voices of women from various ethnicities and economic classes. I believe that the good news of the Gospel is for all people, and it is out of my own faith that I am compelled to hear from people who are not always heard. While literature classes often cover “masterpieces” by male authors, there are countless other great works by women. As a feminist scholar who has studied and written extensively about women writers and representations of women in literature from ancient through contemporary times, as well as a person who has been on many life journeys, I am your guide and co-traveler in this class, not only sharing what I know but also encouraging your own analysis, insights, and journeys. We will read carefully, critically, thoughtfully, and separately ahead of class time, and then we will join together in our classes to wrestle with the texts and learn from each other’s views, honing reading, writing, thinking, and relational skills in the process.

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

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 or Senior standing.

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE STATEMENT

This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, in the category *Seeking Cultural Perspectives*. By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, faculty support the “survey of human endeavors from a historical, cultural, linguistic and philosophical perspective, including developing critical appreciation of human expression—both artistic and literary” (Catalog 2016-17).

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (ILOs, GELOs, CLOs)

<p>Context: Learning, Informed by our Faith in Christ ILO #1: Students will acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world while developing skills and habits that foster life-long learning</p>	
<p>GELO 1a <i>Written Communication:</i> Students will be able to effectively express ideas and information to others through written communication.</p>	
<p>GELO 1b <i>Oral Communication:</i> Students will be able to effectively express ideas and information to others through oral communication.</p>	
<p>GELO 1c <i>Information Literacy:</i> Students will be able to access and cite information as well as evaluate the logic, validity, and relevance of information from a variety of sources.</p>	
<p>GELO 1d <i>Critical Thinking:</i> Students will be able to examine, critique, and synthesize information in order to arrive at reasoned conclusions.</p>	
<p>GELO 1e <i>Quantitative Reasoning:</i> Students will be able to solve problems that are quantitative in nature.</p>	
<p>Context: Growing, In a Christ-Centered Faith Community ILO #2: Students will develop a deeper and more informed understanding of self and others as they negotiate complex environments</p>	
<p>GELO 2a Students will develop an understanding of self that fosters personal wellbeing.</p>	
<p>GELO 2b Students will understand and appreciate diverse forms of artistic expression.</p>	
<p>GELO 2c Students will demonstrate an understanding of the complex issues faced by diverse groups in global and/or cross-cultural contexts.</p>	
<p>Context: Serving, In a Context of Christian Faith ILO #3: Students will serve locally and/or globally in vocational and social settings</p>	
<p>GELO 3 Students will demonstrate an understanding of Christian Scripture, Tradition, and Ethics, including engagement in acts of devotion and works of mercy.</p>	
Course Learning Outcomes for LIT353: Women Writers	Corresponding Assignments
<p>CLO 1 Students will closely read and critically analyze texts. (GELO 1d, 2b, 2c)</p>	<p>Analyses, Quizzes, Class Work</p>
<p>CLO 2 Students will recall, identify, and use fundamental concepts of literary study to read texts: terms, modes/genres, element, periods (dates, writers, characteristics, developments). (GELO 1d, 2b)</p>	<p>Analyses, Group Presentations, Class Work, Exams</p>
<p>CLO 3 Students will connect the literary works with their own lives and with the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the works and their authors. (GELO 1d, 2b, 2c)</p>	<p>Analyses, Final Essay</p>

COURSE RATIONALE AND GOALS

This class will focus primarily on the evolution of women's writing, the concept of home, and the bildungsroman (coming of age story) as told by women writers, linking the works to the ideas of Virginia Woolf, who helped forge the path for contemporary women's writing. We will be discussing the following topics throughout the course:

- How do these works use the themes of growth and journeys?
- How do issues of race, class, and gender intersect in these works?
- How and why does the subject matter of female bildungsroman differ from those about males?
- What is the importance of home in these works?
- What do these women writers have to say about the importance of being able to tell their stories?

- How does feminist literary theory help us understand and analyze these works?
- Are these writers essentialist or constructivist in their views of the sexes?
- What place in the literary canon do these works deserve?
- What do these works say about the authors and their worlds, and ultimately, what do they have to say to us?

REQUIRED TEXTS (in order by course reading assignments)

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*.

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *We Should All Be Feminists*.

Plath, Sylvia. *The Bell Jar*.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*.

Kingston, Maxine. *The Woman Warrior*.

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*.

Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Bean Trees*.

Walls, Jeanette. *The Glass Castle*.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*.

Wesley, Patricia Jabbeh. *When the Wanderers Come Home*.

