

Research Methods and Design I
PSY 3090(4) 3091(4): Section 1
Fall Semester 2025
Spring Semester 2026
M W F 1:30-2:35
Final Exam: TBD
Location: Liberty 205A

Instructors: Kim W. Schaeffer, Ph.D..

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Course Description

PSY 390: Students gain experience in methods of design, data collection, management, and analysis. Students begin a significant research project. This course must be taken in the semester immediately preceding PSY391. Prerequisite(s): PSY103 and MTH203 (may be taken concurrently or with the consent of instructor).

PSY 391: Study of design and of research in psychology and the use of statistics. Practice in the integration of design and statistics is included. Students finish a significant research project. This course must be taken in the semester immediately following PSY 390. Prerequisite(s): PSY 103 and PSY 390 or consent of instructor.

Course Learning Outcomes in PSY 390-391: Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

- Solve real-life, practical problems using psychological science and the scientific method.
- Understand and interpret statistical research findings that are presented in writing, in numerical form, or as tables or figures.
- Apply statistical concepts in clinical and non-clinical applications to optimize vocational performance. This includes being able to interpret clinical test scores, analyze business and financial performance, and empirically assess decision making outcomes.
- Critically evaluate research claims made by academics, business professionals, and media figures by formulating alternative hypotheses, generating alternative explanations, and designing follow-up and replication studies.
- Identify and remediate potential problems in empirical and non-empirical research. This includes recognition of incomplete literature reviews, design flaws, poorly formed hypotheses, ethics violations, incorrect statistical execution and inference, and unsupported conclusions.
- Write a research proposal and submit it to an institutional review board.
- Present the results of empirical research to professional and lay audiences using written, oral, and visual expression. This includes being able to write a research paper using APA style, construct a poster for a research conference, and present research in a brief oral presentation with visual aids.

Reading in PSY 390-391

Employers want employees who are good critical thinkers. According to Diane Halpern (2003), there are 4 aspects to critical thinking: (a) a critical thinking attitude, e.g., not accepting claims at face value; (b) the capacity to implement specific critical thinking skills, e.g., deductive reasoning, hypothesis testing, understanding probability; (c) the facility to apply these critical thinking skills to new situations; and (d) the skill to think about one's own thinking, or metacognition. We will use a significant portion of our class time for activities that will enhance your critical thinking skills. It is imperative that you read and study the reading assignment before coming to class.

Working in Teams in PSY 390-391

This course employs the Team Based Learning (TBL) method. "Team-Based Learning is an evidence based collaborative learning teaching strategy designed around units of instruction, known as "modules," that are taught in a three-step cycle: preparation [completing the assignment before class], in-class readiness assurance testing [RATs, basically quizzes on the

assignment], and application-focused exercise [Team Application Exercises].” The fourth essential component of TBL is the Team Member Helpfulness Evaluation (both formative and summative).

Required Textbook

Mitchell, M. L., & Jolley, J. M. (2013). *Research design explained* (8th ed.). New York: Thomson-Wadsworth.

How Grades Will Be Earned (A = 93-100; A- = 90-92.99; B+ = 88-89.99; B = 84-87.99; B- = 80-83.99; C+ = 77-79.99; C = 70-76.99; C- = 65-69.99; D+ = 62-64.99; D = 55-61.99; D- = 50-54.99; F ≤ 49.99%)

PSY390

- 15% Readiness Assurance Tests (RATs)
- 15% Team Application Exercises
- 5% Team Member Helpfulness Evaluation (peer-graded)
- 40% Tests1-2
- 15% Homework
- 10% IRB Proposal
- Note: Final Examination. Minus 10% in overall grade if not present

PSY391

- 15% Readiness Assurance Tests (RATs)
- 10% Team Application Exercises
- 5% Team Member Helpfulness Evaluation (peer-graded)
- 40% Tests1-4
- 10% Homework
- 20% Paper
- Note: Final Examination. Minus 10% in overall grade if not present

Managing Your Life and This Course

If you cannot take a test due to extreme circumstances, please ask me for permission to take the test at another time before the exam.

Most people need to miss a class due to illness, flight delays, and so on. Therefore, a safety valve is built into the course. For the safety valve to become effective two conditions are met. First, cell phones are put away, and second, 90% of the class completes the IDEA course evaluation the first week it is posted.

Safety Valve: The four lowest Team Application Exercises, two lowest Homework scores, and two lowest RATs, will be dropped.

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.

Late Assignments

You can turn in a late assignment for up to seven days. Canvas will automatically deduct ten percent for lateness and ten percent each additional day the assignment is late.

SYLLABUS: Part 2

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.

Foundational Explorations Mission ★

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION ★

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

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.

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 COPYRIGHT POLICY ★

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY ★

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY ★

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic adjustments, modifications or auxiliary aids/services. At Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), these students are requested to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center (DRC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). The DRC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. After the student files the required documentation, the DRC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to meet that student's specific learning needs. The DRC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. The AP must be implemented in all such courses. If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all of the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course. PLNU highly recommends that DRC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all **synchronous** class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered **asynchronously** and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

SPIRITUAL CARE

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the [Office of Spiritual Development](#)

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. If a student is in need of technological resources please contact student-tech-request@pointloma.edu.

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

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.

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.