

# PSY4090-1 SP25 - Special Studies In Psychology - The Psychology of Motivation


 Edit



Psychology Department

Spring 2025

PSY 4090-1 The Psychology of Motivation (4 units)

<b>Instructor:</b>	Alexandra N. Bitter, Ph.D.
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:abitter@pointloma.edu">abitter@pointloma.edu</a> ( <a href="mailto:abitter@pointloma.edu">mailto:abitter@pointloma.edu</a> )
<b>Office Phone:</b>	(619) 849-3054
<b>Office:</b>	Culbertson Hall 104 (Downstairs)
<b>Office hours:</b>	<b><u><a href="#">Click here to book an appointment!</a></u></b>  ( <a href="https://calendar.app.google/QCzCbfgqTTkH8Eat5">https://calendar.app.google/QCzCbfgqTTkH8Eat5</a> ) You must schedule an appointment 12 hours before or the system will prevent you from scheduling. If the available times don't work for you, shoot me an email and we can find something that works for both of us :)
<b>Teaching Assistant:</b>	Lyndsay Martins
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:lmartins0021@pointloma.edu">lmartins0021@pointloma.edu</a> ( <a href="mailto:lmartins0021@pointloma.edu">mailto:lmartins0021@pointloma.edu</a> )



<b>Class Location:</b>	Taylor Hall 313
<b>Class Meetings:</b>	M/W/F; 1:30 PM - 2:35 PM
<b>Department:</b>	Psychology
<b>Units:</b>	4
<b>Final written exam:</b>	Wednesday 1:30 PM - 4:00 PM
<b>Textbooks</b>	<p>Pink (2009) Drive: The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us</p> <p>Clear (2018) Atomic Habits: An Easy &amp; Proven Way to Build Good Habits &amp; Break Bad Ones</p>

## About Me

I hail from the agriculturally rich and beloved city of Fresno, California. My interest in psychology began in high school during an elective peer counseling class. From there, I ventured down to San Diego to attend Point Loma Nazarene University (sounds familiar...), where I took classes that nurtured my curiosity and introduced me to research. Along the way, I had professors who were passionate, knowledgeable, and persistently encouraging, and I thought, “This seems like a pretty good way to spend my life.” After graduation, I moved to Wyoming and earned my doctorate in Psychology at the University of Wyoming. And now, here I am—grateful to be back at PLNU and excited to walk alongside you on your own academic journey!

## 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

Motivation is the “why” of human behavior: Why do we act certain ways? Why do we have certain thoughts and feelings? Why do some events motivate us, while others do not? These questions can be answered through a variety of lenses. In this course, we'll consider how our biology, psychology, and culture help us understand our “why.” We'll also discuss how we can better accomplish our why through goal setting, the creation of habits, and c



identification and regulation. Through a combination of readings, lectures, discussions, and hands-on practice, you will be evaluated on your understanding, professionalism, and ability to apply and communicate course material. By the end of the course, I hope you find these skills to be not only useful and engaging but also essential for your growth as a psychologist and a human in general.

Course Learning Outcomes

You will learn to:

- Define motivation and emotion and distinguish between their components, including biological, psychological, and cultural factors that shape human behavior.
- Summarize and evaluate key theories of motivation, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-determination theory, and expectancy-value theory, as well as major frameworks for understanding emotion, including basic emotion theory and the dimensional model of affect.
- Explain the principles of goal-setting and habit formation, and analyze their effectiveness in driving behavior and achieving long-term outcomes.
- Identify and practice strategies for recognizing, managing, and regulating emotions to improve personal well-being and interpersonal relationships.
- Critically evaluate motivational and emotional processes in real-world scenarios, such as workplace performance, educational achievement, and personal growth, using theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence.
- Apply concepts of motivation and emotion to hands-on exercises, such as creating personal goals, developing habits, and practicing mindfulness and self-reflection, to enhance personal and professional development.

Objectives will be achieved through reading of the written materials, attention during lectures, and active participation in class exercises.

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 four-unit class delivered over 15 weeks. Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided by the university or our accrediting bodies.

Assessment and Grading

Assessment

Homework/In-Class Exercises	40%
Discussion Lead	10%



Book Reflections	15%
Final Project: Application	20%
Professionalism	15%
	<b>100%</b>

### **Homework/In Class Exercises**

A portion of class will be dedicated to lecture and the other portion of class will be dedicated to discussion and applied activities.

### **Professionalism**

My hope is that the skills you learn in this class will translate to your aspirations, whatever they may be. This class is a low stakes environment for you to learn, practice, and hone your skills. One necessary skill is professionalism. Professionalism encompasses a host of components. In this class you will be expected to:

- Participate
- Be prepared
- Be familiar with course policies
- Be kind, respectful, and helpful
- Be on task and pay attention
- Do your fair share when working with others

Feedback will help you to understand your own strengths and growth areas related to professionalism. Feedback will be received twice: in the middle of the semester and at the end of the semester. Midterm feedback will act as a portion of your final grade. If this midterm grade is not what you hoped for, the feedback will hopefully serve to stimulate constructive conversation among group members. Everyone will provide feedback one more time at the end of the semester. This feedback will result in your final grades. These grades will be determined by both your classmates' observations as well as my own. Professionalism is numerically and objectively calculated based on survey responses. My own observations are considered equivalent to other students you have worked with, and survey responses are averaged across to produce a final grade. These averages are then transferred to the professionalism rubric. The most effective way to display commensurate (A+) professionalism is to communicate, delegate, listen, and be a nice human.



