



Point Loma Nazarene University  
Department of Psychology

**PSY 3021 ON4 - Abnormal Psychology**

3 Units

Spring 2025

**Meeting Days/Times: Thursdays 3:30 pm - 6:00 pm**

**Meeting Location: Zoom (link to be provided)**

**Final Exam: Due Thursday, 05/08/2025 @ 11:59 pm**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Mia J. Covello, M.A.
<b>Email:</b>	mcovello@pointloma.edu
<b>Phone:</b>	N/A
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Zoom appointments scheduled upon request.

**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 is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

**Course Description**

Study of etiology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of various forms of abnormal behavior from various psychological perspectives.

Letter grade.

**Prerequisite(s):** One of [CHD 1050](#), [PSY 1003](#), [PSY 3008](#), or consent of instructor.

**Program and Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Critically evaluate, reflect on, and discuss the core diagnostic ideas/concepts of abnormal psychology.
2. Learn the fundamental theories, generalizations, and conceptualizations of psychological disorders.
3. Form an understanding of the practical applications of psychological research and various psychological theories related to mental health diagnoses, disorders, and treatments.
4. Gain a basic understanding of various therapeutic theories and specific interventions used to treat psychological disorders.
5. Identify key factors that contribute to psychological well-being.

### Required Text

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class.

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

Texts:

- Comer, R. J., & Comer, J. S. (2022). *Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology* (10th ed.). Worth Publishers.
- American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Desk reference to the diagnostic criteria from DSM-5-TR*. American Psychiatric Association Publishing.

### 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 three (3) unit class delivered over 16 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.

### Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	

	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	
--	----------	----------	----------	--

### **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 [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

### **Content Warning**

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In Abnormal Psychology (PSY 3021), all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics covered in the course from the Comer & Comer course textbook include, but are not limited to, Chapter 5: Disorders of Trauma and Stress; Chapter 7: Suicide; Chapter 9: Eating Disorders; Chapter 10: Substance Use and Addictive Disorders; Chapter 11: Sexual Disorders and Gender Variations; Chapter 14: Disorders Among Children and Adolescents; and Chapter 15: Disorders of Aging and Cognition. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of Abnormal Psychology, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

### **Trigger Warning**

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In Abnormal Psychology (PSY 3021), we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics covered in the course from the Comer & Comer course textbook include, but are not limited to, Chapter 5: Disorders of Trauma and Stress; Chapter 7: Suicide; Chapter 9: Eating Disorders; Chapter 10: Substance Use and Addictive Disorders; Chapter 11: Sexual Disorders and Gender Variations; Chapter 14: Disorders Among Children and Adolescents; and Chapter 15: Disorders of Aging and Cognition. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus with “\*”. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods

for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of Abnormal Psychology, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

### **Incompletes and Late Assignments**

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the dates noted in the syllabus for when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Late work is accepted for 10 days, including weekend days, after the original due date. 5% will be deducted from the grade for each late day. For example, an assignment submitted 3 days late can earn up to 85% of the available points. End-of-semester assignments may not be submitted late after the final exam (to accommodate faculty grading deadlines). In other words, no coursework will be accepted after May 8th, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. Work submitted late may also be graded later.

### **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 your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

### **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.

### **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 Recording Notification®**

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

### **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. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

### **Artificial (AI) Policy**

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) to generate ideas, but you are not allowed to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

### **PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy**

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center ([EAC@pointloma.edu](mailto:EAC@pointloma.edu) or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It

is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

### **Language and Belonging**

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced a bias incident regarding language, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [www.pointloma.edu/bias](http://www.pointloma.edu/bias).

### **Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination**

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at [pointloma.edu/Title-IX](http://pointloma.edu/Title-IX). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at [counselingservices@pointloma.edu](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) or find a list of campus pastors at [pointloma.edu/title-ix](http://pointloma.edu/title-ix).

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [www.pointloma.edu/bias](http://www.pointloma.edu/bias).

### **General Course Expectations**

Any changes to the syllabus (including course expectations and assignments) are possible. Changes will be announced in class and/or as a Canvas announcement. Students are responsible for actively

monitoring Canvas updates. Students are responsible for all content/material that is found within the Canvas course.

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

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, 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 withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

### **Course Modality Definitions**

1. Online Courses: These are courses with class meetings where all instruction and interaction is fully online.
  - a. Synchronous Courses: At least one class meeting takes place at a designated time.
  - b. Asynchronous Courses: All class meetings are asynchronous.
2. Hybrid Courses: These are courses with class meetings that take place both in the classroom and online synchronously and/or asynchronously.
3. In-Person Courses: These are courses that meet in person with the instructor and students in a physical classroom setting. With approval by the area dean, this may include up to 25% of qualified class interactions through a Learning Management System (such as Canvas).

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.

### **Use of Technology**

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid 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, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible) to complete exams online.

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

### **Loma Writing Center**

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work

toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- Appointment Calendar: <https://plnu.mywconline.com/>
- Website: <https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center>
- Email: [writingcenter@pointloma.edu](mailto:writingcenter@pointloma.edu)

### **Final Grade Breakdown**

- Class Participation/Activities (10%)
  - Class participation includes having cameras on during class and participating in class discussions when applicable. If you have a reason that you cannot have your camera on during class, please email the course instructor to communicate that to them.
- Weekly Reading Question Responses (25%)
- Case Conceptualization Presentation (15%)
- Midterm Exam (15%)
- Reflection Paper (15%)
- Final Exam (20%)

### **Assignments At-A-Glance:**

#### **Weekly Reading Question Responses (10 points each):**

Each week students will read the required chapter from Comer & Comer, and any other required readings from the DSM-5 TR Desk Reference, and submit a 250-word response to the question provided in the Canvas Module for that week.

