Spring 2026 | Quad 1

January 12 - March 8, 2026

Modality: In Person

Meeting Days: Monday

Meeting Times: 5:00 PM - 5:50 PM

Meeting Location: Balboa 150AB

Instructor: Dr. Brent A. Alvar

Email: balvar@pointloma.edu

Office Hours: By Appointment

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

This course provides advanced study and specific exploration of the landmark papers that constitute the essential research of the disciplines of exercise science and sport performance. Both the theoretical concepts and practical applications of the research will be discussed, including an examination of the research paradigms, a critical appraisal of the study design and findings, and the clinical relevance of the results. Students will submit a final proposal for a thesis or capstone project.

This course may be repeated for up to 2 units of credit.

Course Aim and Introduction:

A directed reading is a course designed for students writing and developing their research project (i.e. thesis, capstone or pilot study) who wish to complete a review of literature and begin collecting data. Typically, students attending this seminar will be entering their 2nd or 3rd term in the MS-KIN, and will have decided on a project topic and a project Advisor to work with before enrolling for this course. Your chosen Advisor should have approved working with you and your topic. Students interested in this seminar should be well on their way to finishing up a proposal which the Professor and/or Advisor will approve by the end of the directed reading seminar. Students are expected to have done a good deal of background reading to prepare them for this course. While your Professor/Advisor has expertise in your chosen field of study, remember, it is your project and your Advisor will serve only as a guide in your research process.

This is a graduate level seminar that will equip you with the tools to bring your project to a successful conclusion. During the course sequence of KIN 650 and 660, a student is expected to complete a proposal that is advanced enough to be defended. Your success or failure in this process will depend on the diligence and time you are prepared to invest towards the completion of your project.

Attendance at each session is mandatory and the student is expected to have completed any work allocated by the Professor. Your professor will also require you to identify and raise specific issues of interest and usefulness to you, i.e. which topics for which you need additional readings.

Course Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you should be able to:

1. Evaluate research in a specific discipline in Kinesiology that represents your area of research interest.

2. Critically appraise various research paradigms and study designs and findings to determine the validity of the methodology and the practical relevance of the results.

3. Produce a well-developed project proposal with a thesis statement, central argument or/& hypothesis and be able to answer the following questions, in written and oral form:

    -
        o   What is your thesis question?

        o   Rationale for why this is an important question to address?

        o   What evidence exists on this question? What are the holes in the literature that need addressing?

        o   How will your research contribute to the existing literature in the field?

4. Produce a well-developed Literature Review on your topic of interest.

Program Learning Outcomes

The Point Loma Nazarene University MS-KIN graduate will be able to:

1. Appraise current research data in Kinesiology and integrate it into professional practice to solve relevant problems and make effective decisions .

2. Work independently and with a team to persuasively communicate essential information in their discipline.

3. Demonstrate appropriate breadth of knowledge of the background and principle research in their specialization in order to conduct an independent research project.

4. Serve various populations, integrating compassionate care and the Christian faith with their professional practice.

5. Pursue an active and growing involvement in their discipline by achieving advanced certification and/or membership in a related professional organization.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

1. **Learning, Informed by our Faith in Christ**
   Students will acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world while developing skills and habits of the mind that foster lifelong learning.

2. **Growing, in a Christ-centered Faith Community**
   Students will develop a deeper and more informed understanding of others as they negotiate complex professional, environmental, and social contexts.

3. **Serving, in a Context of Christian Faith**
   Students will serve locally and/or globally in vocational and social settings.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th ed.

Note: Students are responsible for having the required textbooks prior to the first day of class. Students are also encouraged to begin reading the books in preparation for the class as soon as possible.

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. 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.

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 1-unit class delivered over 8 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 37.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided upon request.

Assessment and Grading

1. ***Discussion Board:***

Students will participate in several Discussion Boards on Canvas. This will be an opportunity for students to revisit their draft capstone/thesis topics as well as work with their peers on feedback and revisions.

