



Psychology 3021: Abnormal Psychology
Point Loma Nazarene University, Department of Psychology
Section 1, Online Synchronous, Summer 2025, 3 units
Course Syllabus

Professor: Jessie Tibbs, Ph.D. (pronouns: she/her)

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Meeting Days, Times & Location: Online on Zoom (Mon & Wed 3:30pm-5:00pm)

Final Exam: Opens Wed 6/11/25 @ 3:30pm, Closes Fri 6/13/25 @ 11:59pm

Online Drop-In Hour: Online via Zoom, Fridays 12:30pm-1:30pm (or by appt)

REQUIRED TEXT:

Brown, B. (2021). *Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of the Human Experience*. NYC, NY. Random House.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS: (These are available **for free** in e-book form from the PLNU library! I encourage you to access these through the library's website.)

Hofman, S. G. (Ed). (2017). *Clinical Psychology: A Global Perspective*. Hoboken, NJ. Wiley- Blackwell.

Lilienfeld, S.O., & Arkowitz, H. (2017). *Facts and Fictions in Mental Health*. Hoboken, NJ. Wiley-Blackwell.

Additional required readings and course content will be posted within unit modules on Canvas by professor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to "abnormal" psychology. This course is intended to engage students in examination of various diverse lenses through which societies have previously and currently view mental health; to explore various kinds of psychopathology; theories about the causes of different mental health differences, disabilities, and disorders; current and historical methods of treatment; consider multicultural and diversity aspects as they relate to the major concepts of this course; and apply this knowledge to their personal understanding of mental health.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Learn the history behind mental health disorders and behind western diagnostic classification systems
2. Examine core symptoms and features of psychological disorders
3. Consider competing approaches and theories attempting to explain how disorders develop
4. Explore how aspects of human diversity may affect the expression of psychopathology

5. Employ a scientific approach to understanding psychological disorders
6. Exercise critical thinking skills to evaluate information about mental health and treatment and their sources
7. Dispel common myths about mental health
8. Expand compassion toward mental health differences, disorders, and disabilities.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

Although we strive for objectivity in science, the reality is that most research and dissemination of knowledge is subjective and has been formed by a very small group of privileged voices. I acknowledge that some of the textbooks and many of the studies cited within were authored by white cisgender men. I am working each semester to increase the diversity of voices from which we learn this material, and I also acknowledge that I have a long way to go in this effort. As we will discuss this semester, it is important to think critically about the biases present in any information we consume, and we will certainly engage in that practice as it applies to the content of this course. Please contact me if you have any suggestions for improving the course materials. Further, it is my intention to create a safe environment in which all students are able to learn. I believe that supporting diversity of thought, perspective, and experience is one way to do so. Another way is working to honor your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, denomination, disability, etc.). To help accomplish these goals:

- If you have a name and/or pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official PLNU record, please let me know (if you feel comfortable)!
- I know that all of our lives are busy and are (hopefully) made up of lots of other things aside from college classes. If your life outside of this course is conflicting with your effort to be successful in our class (e.g., parental/caregiving activities, veteran/military responsibilities, work responsibilities, etc.), please let me know so we can find a time to meet. I want to be a resource for you and will work to support your efforts to learn in this class.
- Students are expected to be respectful of and practice compassion for one another. It is important to remember that everyone has a right to form and hold their opinion on issues covered in class, and discussions must be respectful. Although you may not always agree with one another, this class is intended to provide an open forum for the fluid exchange of ideas. Remember, as a group, you represent a broad range of backgrounds, including diversity of culture, gender, race, sexuality, region/country of origin, disability, denomination, veteran status, etc. and it is my experience that fostering respect for this diversity will result in a deeper, more meaningful learning experience for us all. If you ever have feedback on ways to improve this aspect of the course, I am very grateful to be provided the opportunity to learn from such feedback.
- I am always in the process of learning and un-learning about oppression, intersectionality, minoritization, stigma, and diversity. If something occurred in class (by me or anyone else) that made you feel uncomfortable (including microaggressions, etc.), please talk to me about it. If you do not feel comfortable talking to me directly, you can discuss with another trusted faculty member in the Psychology or another department, or [make a report of bias/harassment incident](#).

WELLNESS, RESPECT, & PRIVACY

Mental health is a sensitive topic for most of us, especially the further we dive into content across the semester. If you feel significantly emotionally distressed, please seek help. PLNU students can access mental health resources for free via the [counseling center](#) (619-

849-3020; visit M-F 8-12:15, 12:45-4:30 in Taylor Hall).

During class discussions about psychological disorders or experiences please assume that someone in the room either deals with these issues personally or has someone close to them who does. It is certainly acceptable to ask questions and expand your understanding, but please be aware that each topic may be personally sensitive for your classmates.

