

Point Loma Nazarene University  
 Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages  
**Special Studies in Writing**  
**Retelling the Bible: A Multi-Genre Writing Workshop**  
**WRI 4090 (3 units)**

**Section: 01**

**Time: TR, 11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.**

**Fall 2020**

**Location: Zoom**

Instructor: Dr. Katie Manning, kmanning@pointloma.edu

Phone: 619-849-2200, x2432

Office: Bond 124

Office Hours: TR, 9:30-10:30 a.m., and other times by appointment

Course Website: <https://canvas.pointloma.edu>

\*Please review the [Netiquette Guidelines](#) on Canvas early and often. Thanks!\*

**Catalog Entry:** An intensive study of a selected problem by an individual or group under the direction of a member of the faculty. May be repeated to a total of six units.

**Course Description:** Students in this class will craft an original project that draws from midrash and theo-poetics in order to question, interpret, or otherwise engage with the Bible. We will read examples of literary retellings of Scripture across genres and spend time workshopping students' writing. Writers of poetry (including spoken word and song lyrics), fiction, nonfiction, and/or drama are all welcome. This course may be taken as an elective, or it may count in place of a 300-level workshop (WRI3021, 3022, or 3023)

### Required Materials

All common class readings will be posted on Canvas.

You will choose and obtain additional individual readings after the semester begins.

A writing notebook/journal of your choice

**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.

### Course Learning Outcomes

*Students who complete WRI 4090 will be able to:*

1. identify (**knowledge, comprehension**) targeted aspects of the writing craft in professional works of various genres; (**W PLO 2**)
2. employ (**application, synthesis**) research techniques as necessary to create advanced works that address the demands of their genres; (**W PLO 1**)

3. craft (**synthesis**) original creative work as part of a self-assigned, focused project; **(W PLO 1)**
4. apply (**application**) workshop techniques for constructive criticism of peers and in turn take criticism and use it to improve their own work; **(W PLO 1)**
5. format (**application, evaluation**) texts in a genre-appropriate and professional manner for submission to workshop and publication; **(W PLO 3)**
6. present (**application, evaluation**) written work to live audiences, demonstrating strategies for audience engagement and oral communication. **(W PLO 4)**

**Course Credit Hour Information:** In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

### CLASS POLICIES

\*NOTE: We are experiencing a global pandemic, so please take my policies with a grain of salt and a spoonful of sugar. tl;dr Please don't disappear. Talk to me if you're struggling, and I will help you make a plan. I want you to complete this course successfully.

Grade Distribution: In order to receive credit for the course, all of the following must be completed. Failure to complete any major assignment will result in failure of the course.

Reading Discussions, Drafts, & Workshops	50%
<u>Portfolio &amp; Final Exam (Reading)</u>	<u>50%</u>
<i>Total</i>	100%

### 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 = Excellent 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 4 times (over 2 weeks), you will automatically fail this course. Coming to class unprepared, misusing 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. Always 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.

Assignments: You will turn in several early and revised drafts of writing. Some of these will have assigned styles or content, but most will 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 extensively.

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). For each workshop, you will be responsible for reading the pieces before class, writing initial comments (in the form of a letter to the author), and having the reading and comments with you 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.

Portfolio: Early in the semester, you will submit a proposal that includes two parts:

- 1) A reading assignment and schedule, which you will create in consultation with me. This could include texts in the genre you'll be writing (novels or books of poetry, for example), or it could be creative work across genres that engage with the same biblical text you've chosen to pursue (essays and songs around Jesus' birth, for example), or it could be theoretical texts in theopoetics or midrash, or it could be some combination of these.
- 2) A project description, in which you will describe the biblical text, creative process, research, experience, theme, style, genre, and/or other unifying element that will guide your writing for the rest of the semester. This may be a new project or a continuation of a

previous project, and it could be a collection of poems, a few short stories, a novella, a series of essays, a play, a song cycle, etc.

At the end of the semester, you will turn in a final portfolio that includes a title and cover, a brief (~2 page) introduction to your work that describes why and what you've included and reflects thoughtfully on your readings/influences/research, and your revised well-crafted writing.

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.

Final Exam: Attendance is mandatory. For your final, you will give a brief overview of your self-assigned reading; a practiced, polished introduction to your writing project; and a reading of your revised work. You will be graded on the quality of your content and overall delivery.

Due Dates: Dates when assignments are due are listed on the attached course outline; unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class. I highly encourage you to visit with me one-on-one during office hours to run project ideas or any questions 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 when possible (or if you wake up sick, please email me ASAP with your assignment so it will not be counted late). Please complete all readings on time as well. All coursework must be completed by our final meeting. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Student-Directed Conferences: During the semester, you must meet with me on scheduled conference days to discuss your writing, reading, or whatever else you'd like. Dates for these mandatory conferences are on the course outline. This will be part of your attendance grade. Feel free to meet with me more often than this!

Extra Credit (in addition to perfect attendance): Writing events go on frequently at PLNU and in our larger San Diego community. Attend an author lecture, reading, or workshop and write a 1-2 page critical analysis and reflection over what was said and how you can apply it to your reading and/or writing. Due within one week of the event. This will earn you 1% (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: Please check your PLNU email account 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*.