2. ***Oral Presentation and Summaries of Research Article:***

For the face-to-face meeting, you will be expected to find, read and summaries research articles relevant to your area of research each week prior to class and be ready to discuss the articles in depth through a Journal Club process.   Each student will be expected to lead the discussion for 1-2 articles by presenting the salient aspects of the article to your peers for discussion during LSCC meeting times. Students will also summarize these articles and submit them via Assignments.

3. ***Participation:***

There is an expectation that students come prepared and participate fully in classroom discussion and meetings.

4. ***Literature Review:***

The final assignment for this class will be a Literature Review. This Literature Review can be used for your Capstone or Thesis. Reading assignments will be used for this purpose.

Assignment Points

Course Assignments	Points
Class and Meeting Participation (5 at 10 points each)	50
Discussion Boards (4 at 10 points each; 1 at 20)	60

Article Summaries (4 at 10 points each)	40
Presentation	50
Literature Review	100
TOTAL	300

NOTE: It is your responsibility to maintain your class schedule. Should the need arise to drop this course (personal emergencies, poor performance, etc.), you have the responsibility to first contact the professors. Then if no accommodations can be made, you are responsible to follow through (provided the drop date meets the stated calendar deadline established by the university).

Grading Scale

The following grading scale will be used for all exams and final course grades:

- 93-100% = A
- 90 - 92% = A-
- 87 – 89% = B+
- 84 – 86% = B
- 81 – 83% = B-
- 78 – 80% = C+
- *75 – 77% = C
- 73 – 74% = C-
- 71 – 72% = D+
- 68 – 70% = D
- Below 68% = F

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

PLNU Spiritual Care

Balboa Campus

PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as a whole person. To this end, we provide resources for our graduate students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. At the Balboa campus, we have an onsite chaplain, Rev. Kevin Portillo, who is available during class break times across the week. If you have questions or a desire to meet or share any prayer requests with Rev. Portillo, you may contact him directly at KevinPortillo@pointloma.edu.

PLNU Copyright Policy

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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 [Graduate Academic and General Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

During the first week of class, you will be asked to submit an Academic Honesty Verification Statement. Submitting the statement is a requirement of this course. By submitting the Academic Honesty Verification Statement, you will be verifying all assignments completed in this course were completed by you. Carefully review the Academic Honesty Statement below.

Statement: "In submitting this form, I am verifying all the assignments in this course will be completed by me and will be my own work."

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) 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.

- [APA Style: How to Cite ChatGPT](#)

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 619-849-2533). 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. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

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 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 other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [PLNU's Nondiscrimination webpage](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students. 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 help and support are available through the [Title IX Office](#). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is 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 or find a list of campus pastors via our [Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy.](#)

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via our [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. Therefore, regular attendance and participation in each course are minimal requirements.

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.

Students who anticipate being absent for an entire week of a course should contact the instructor in advance for approval and make arrangements to complete the required coursework and/or alternative assignments assigned at the discretion of the instructor. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the instructor and does not waive attendance requirements.

Refer to [Academic Policies](#) for additional details.

Synchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

For synchronous courses that have specific scheduled meeting times (including in-person, hybrid, and synchronous online courses), absences are counted from the first official meeting of the class regardless of the date of the student's enrollment. For courses with specific attendance requirements, those requirements are outlined in the course syllabus.

Note: For synchronous courses with an online asynchronous week, refer to the Online Asynchronous Class Attendance policy listed below.

Online Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

Students taking online courses with no specific scheduled meeting times are expected to actively engage throughout each week of the course. Attendance is defined as participating in an academic activity within the online classroom which includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in an online discussion

- Submitting an assignment

- Taking an exam

- Participating in online labs

- Initiating contact with faculty member within the learning management system to discuss course content

Note: Logging into the course does not qualify as participation and will not be counted as meeting the attendance requirement.