Everyone has a right to privacy. Sometimes during class, a student may feel called to share a personal story related to mental health. These stories should be held with the utmost respect and should not be shared with anyone outside of class (unless you have talked to the person and gotten their permission to share it). Even if you share the story without identifying information (e.g., names), the uniqueness of the story could unintentionally reveal that person's identity. Further, students should never feel pressured to reveal personal information. Utilize the same respect and caution in privacy when sharing someone else's story with the class.

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 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 & GRADING:

Student grades will be posted regularly in the Canvas gradebook. It is important to read the comments posted in the grade book as these comments are intended to help students improve their work. Grades will be based on the following:

Exams: There are five exams, each worth 40 points. Exams will include multiple-choice, fill in the blank, matching, and/or short-answer items requiring both recall/recognition and application of key concepts. The final (5th) exam is non-cumulative and will include only material covered during the final unit of class. Exams will cover material from the lectures and assigned reading/content. You are responsible for all the material covered in the readings, other assigned content, and lecture material. Exams are open-book and open-note, but you still need to study the material in preparation for the exams, as they are timed. **You have the option to re-take one exam of your choice.** In order to do this, please contact the professor to arrange your selected exam to be re-opened for you and your highest score will be recorded. As described in the AI policy below, use of AI software (i.e., ChatGPT) for submitted work, including exams, is not permitted.

Exams are available as indicated on the due dates and will close and become unavailable afterward. If you unexpectedly miss an exam due to circumstances beyond your control, you can use your exam re-take to take the missed exam.

Artificial Intelligence (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 (including exam short answer responses) to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

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. 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.

Synchronous Zoom Class Sessions: You are expected to attend and actively participate in class sessions and will be awarded attendance points. You will be awarded 10 points for attending 8 of the 9 scheduled live classes (for a total of 80 points; you can miss 1 class without penalty). I know that life happens, so this is my way of balancing rewarding regular attendance with flexibility! In order to earn these points, you must:

- Arrive on time. Individuals who arrive more than ten minutes late will not be given points (unless discussed with the professor in advance). Perpetually arriving late 5-9 minutes late to class will result in a deduction of attendance points.
- Keep your camera on for the entirety of class. I understand that life happens and at times you need to temporarily turn off your camera for a variety of reasons (e.g., bathroom, children/spouse/roommates interrupting). That is okay. However, you are expected to plan to actively attend this course and arrange to attend in an environment conducive to your learning and participation and in real-time. If you need to have your camera turned off, you must send me an email before class (I understand that some days you may need to have your camera off for unforeseen circumstances, so if you communicate with me in advance, you will not lose points). If I do not receive an email in advance of class, having your camera off for the majority of the class will be considered an absence and you will not receive attendance points.
- Make sure you attend in a relatively quiet and private space free of distractions. Students will not receive participation points if they are driving a car, or actively engaged in other activities (i.e., engaging in conversation with roommates, walking outside, at work). I treat this class just as seriously as any in-person course, and I expect you to reserve this class time just like you would if we were face-to-face.
- Attend the entire class session. I will be taking attendance at the start and end of class. If you leave class early (without discussing it with me in advance), attendance points will be deducted.

Extra Credit: There are several options for extra credit. A maximum of 20 points of extra credit may be obtained for the semester. All extra credit must be turned in on Canvas (Extra Credit assignment) by 6/13/2025 at 11:59pm. You can receive extra credit through the following means:

- Eight points per Diversity/Equity-Related Response Paper (paper must be at least 2 pages, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins). The purpose of this extra credit opportunity is to seek out a peer-reviewed research paper that focuses on an aspect of diversity, intersectionality, anti-racism, and/or systemic oppression within the field of psychology and to reflect on the research paper as it relates to abnormal psychology. These research papers must be scientific manuscripts published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal (please contact the professor for further information on such

articles/journals). Each response paper should summarize the main findings/implications of the manuscript and also must include two discussion questions you had after reading the paper (i.e., questions you could propose to a class for further discussion of the material). Diversity Response Papers completed in response to a non-scientific non-peer reviewed source will not be awarded points. Submit the response paper on Canvas by the due date above.

- Two points per hour for volunteering at a facility involved in the provision of mental health services. Please record your hours on a piece of paper, include the facility's name/basic info, your supervisor's name and contact info, and have your supervisor sign the paper. Scan in and submit the signed paper on Canvas by the due date specified above.
- Two points per hour volunteering in a research lab if you are not otherwise being compensated. Please record your hours on a piece of paper, include the lab's name/basic info, your supervisor's name and contact info (i.e., faculty member or graduate student), and have your supervisor sign the paper. Scan in and submit the signed paper on Canvas by the due date specified above.