COURSE GROUND RULES

1. Bring the assigned book with you to class every day. This is a literature course and depends upon us reading and analyzing the works. We will reference the texts frequently, reading aloud, and using them for group discussion exercises and sometimes open-book quizzes.
2. **Do your own work for every written assignment and in every quiz and exam. See the section below on Academic Honesty.**
3. **PUT AWAY YOUR CELL PHONES DURING CLASS—NO TEXTING, RECEIVING TEXTS, OR PHONE CALLS DURING CLASS TIME.**
4. Make certain you know how to access your Canvas account for the course and your LiveText account.
5. If you are using your computer in class, it must be used only for note-taking, and you must sit in the front row. Class is not the time for email, social media, games, etc.
6. This is an interactive course, rather than a lecture course. We will interact with the texts and with each other. Your attendance and participation are essential. Daily work is crucial, as well as a grounding in context and critical approaches, and is reflected by the heavily weighted proportion of the analysis assignments, quizzes, and group work.
7. For each class meeting, you will be expected to have read the assigned material and written your analysis entry if there was one due. You also need to turn in the final paper on time in both hard copy and on LiveText, as well as to take the in-class exams at the time specified. No late work will be accepted, except in the case of medical emergencies.
8. **Because the Literature, Journalism, and Modern Language department recognizes the power of language, 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.**
9. Much of the work we will do in this class is cooperative, by nature of the class discussions and general feedback given to written work and/projects; thus 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.

10. No *Wikipedia*, *Sparks Notes*, or similar guides are to be used for papers or used as a substitute for the reading.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Quizzes, homework, analyses, papers, in-class writings, and the midterm and final exams may not usually be made up—no late work is accepted, except for emergency situations. If you have an excused absence, turn in your paper early or electronically. It is important to communicate with me regarding reasons for absences and any need for clarification of assignments. I don't give make-up quizzes. If you are on a sports or debate team that requires excused absences, talk to me the first week of class.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

If you are not going to do your own work, you should reconsider your decision to enroll in a university. 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.

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 the Disability Resource Center for additional information.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

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. If you are on a sports or debate team, let me know on the first day of class how that will affect your attendance and we will discuss how you will compensate for missing quizzes and other in-class work.

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

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Public Discourse: Much of the work we will do in this class is cooperative, by nature of the class discussions and general feedback given to written work and/projects; thus 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. Thinking of our class work as public and shared also gives us the chance to treat one another with gentleness and compassion.

Maintaining Your Own Class Schedule through Online Registration: You will be responsible for maintaining your own class schedule. Should you need to drop this or any course, please remember to drop the course before the drop deadline. If you need to drop a class, be sure to fill out and submit the official forms; simply ceasing to attend may result in a grade of F on your transcript.

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, and Modern 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.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Your grade for LIT 353 will be based on the following:

- **Attendance and active participation** in class, quizzes, and other in-class work: **10% of your grade**
- **Analysis work**—You will turn in one to two assignments on Canvas each week, as per the following instructions: **20% of your grade**

Once a week, post a 350 word entry on Canvas, answering the question of the day and posing a new question for the class. Canvas Journal postings are due by 10:00pm the night before class. In other words, if you are writing an analysis for Chimamanda Ngozi Adiché's *We Should All Be Feminists* that we will cover in class on 1/20, you would turn in your Canvas entry by 10:00 pm on 1/19.

Format: Typed, Double-spaced, 350 words—due as indicated on the syllabus—one per week.

There should be five indentations in each analysis—five sections consisting of: one sentence, three paragraphs, and one sentence.

Write a thesis statement that answers the question of the day—One sentence opening—no introductory paragraph.

Use three paragraphs to support your thesis.

Write a one-sentence question on the work that you would like to ask the class.

Use the text itself—your analysis must be fully based in the literary work; all assertions must be backed up with examples from or references to the work. Use parenthetical references and list the page numbers of the text you cite.

The analysis must be your own work—not taken in part or the whole from any other sources.

Grading is based on:

1. Thoroughness of response—demonstrating good understanding of the text
2. Originality of ideas
3. Critical thought
4. Strength of thesis/argument
5. Strength of support from the text

On the first day of each new work, you will turn in a 300-word typed summary of a book chapter, article, or essay on the writer and/or her work. You may use a reliable, scholarly print or database source. Include a citation for your sources, in MLA format. Do not summarize *Spark's Notes* (or similar works), book reviews, or student essays. Here are some good databases to consult—The Gale Literature Resource Center, JSTORE, and Academic Search Premier. Here is a link to MLA format:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/24/>

- **Group oral presentation and handout** on of the assigned writers, to be presented on the first day for each writer: **10% of your grade** .