Course Modality Definitions

1. Online Courses: These are courses with class meetings where all instruction and interaction are fully online.

   1. Synchronous Courses: At least one class meeting takes place at a designated time.

   2. 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).

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 nor allowable) 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.

GPS Academic Resources

PLNU offers the following free academic resources virtually for Graduate Professional Studies (GPS) Students. Visit myPLNU through the links below for more information.

- **The GPS Writing Center** offers:

    - **Zoom Writers Workshops** offered each quad on a variety of helpful topics

    - **One-to-one appointments** with the Writing Coach

    - **Microlearning YouTube Video Library** for helpful tips anytime

- **Research Help Guide** to help you start your research

    - The physical office is located on the third floor of the Mission Valley Regional Center off the student lounge

- **Academic Writing Resources Course:** Found on your Canvas Dashboard, this course is non-credit with 24/7 access, no time limits, and self-paced content. Watch a quick video run-through and take time now to explore!

- **Grammarly**: Students have unlimited FREE access to Grammarly for Education, a trusted tool designed to help enhance writing skills by providing real-time feedback, identifying areas for improvement, and providing suggestions. Grammarly's Generative AI is NOT available with our student accounts.

- **Tutoring**: Students have access to 24/7 live or scheduled subject tutoring through Tutor.com, including a Paper Drop-Off Service with feedback within 12 hours.

Course Schedule & Assignments

The course summary below lists our assignments and their due dates. Click on any assignment to review it.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Topic	Meeting
Week 1	Introduction	Face to Face: Balboa

Week 2	Individual Meetings - Background	Instructor's Office Canvas
Week 3	Methodology	Face to Face: Balboa
Week 4	Statistical Analysis	No Class - Canvas
Week 5	Individual Meetings Writing	Instructor's Office
Week 6	Peer Review	Face to Face: Balboa
Week 7	Lit Summary	Instructor's Office if necessary
Week 8	Presentations	Face to Face: Balboa

Timeline

Week 1: Current Status

Objective: The purpose of this unit is to introduce student's current thesis/capstone status to faculty and peers.

CLASS SESSION - Class participation 10 points

Assignments:

Students are to participate in course orientation at Liberty Station.

Discussions #1: *Current Status Report*.

- Students are to submit a brief report (250 word limit) describing their current progress/concerns on their Thesis/Capstone via **Discussions #1**.

Due Wednesday

- Students are to read each peers post and provide constructive criticism and support on two of their peers current status reports.

Due Sunday

Assignment #1: Find, review and summarize two additional articles related to your Capstone/Thesis topic. Submit via Assignments. Formatting can be of your choice. Include an APA reference for each article.

Due Sunday

Week 2: Develop an Individual Dissertation Proposal Background and Hypothesis.

Task 1: Set ups a meeting with Instructor during this week

Meeting with Instructor 10 points

Task 2: Students will develop/revise a document (minimum 1-2 page narrative document) explaining the background information and purpose of the dissertation research. The paper is meant to give the reader a clear and concise understanding of the research project. Pay close attention to ability to convey the necessity of the research as well as the purported impact it theoretically may have on the field. Include references

Discussions #2:

- **Part 1** (5 pts)**:** Upload a Google Doc link into the Discussion Board titled as name and Discussion Board (such as Discussion Board #2) on Discussions #2. **Due Wednesday.**

- **Part 2** (5 pts)**:** Students will read one peers' papers and provide feedback via track changes on word or Google Doc. Once the file is downloaded – immediately reply to the original post stating such. This will let the class know that this paper has been selected and will help to reduce redundancy. Then reply to the post with the edited file. **Due Sunday.**

Feedback should be *scholarly* and give guidance on how the document could be improved (grammar, format, clarity, depth etc.). Be very specific. Examples or suggestions are suggested and/or expected.