Late assignments: All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the posted due date. If you know in advance that you will have to miss an exam, you will need discuss with me why you cannot take the exam on the scheduled days, obtain approval in advance, and arrange to take the exam in advance. If you unexpectedly miss an exam due to circumstances beyond your control, you can use your one exam re-take to take the exam after the exam date. Other course material turned in past the due date (without communicating with me in advance) will be automatically docked 5 points. No late assignments will be accepted after the final day of class. If life events interfere with class, please contact me as soon as possible so we can determine possible next steps.

Final Course Grades:

Final course grades will be based on points earned on class attendance, online assignments/discussions, five exams, and any extra credit submitted. All components of the class must be completed by Friday, 6/13/2025 by 11:59pm.

Class Points by Category

<i>Category</i>	<i>Points</i>
Class attendance	80
Online Assignments	220
Exams	200
Total	500

Grade Scale Based on Percentage of Points Earned

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	

Course Schedule (subject to change by professor)

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

1. Pre-Course Survey (0 points, completion required by 5/13)
2. Read Syllabus
3. Syllabus Quiz (due 5/13 @ 11:59pm)
4. Discussion – Introduction Videos (due 5/14 @ 3:30pm)
5. Course Success Brainstorm Survey (completion required by 5/16 @ 11:59pm)

WEEK/UNIT 1 – INTRO, HISTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH BIAS & STIGMA; ASSESSMENT, & DIAGNOSIS

1. Week 1, Class 1 Readings/Assigned Content
2. Week 1, Class 1 Zoom Class Attendance
3. Week 1, Class 2 Readings/Assigned Content
4. Week 1, Class 2 Zoom Class Attendance
5. Week 1 Knowledge Practice Crossword (DUE 5/18 @ 11:59pm)
6. Week 1 Discussion – (DUE 5/18 @ 11:59pm)
7. Week 1 Exam – (OPENS 5/16, CLOSSES 5/18 @ 11:59pm)

WEEK/UNIT 2 – NEURODEVELOPMENT, NEUROCOGNITION, AND ADDICTION

1. Week 2, Class 1 Readings/Assigned Content
2. Week 2, Class 1 Zoom Class Attendance
3. Week 2, Class 2 Readings/Assigned Content
4. Week 2, Class 2 Zoom Class Attendance
5. Week 2 Knowledge Practice Crossword (DUE 5/25 @ 11:59pm)
6. Week 2 Asynchronous Assignment (DUE AT END OF SEMESTER - (6/13 @ 11:59pm))
7. Week 2 Exam (OPENS 5/23, CLOSSES 5/25 @ 11:59pm)

WEEK/UNIT 3 – EMOTIONS, DEPRESSION, SUICIDE, MANIA & BIPOLAR DISORDERS

1. Week 3, Class 1 Readings/Assigned Content – ASYNCHRONOUS ONLY MEMORIAL DAY
2. Week 3, Class 1 – MEMORIAL DAY – NO SYNCHRONOUS ZOOM CLASS
3. Week 3, Class 2 Readings/Assigned Content
4. Week 3, Class 2 Zoom Class Attendance
5. Week 3 Knowledge Practice Crossword (DUE 6/1 @ 11:59pm)
6. Week 3 Discussion (DUE DATE TBD VIA CLASS DISCUSSION)
7. Week 3 Exam (OPENS 5/30, CLOSSES 6/1 @ 11:59pm)

WEEK/UNIT 4 – STRESS & SLEEP, ANXIETY, TRAUMA

1. Week 4, Class 1 Readings/Assigned Content
2. Week 4, Class 1 Zoom Class Attendance
3. Week 4, Class 2 Readings/Assigned Content
4. Week 4, Class 2 Zoom Class Attendance
5. Week 4 Knowledge Practice Crossword (DUE 6/8 @ 11:59pm)
6. Week 4 Discussion (DUE 6/8 @ 11:59pm)
7. Week 4 Exam (OPENS 6/6, CLOSSES 6/8 at 11:59pm)

WEEK/UNIT 5 – SCHIZOPHRENIA, PERSONALITY & MENTAL WELLNESS

1. Week 5, Class 1 Readings/Assigned Content
2. Week 5, Class 1 Zoom Class Attendance
3. Week 5, Class 2 Readings/Assigned Content
4. Week 5, Class 3 Zoom Class Attendance
5. Week 5 Knowledge Practice Crossword (DUE 6/13 @ 11:59pm)
6. Week 5 Assignment (DUE 6/13 @ 11:59pm)
7. Week 5 (Final) Exam! (OPENS 6/11, CLOSSES 6/13 @ 11:59pm)

Undergraduate Syllabus Notification Page

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.

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.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

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

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. 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 issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. 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 and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course. 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.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

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. **Online Synchronous definition:** Coursework is completed 100% online with required weekly online class meetings.

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.

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 require 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.