

Point Loma Nazarene University  
 Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages  
**Women Writers**  
**Special Topic: Black Women Writers in the U.S.**  
**LIT 3053 (3 units)**

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

**Spring 2021**  
**Location: Zoom & Canvas**

Instructor: Dr. Katie Manning, [kmanning@pointloma.edu](mailto: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 review the [Netiquette Guidelines](#) on Canvas early and often. Thanks!\*

**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 2000, 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 and to apply what we read to our own lives.

### Required Materials

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

Peters, Charnell. *Un-Becoming*. Thirty West, 2019. Available [here](#).

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

Students who complete this course 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. Contemporary critical approaches
  - f. Extra-literary research
3. Analyze the social, cultural, ethnic, gendered, and/or historical contexts of the works and their authors, and connect the texts with their own lives.
  4. Create detailed and informed textual analysis of literary works employing secondary sources and applying concepts of literary study and literary theory.

**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 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.

Attendance & Participation	20% - 40 pts
Discussion Posts & Responses (10 each)	60% - 120 pts
Creative Analysis	10% - 20 pts
<u>Final Essay</u>	<u>10% - 20 pts</u>
<i>Total (approximate)</i>	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. Each Zoom session will be worth 3 points. If you miss class more than 2 weeks of class meetings, you will automatically fail this course (PLNU policy). 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.

Discussion Posts & Responses: Each week, you'll post in a group discussion board in response to specific prompts for that week's reading. These will serve as jumping off places for some of our discussions on Zoom, and you'll also post responses to each other's work on Canvas. The due dates and rubrics for these discussion posts and responses will all be detailed on our Canvas site.

Creative Analysis: 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 Response: Create an original piece of creative writing (poem, short fiction, etc.) that somehow responds to one of our assigned texts. Include a 1-paragraph artist's statement that discusses your writing process and choices.
2. Analysis: Write a focused 2-page analysis of the assigned text that you responded to in part 1. Make an interesting claim (thesis) about the text with your first sentence, and then back up your claim with evidence (quoted lines and specific details) from your chosen text.

Bad thesis (just a fact): Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 is a sonnet.

Good thesis (arguable claim): Although Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 might appear to criticize an imperfect woman, Shakespeare actually uses this sonnet to criticize the hyperbolic beauty standards that are commonly used in other love poems.

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.

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; 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.

Extra Credit (in addition to perfect attendance): Writing events go on frequently at PLNU and in our larger San Diego community (and now virtually all over the place). 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 up to 5 points (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*.

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

Watch welcome video  
Read full syllabus & MLA handout  
Get the books!

M Mar 1

**Zoom Session**  
Introductions  
Defining terms

W

Reading 1: Phillis Wheatley, Sojourner Truth

F

Discussion Post 1

### WEEK 2

M Mar 8

**Zoom Session**  
Discussion Response 1

W

Reading 2: Zora Neale Hurston, Anita Scott Coleman, Mae V. Cowdery

F

Discussion Post 2

### WEEK 3

M Mar 15

**Zoom Session**  
Discussion Response 2

W

Readings 3: Gwendolyn Brooks, Maya Angelou

F

Discussion Post 3

### WEEK 4

M Mar 22

**Zoom Session**  
Discussion Response 3

\*TWR

Bonus: Attend [Writer's Symposium](#) events this week!  
Wed., 4:30: Generative Poetry Workshop  
Wed., 7:00: Interview with Katie Manning & Margarita Pintado Burgos

W

Readings 4: Audre Lorde, Lucille Clifton

F

Discussion Post 4

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

WEEK 5	
M Mar 29	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 4
W	Reading 5: Toni Morrison
F	Discussion Post 5
WEEK 6	
M Apr 5	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 5
W	Reading 6: Alice Walker's <i>The Color Purple</i> : 1-89, ends "think about her."
F	Discussion Post 6
WEEK 7	
M Apr 12	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 6
W	Reading 7: Alice Walker's <i>The Color Purple</i> : 90-183, ends "and kiss me."
F	Discussion Post 7
WEEK 8	
M Apr 19	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 7
*T	Visiting Author: Charnell Peters at 11 a.m. in WRI3021 We're reading her chapbook in Week 14, so definitely attend if it's humanly possible for you to get there at this time!
W	Reading 8: Alice Walker's <i>The Color Purple</i> : 184-288 (the end)
F	Discussion Post 8
WEEK 9	
M Apr 26	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 8

F	DUE: Midterm Creative Response
WEEK 10 M May 3	No Zoom!
W	Reading 9: Ai, Nikki Giovanni, Rita Dove, Elizabeth Alexander
F	Discussion Post 9
WEEK 11 M May 10	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 9
W	Reading 10: Claudia Rankine's <i>Citizen</i>
F	Discussion Post 10
WEEK 12 M May 17	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 10
W	Reading 11: Natasha Trethewey, Allison Joseph, Tracy K. Smith
F	Discussion Post 11
WEEK 13 M May 24	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 11
W	Reading 12: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's <i>We Should All Be Feminists</i>
F	Discussion Post 12
WEEK 14 M May 31	<b>Zoom Session</b> Discussion Response 12
W	Reading 13: Lauren K. Alleyne, Charnell Peters, Amanda Gorman
F	Discussion Post 13

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**FINAL EXAM**

Section 1 (8:30 class)

Wednesday

7:30 -10:00 a.m.

Section 2 (11:00 class)

Friday

10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

DUE: Final Essay

*Mandatory attendance*

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## 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.