#### **Case Conceptualization Presentation (50 points):**

Students will select a character from a movie or T.V. show and will create a case conceptualization of that character. At the beginning of the course, students will sign up for a designated time to present throughout the course. Students will provide a 10-minute presentation of their conceptualization. The course instructor will provide detailed instructions about sign-ups and expectations for this assignment in Canvas during the first two weeks of the course.

#### **Midterm Exam (100 points):**



The midterm examination will consist of multiple-choice questions and short answer questions based on the readings and lecture materials covered in the first portion of the course. The instructor will provide a study guide with the topics, terms, etc. that students will need to know for the exam. Further details and the study guide will be provided by the instructor at a later date in the course. The midterm exam will be due on Friday of Week 7 (02/28/2025) at 11:59 p.m.

**Research and Reflection Paper (50 points):**

Students will write a research and reflection paper on a topic from a list provided by the course instructor. Students will write a 5-page paper (APA or MLA format, double-spaced, 12-point font). The instructor will provide further details throughout the course, and a detailed rubric for the paper will be posted in Canvas at a later date. The Research and Reflection Paper will be due on Friday of Week 13 (04/11/2025) at 11:59 p.m.

**Final Exam (100 points):**

The final examination will consist of multiple-choice questions and short answer questions based on the readings and lecture materials covered throughout the course. The instructor will provide a study guide with the topics, terms, etc. that students will need to know for the exam. Further details and the study guide will be provided by the instructor at a later date in the course. The final exam will be due on Thursday of Finals Week (05/08/2025) at 11:59 p.m.

**Lomabooks Instructions for Students:**

*This course is part of our course material delivery program, LomaBooks. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.*

*You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.*

*For more information about LomaBooks, please go: [HERE](#)*

**Course Schedule**

Week # & Topics	Assigned Reading/Materials	Assignments & Due Dates
Week 1: Introduction & History of Abnormal Psychology	Comer & Comer: Ch. 1	- <b>No assignments due.</b>
Week 2: Models of Abnormal Psychology	Comer & Comer: Ch. 2	- <b>Week 2 Reading Question Response:</b>

		Due 01/22 @ 11:59 pm
Week 3: Clinical Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment	Comer & Comer: Ch. 3	- <b>Week 3 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 01/29 @ 11:59 pm
Week 4: Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Related Disorders	Comer & Comer: Ch. 4; DSM-5 TR: Anxiety Disorders; Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders	- <b>Week 4 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 02/05 @ 11:59 pm
*Week 5: Disorders of Trauma and Stress	Comer & Comer: Ch. 5; DSM-5 TR: Trauma- and Stress-Related Disorders; Dissociative Disorders	- <b>Week 5 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 02/12 @ 11:59 pm
Week 6: Depressive and Bipolar Disorders; Harm to Self; **Note: Potentially Triggering Content** Midterm Exam Review	Comer & Comer: Ch. 6; Ch. 7 DSM-5 TR: Bipolar and Related Disorders; Depressive Disorders	- <b>Week 6 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 02/19 @ 11:59 pm
*Week 7: Disorders Featuring Somatic Symptoms	Comer & Comer: Ch. 8; DSM-5 TR: Somatic Symptoms and Related Disorders	- <b>Week 7 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 02/26 @ 11:59 pm - <b>Midterm Exam:</b> Due 02/28 @ 11:59 pm
*Week 8: Eating Disorders	Comer & Comer: Ch. 9; DSM-5 TR: Feeding and Eating Disorders	- <b>Week 8 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 03/05 @ 11:59 pm
<b>Week 9: Spring Break NO SYNCHRONOUS CLASS MEETING</b>	<b>NO ASSIGNED READINGS</b>	- <b>No assignments due.</b>
*Week 10: Substance Use and Addictive Disorders	Comer & Comer: Ch. 10; DSM-5 TR: Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders	- <b>Week 10 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 03/19 @ 11:59 pm
*Week 11: Sexual Disorders and Gender Variations	Comer & Comer: Ch. 11; DSM-5 TR: Sexual Dysfunctions; Gender Dysphoria; Paraphilic Disorders	- <b>Week 11 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 03/26 @ 11:59 pm
Week 12: Schizophrenia and Related Disorders	Comer & Comer: Ch. 12; DSM-5 TR: Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders	- <b>Week 12 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 04/02 @ 11:59 pm
Week 13: Personality Disorders	Comer & Comer: Ch. 13;	- <b>Week 13 Reading</b>

	DSM-5 TR: Personality Disorders	<b>Question Response:</b> Due 04/09 @ 11:59 pm - <b>Research/Reflection Paper:</b> Due 04/11 @ 11:59 pm
*Week 14: Disorders in Child and Adolescent Populations  <b>EASTER RECESS - NO SYNCHRONOUS CLASS</b>	Comer & Comer: Ch. 14; DSM-5 TR: Neurodevelopmental Disorders; Elimination Disorders; Disruptive, Impulse Control, and Conduct Disorders	- <b>Week 14 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 04/16 @ 11:59 pm
*Week 15: Disorders of Aging and Cognition	Comer & Comer: Ch. 15; DSM-5 TR: Neurocognitive Disorders	- <b>Week 14 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 04/23 @ 11:59 pm
Week 16: Law, Society, and the Mental Health Profession; Final Exam Review	Comer & Comer: Ch. 16	- <b>Week 15 Reading Question Response:</b> Due 04/30 @ 11:59 pm
Week 17: Finals Week	<b>NO ASSIGNED READINGS</b>	- <b>Final Exam:</b> Due 05/08 @ 11:59 pm