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 OUTLINE<sup>1</sup>

#### **WEEK 1**

T Aug 18\*                      In Class: Greetings! Introductions!  
     Visiting poet: Katie Manning ☺  
     Writing exercise  
     Class planning survey

\*Bonus Event: Diane Glancy on *Image* Summer Stage  
 12 p.m. Pacific ([Register here](#) to receive the Zoom link.)

R Aug 20                      DUE: Read [Emily Dickinson's Midrash of Jacob and the Angel](#)  
     Read "[Makebelieve](#)" by Pádraig Ó Tuama  
     Read full syllabus  
     In Class: Discussion, Share erasures, Writing exercise

#### **WEEK 2**

T Aug 25                      DUE: Read "[Theopoetics: Process and Perspective](#)" by L.B.C. Keefe-Perry  
     In Class: Discussion, The Mountain Goats, Writing exercise

R Aug 27                      DUE: Read "[Abruptly](#)" by Gwendolyn Brooks  
     and "[Unholy Sonnet #1](#)" by Mark Jarman  
     In Class: Discussion, excerpt from *Severance*, Writing exercise  
     \*Think about what kind of project you might want to pursue!

#### **WEEK 3**

T Sep 1                        DUE: Read "[brothers](#)" by Lucille Clifton  
     and "[Job, the Comet-man](#)" by Diane Glancy  
     and "[A Religious Discussion](#)" by Ace Boggess  
     In Class: Discussion, Writing exercise

R Sep 3                        DUE: Read "[The Book of Genesis](#)" by Morgan Parker

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<sup>1</sup> This schedule may be changed at the instructor's discretion.

and "[A Golden Shovel to the God of Bloodshed](#)" by Jermaine Thompson  
 and "[This Little Light of Mine Speaks](#)" by Crystal Valentine  
 In Class: Discussion, Writing exercise

**WEEK 4**

T Sep 8

DUE: Read "[Sarah's Choice](#)" by Eleanor Wilner  
 and "[The Woman Who Cut Judas Down](#)" by Nicelle Davis  
 In Class: Discussion, Writing exercise

R Sep 10

DUE: Read "[Today Is Friday](#)" by Ernest Hemingway  
 In Class: Discussion, Writing exercise

**WEEK 5**

T Sep 15

CONFERENCES  
 - Talk over reading schedules and project descriptions

R Sep 17

DUE: Proposal  
 In Class: Share proposals, Prepare for workshops

**WEEK 6**

T Sep 22

Workshop 1

R Sep 24\*

Workshop 2

\*Bonus Events: PLNU's 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Poetry Day with Genevieve Kaplan  
 Nature writing workshop, 3-4 p.m.  
 Poetry reading, 7-8 p.m.  
 (Events will be hosted on Zoom. Links forthcoming in Announcements.)

**WEEK 7**

T Sep 29

Workshop 3 &amp; Workshop Menu

R Oct 1

Workshop 4

**WEEK 8**

T Oct 6

Workshop 5

R Oct 8

Workshop 6

**WEEK 9**

T Oct 13

CONFERENCES  
 - Check in about project progress and self-assigned reading

R Oct 15

CONFERENCES  
 - Check in about project progress and self-assigned reading

**WEEK 10**

T Oct 20 DUE: Read “After the Fire of Writing: On Revision” by Diane Glancy  
and “How to Revise a Poem” by Katie Manning  
In Class: Discussion, Revision Time

R Oct 22 Workshop 7

**WEEK 11**

T Oct 27 Workshop 8

R Oct 29 Workshop 9

**WEEK 12**

T Nov 3 Workshop 10

R Nov 5 Workshop 11

**WEEK 13**

T Nov 10 Workshop 12

R Nov 12 Workshop 13

**WEEK 14**

T Nov 17 Workshop 14

R Nov 19 Workshop 15

**WEEK 15**

T Nov 24 DUE: Read “How to Give a Reading” links  
In Class: Discuss “How to Give a Reading”  
Post reminders for yourself (group Jamboard)

R Nov 26 THANKSGIVING!

**WEEK 16**

T Dec 1 \*Finals Schedule\*  
10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
DUE: Portfolio  
In Class: Final Readings

## 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.

**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.

### **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.

### **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. 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.

*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.



### **PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy**

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic adjustments, modifications or auxiliary aids/services. At Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), these students are requested to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. (DRC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). The DRC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 (a) prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. After the student files the required documentation, the DRC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to meet that student's specific learning needs. The DRC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. The AP must be implemented in all such courses.

If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all of the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course. PLNU highly recommends that DRC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

### **PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy**

Regular and punctual attendance at all **synchronous** class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), 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 drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered **asynchronously** and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

### **Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition**

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

### **Spiritual Care**

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the [Office of Spiritual Development](#).

**Use of Technology**

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information.

Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. If a student is in need of technological resources please contact [student-tech-request@pointloma.edu](mailto:student-tech-request@pointloma.edu).

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

**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 online (distance education) outside of California.