Sign-up in class. The reports are to be **12 TO 15 minutes long** (please time your presentation ahead of time, so that I do not need to cut you off) and must include the following information:

- ♦ Biographical background to author
- ♦ Major works/awards of the author

- ♦ How the author's personal and historical contexts influenced this work
- ♦ Author's writing style/genre of the work
- ♦ What theme/issue/question you feel is most important connected to this author's work.
- ♦ Major critical debates about the work—you should also lead a brief class discussion about these debates.

These presentations are to be researched using sources outside of our textbooks and **must include a one-page, two-sided handout for the class on backgrounds to the author and her work. Include a Works Cited list in MLA format of at least three outside scholarly resources on the author and her work; do not use Wikipedia or similar materials. You may also use other visual aids.**

- **A midterm exam: 20%--Short answer and essay**
- **A final exam: 25 %--Short answer and essay**
- **A final essay, turned in as a printed document on 4/28: 15%--** The essay prompt will be given later in the course.

The following questions will be considered when assignments –analysis work, essays on exams, and the final paper--are evaluated and graded. All questions may not be relevant to each assignment.

- Does the paper respond to the prompt or question of the day?
- Does the paper make an argument?
- Is the claim or thesis clear and plausible? Is it stated and contextualized effectively?
- Is there sufficient and relevant evidence to ground the claim?
- Does the paper effectively select and use material from the course readings to support and validate the analysis? Does it summarize, paraphrase, and quote effectively?
- Does the paper use all relevant details from the readings both to support the claim and to provide a context for the case being made? Does it ignore material that should be taken into account?
- Does the paper demonstrate an awareness of how the argument being proposed fits into the larger set of claims made about the topic in our course readings?
- Does the paper work through the complexities of the material (as opposed to oversimplifying or overgeneralizing)?
- Is the paper well-organized?
- Does it cite material from the sources using MLA documentation style?
- Are there sentence structure problems or spelling and grammatical errors that interfere with the meaning?
- An "A" essay (a 5 for the analysis work) demonstrates excellent work. It has something to say and says it well. It develops its argument clearly and consistently, demonstrating a complex understanding of the assignment, and does so using varied sentence structure. It often rises above other essays with particular instances of creative or analytical sophistication. There may be only minor and/or occasional grammatical errors.
- A "B" essay (a 4 for the analysis work) demonstrates good work. It establishes a clear claim and pursues it consistently, demonstrating a good understanding of the assignment. There may be some mechanical difficulties, but not so many as to impair the clear development of the main argument. While a "B" essay is in many ways successful, it lacks the originality and/or sophistication of an "A" essay.
- A "C" essay (a 3 for the analysis work) demonstrates adequate work. It establishes an adequate grasp of the assignment and argues a central claim. In addition, the argument may rely on unsupported generalizations or insufficiently developed ideas. It may also contain grammatical errors.
- Work that earns a grade of "D" or "F" (a 2,1, or for the analysis work) is often characterized by the following problems: it fails to demonstrate an adequate understanding of the assignment; it fails to articulate an adequate argument; and/or it contains significant grammatical problems