You are evaluating: **Ross Oakes Mueller**

Across the semester, they...

	Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
Participated in class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have been prepared for class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have been familiar with course policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have been kind	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have been respectful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have been helpful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have been on task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have paid attention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have done their fair share	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Grade Scale

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89.99	C+ 77-79.99	D+ 67-69.99	F Less than 59
A- 90-92.99	B 83-86.99	C 73-76.99	D 63-66.99	
	B- 80-82.99	C- 70-72.99	D- 60-62.99	

### 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.

### LATE ASSIGNMENTS & EXTENSIONS

#### Assignments

Each day an assignment is late reduces the original assignment ceiling by 5%, up to a maximum of 50% lost (e.g., one day = 95%, two days = 90%, ten days = 50%). After ten days, the assignment is no longer eligible for credit without an official excused absence. However, you can also request an assignment extension. You can either receive an automatic two day extension or request more time if necessary. If you're interested, complete the form [here \(https://pointloma.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0fuXXRNHUy39w34\)](https://pointloma.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0fuXXRNHUy39w34). You must complete the form 24 hours before the assignment deadline. Otherwise, the initial late assignment policy stands. Late work will be accepted



until the last week of classes. Official excused absences are given by the Provost's Office. Please be aware that the official PLNU policy is that illnesses are not excused absences, even with a note from a health care provider.

## **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](https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/tug-catalog/academic-general-policies/) ⇨ (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/tug-catalog/academic-general-policies/>) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY**

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) in this course. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly identified as such, including the specific tool(s) used. This means you must cite when using AI, following [APA style](https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt) ⇨ (<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>) for your citations. If you do not cite your sources, this is considered plagiarism. Additionally, solely copying AI-produced text without significant modification is also considered plagiarism. AI-generated text must be altered to incorporate your own voice, insights, and understanding. The first time a violation occurs, you will receive a warning; subsequent violations will result in a zero on the assignment. Importantly, all group members must be in unanimous agreement over the use of AI tools.

## **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.

## **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 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 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) (<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).

## CHANGE IN SYLLABUS OR SCHEDULE

It is possible that I will make modifications to the syllabus or schedule during the semester. If this occurs, I will make an announcement by email, in class, or both.

Course Schedule:

Timeframe	Required Reading	Motivated Reflection	Book Club	Reflections/Holidays
Week 1: Jan. 13th - Jan. 19th		None	None	No Class Friday
Week 2: Jan. 20th - Jan. 26th	Drive - Intro & Chapter 1	Wednesday (Jan. 22nd)	Friday (Jan. 24th)	No Class Monday - MLK Jr. Day
Week 3: Jan. 27th - Feb. 2nd	Drive - Chapters 2 & 2a	Wednesday (Jan. 29th)	Friday (Jan. 31st)	
Week 4: Feb. 3rd - Feb. 9th	Drive - Chapters 3 & 4	Wednesday (Feb. 5th)	Friday (Feb. 7th)	
Week 5: Feb. 10th - Feb. 16th	Drive - Chapter 5 & 6	Monday (Feb. 10th)	Wednesday (Feb. 12th)	No Class Friday - PLNU Presidential Inauguration
Week 6: Feb. 17th - Feb. 23rd	Drive - Type I Toolkit	Monday (Feb. 17th)	Wednesday (Feb. 19th)	No Class Friday
Week 7: Feb. 24th - Mar. 2nd	Atomic Habits - Introduction & Chapter 1	Wednesday (Feb. 26th)	Friday (Feb. 28th)	





Week 8: Mar. 3rd - Mar. 9th	Atomic Habits - Chapters 2 & 3	Wednesday (Mar. 5th)	Friday (Mar. 7th)	
March 10th - 16th: Spring Break!				
Week 9: Mar. 17th - Mar. 23rd	Atomic Habits - Chapters 4 & 5	Wednesday (Mar. 19th)	Friday (Mar. 21st)	
Week 10: Mar. 24th - Mar. 30th	Atomic Habits - Chapters 6 & 7	Wednesday (Mar. 26th)	Friday (Mar. 28th)	
Week 11: Mar. 31st - Apr. 6th	Atomic Habits - Chapters 8 - 10	Wednesday (Apr. 2nd)	Friday (Apr. 4th)	
Week 12: Apr. 7th - Apr. 13th	Atomic Habits - Chapters 11 - 14	Wednesday (Apr. 9th)	Friday (Apr. 11th)	
Week 13: Apr. 14th - Apr. 20th	Atomic Habits - Chapters 15 - 17	Monday (Apr. 14th)	Wednesday (Apr. 16th)	No Class Friday - Easter Break
Week 14: Apr. 21st - Apr. 27th	Atomic Habits - Chapters 18 - 20 & Conclusion	Wednesday (Apr. 23rd)	Friday (Apr. 25th)	No Class Monday - Easter Break
Week 15: Apr. 28th - May 4th	No Book Club!			No Class Friday - Psychology Department Out of Town for Conference
Finals Week: May 5th - May 9th				Wednesday: 1:30-4:00