Assignment #2: Find, review and summarize two additional articles related to your Capstone/Thesis topic. Include a brief discussion of how the articles add to your topical area. Submit via Assignments. Formatting can be of your choice. Include an APA reference for each article. **Due Sunday**

Week 3: Proposal Methodology

CLASS SESSION - Class participation 10 points

Task 1: Students will develop/revise a document (1-2 pages) explaining the methodology proposed for the dissertation research. This should be a step by step explanation of how the project will be carried out. Details should emphasize the ability to replicate the study by outside researchers. Include references

Discussions #3:

- **Part 1** (5 pts): Upload a Google Doc link into the Discussion Board titled as name and Discussion Board number (such as Discussions #3) **Due Wednesday**

- **Part 2** (5 pts)**:** Students will read one peers' papers and provide feedback via track changes on word or Google Doc. Once the file is downloaded – immediately reply to the original post stating such. This will let the class know that this paper has been selected and will help to reduce redundancy. Then reply to the post with the edited file. **Due Sunday.**

Feedback should be *scholarly* and give guidance on how the document could be improved (grammar, format, clarity, depth etc.). Be very specific. Examples or suggestions are suggested and/or expected.

Assignment #3: Find, review and summarize two additional articles related to your Capstone/Thesis topic. Submit via Assignments. Formatting can be of your choice. Include an APA reference for each article. **Due Sunday**

Week 4: Statistical Analysis

Task 1: Students will develop a document (1-2 pages) explaining the data analysis procedures proposed for the dissertation research. This should include very specific study variable descriptions, how data will be summarized and/or aggregated and specific details of advanced data analysis (e.g. correlations, group comparisons, etc). Detail should emphasize the ability to determine relevance and appropriateness of the analysis procedures.

Discussions #4:

- **Part 1** (5 pts): Upload link to a Google Doc into the Discussions #4 as name and Discussion Board number (such as Discussions #4) **Due Wednesday**

- **Part 2** (5 pts): Students will read one peers' document and provide feedback via track changes and post it back on the Forum. Once the document is downloaded – immediately reply to the original post stating such. This will let the class know that this document is selected and will hope to reduce redundancy. Then reply to the post with the edited file. **Due Sunday**

Feedback should be *scholarly* and give guidance on how the document could be improved (grammar, format, clarity, depth etc.). Be very specific. Examples or suggestions are suggested and/or expected.

Assignment #4: Find, review and summarize two additional articles related to your Capstone/Thesis topic. Submit via Assignments. Formatting can be of your choice. Include an APA reference for each article. **Due Sunday**

Week 5: Writing of the Literature Review

Task 1: Set ups a meeting with Instructor during this week

Meeting with Instructor 10 points

Task 2: Writing of Literature Review. This is a free week for students to complete their writing. Nothing is due this week.

Week 6: Peer Review

CLASS SESSION - Class participation 10 points

The purpose of this week is provide peer review of your classmates papers.

Discussions 5: "Start a new thread" with your name (Discussions #5) and post the link go the Google Doc draft of your literature review paper.

Provide Peer Review (via Forum): We learn by critiquing others work. Effective researchers need to be able to critically analyze the work of themselves and others. Science is founded on the concept of peer review. This is not a punitive process, rather it is a process designed to improve the final product by insure that threats to validity are accounted for.

Provide substantive feedback to the assigned 2 colleagues related to decisions the depth and breadth of their paper and the logic of the program.) 10 points each

Initial post Due Wednesday and **Feedback Sunday**

Feel free to post commentary on other student's forums. All feedback is welcome!!

Week 7: Final Literature Review Document

The purpose of this week is to complete the final document for your literature review. This should be an expansion of the work that you have done previously in the research methods course.

Paper should be submitted via canvas no later than midnight Sunday

Final Paper is due Sunday

Week 8: In-Class Presentations of Literature Review

CLASS SESSION - Class participation 10 points

Presentation of Literature Review: Each student will have 5 minutes to present an updated literature review. Students will be evaluated based upon the following:

- presentation organization

- communication and professional presentation skills

- use of presentation time limit

- ability to address questions during Q/A session