PERCENT	GRADE
93-100	A
90-92	A-
88-89	B+
83-87	B
80-82	B-
78-79	C+
73-77	C
70-72	C-
68-69	D+
63-67	D
60-62	D-

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

DATE	IN CLASS COVERAGE	WORK DUE
1/10	Course Introduction; Handouts on women's writing and bildungsroman	Analysis due this week
1/11	Virginia Woolf—Backgrounds, <i>A Room of One's Own</i> , pp. 3-59 What is Woolf trying to show through her comparison of the men's and women's colleges?	
1/13	Woolf: <i>A Room of One's Own</i> , pp. 60-118 What does Woolf say about the reasons why women have not written in earlier decades?	
1/16	The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—No Classes	Read an article by or about MLK
1/18	Sarah Bessey: <i>Jesus Feminist</i> , online essay http://media.patheos.com.s3.amazonaws.com/Media/BC.JesusFem.Excerpt.pdf What does Bessey mean by the term "Jesus Feminist"?	Analysis due this week
1/20	Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: <i>We Should All Be Feminists</i> Why should we all be feminists, according to Adichie?	
1/23	Sylvia Plath—Backgrounds/Poetry handouts	Read and summarize one critical article on Plath.
1/25	Plath: <i>The Bell Jar</i> , pp. 1-50 What types of women are represented by the <i>Bell Jar's</i> characters?	Analysis due this week
1/27	Plath: <i>The Bell Jar</i> , pp. 51-103 How do society's views of women affect Esther?	
1/30	Plath: <i>The Bell Jar</i> , pp. 104-150 Do you sympathize with or dissociate from Esther?	Analysis due this week
2/1	Plath: <i>The Bell Jar</i> , pp. 151-216 What does the title mean? Is Esther "well"?	
2/3	Alice Walker: Backgrounds, Poetry and Essay handout	Read and summarize one critical article on Alice Walker
2/6	Walker: <i>The Color Purple</i> , pp. 1-60 Why is this work written in the form of letters?	Analysis due this week
2/8	Walker: <i>The Color Purple</i> , pp. 61-121 Is this work anti-male?	
2/10	Walker: <i>The Color Purple</i> , pp. 122-182 How are Nettie's and Celie's stories connected?	
2/13	Walker: <i>The Color Purple</i> , pp. 183-246 What do you think of Celie's view of God?	Analysis due this week
2/15	Walker: <i>The Color Purple</i> , pp. 247-296 How is home constructed in the ending? How has home changed over the course of the novel?	
2/17	Walker: <i>The Color Purple</i> , Movie Excerpts	In-class worksheet
2/20	Maxine Hong Kingston—Backgrounds; <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , "No Name Woman"	Read and summarize one critical article on Kingston.
2/22	Kingston: <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , "White Tigers" Explain the allegory and significance of <i>The Woman Warrior</i> —Fa Mu Lan.	Analysis due this week
2/24	Kingston: <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , "Shaman" How is Kingston's mother a "woman warrior"?	
2/27	Kingston: <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , "At the Western Palace" How do Kingston's female relatives' stories intersect hers?	Analysis due this week
3/1	Kingston: <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" What prejudices does the author have to deal with? How does she deal with them?	
3/3	Midterm Exam	In-Class Exam
3/6-10	Spring Break Week—No Classes	Keep reading
3/13	Cisneros—Backgrounds/Cisneros poetry handout	Read and summarize one critical article on Cisneros.
3/15	Cisneros: <i>The House on Mango Street</i> , pp. 3-52 What is the voice of the narrator? Why is this voice chosen?	Analysis due this week

3/17	Cisneros: <i>The House on Mango Street</i> , pp. 53-110 Is this specifically a female bildungsroman?	
3/20	Kingsolver: Backgrounds; on-line essay http://johnwchilibraryhhs.weebly.com/uploads/1/5/1/8/1518127/saying_grace.pdf	Read and summarize one critical article on Kingsolver
3/22	Kingsolver: <i>The Bean Trees</i> , pp. 1-67 What role does the setting play in this novel?	Analysis due this week
3/24	Kingsolver: <i>The Bean Trees</i> , pp. 68-136 How does Kingsolver portray Nature?	
3/27	Kingsolver: <i>The Bean Trees</i> , pp. 137-199 How does Taylor's story fit the bildungsroman model?	Analysis due this week
3/29	Kingsolver: <i>The Bean Trees</i> , pp. 200-246 Discuss the view of motherhood in the novel.	
3/31	Jeanette Walls: Backgrounds; <i>The Glass Castle</i> , pp. 3-72	Read and summarize one critical article on Jeanette Walls.
4/3	Walls: <i>The Glass Castle</i> , pp. 73-148 How would you describe the narrative voice in this memoir?	Analysis due this week
4/5	Walls: <i>The Glass Castle</i> , pp. 149-213 What is Walls' attitude toward the challenges she encounters?	
4/7	Walls: <i>The Glass Castle</i> , pp. 214-288 How and why does Walls' life differ from her brother's?	
4/10	Patricia Jabbeh Wesley: <i>When the Wanderers Come Home</i> —Selections to be assigned	Read and summarize one article on the Liberian Civil War
4/12	Wesley: <i>When the Wanderers Come Home</i> —Selections to be assigned How does being an exile change Wesley's view of home?	Analysis due this week
4/13-17	Easter Break—No Classes	Celebrate the resurrection of Christ
4/19	Jhumpa Lahiri: Backgrounds; <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i> : "A Temporary Matter," and "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine"	Read and summarize one critical article on Lahiri or her work.
4/21	Lahiri: <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i> : "Interpreter of Maladies," "Sexy" How does Lahiri depict male/female relationships?	Analysis due this week
4/24	Lahiri: <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i> : "Mrs. Sen's " and "This Blessed House" Describe the cross-cultural encounters in one work.	Analysis due this week
4/26	Lahiri: <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i> : "The Third and Final Continent" How does the concept of new worlds or of relocation play a central role in this story?	
4/28	Course Wrap-up and review	Paper DUE
5/1	Final Exam, Monday, 5/1 7:30-10:00am Section One	
5/3	Final Exam, Wednesday 5/3 10:30am to 1:00pm, Section Two <i>From the Schedule of Classes: "The published time for the final examination is one of the considerations when enrolling for a course. Students are expected to arrange their personal affairs to fit the examination schedule."</i>	In-Class Exam