

SYLLABUS

Psychology Department

PSY 4010: Issues in the Integration of Psychology and Theology

Fall 2025

Faculty: Dr. Kendra Oakes Mueller

Semester Units: 3

Schedule: M/W 8:30-9:35, Taylor 311

Final Exam: 12/15 7:30 - 10:30am

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Office hours: By appointment

PLNU Mission Statement

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is molded and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description

The University catalogue describes this course as: A more detailed study of issues in the integration of theological insights and psychotherapy approaches within the therapeutic setting. Includes an overview of the historical relationship between religion and psychotherapy, differing models of the therapeutic relationship, and various models for integrating psychotherapeutic theory with theological issues. It introduces specific issues that arise in conducting therapy with religious persons, including criteria for evaluating healthy and unhealthy forms of religious belief.

The purpose of each class session is to highlight selected topics from the required readings and to supplement this material with related ideas. Students are responsible for all assigned readings, whether discussed in class. A “graduate style” discussion format will be used in the course. Each student is expected to have read the assigned reading for class discussion (course schedule below) and be prepared to think together about the reading in class.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Identify basic tenants of psychology

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Describe key themes of integrating theological insight and psychological approaches within the therapeutic self
2. Demonstrate skills in oral presentation of the integration of theology insights and psychological approaches within the therapeutic self
3. Identify key themes regarding the historical relationship between religion and psychology and different models of the therapeutic relationship
4. Identify specific issues that arise in conducting therapy with religious persons
5. Identify and explain implications of course material as it relates to your personal values and beliefs

Textbooks

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.

1. Neff & McMinn (2020). **Embodying Integration: A Fresh look at Christianity in the Therapy Room**. Intervarsity Press.
2. Tan (2022). **A Christian Approach to Counseling and Psychotherapy**. Cascade Books.
3. Course reader (either through bookstore, or cognella (which is cheaper)
4. Other course material found online

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 115 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

Attendance

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.

Grading

A minimum of 60% is needed to pass the course. The final grade will be computed on the following basis:

1. 35% Daily participation, attendance and professionalism (lowest 3 will be dropped)
2. 40% Daily Reading video response and discussion (lowest 3 will be dropped)
3. 15% Facilitation Leader for Class Discussion/preparation
4. 10% Personalized final project

DEPARTMENT FACULTY NORMAL CURVE GUIDES

	Z Score		Percentage Score
A	1.33	A =	93-100%
A-	1	A -	90-92%
B+	0.67	B +	88-89%
B	0.33	B	84-87%
B-	0	B -	80-83%
C+	-0.33	C +	77-79%
C	-1	C	73-76%
C-	-1.33	C -	73-70%
D+	-1.67	D +	67-69%

Assignments

This course is a technology enhanced class, and there are additional assignments that help fulfill seat time requirements. For each class period, there is an assigned reading to be completed, along with a video summary/response and discussion comments. These assignments are designed to expose students to content around psychology & theology, while having students reflect on their own thoughts/reactions to the materials while also

engaging their classmates. This allows students to enter classroom discussions already primed with some thoughts and questions. For each class period, students will also be given a grade for their attendance, meaningful participation in discussion, and professionalism. Students will also be a facilitator of the classroom discussion at some point during the semester. Lastly, students will complete a personalized assignment that instructions will be given later in the semester.

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 Psy 4010, all 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 include therapeutic experiences, case studies of clients, and religious/spiritual matters. 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 psychology, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Late Policy

Given the discussion nature of this course, prompt completion of assignments are an important component to the course experience. In lieu of a late policy, canvas is set to drop the lowest three assignments (for daily summary and responses, as well as attendance/participation). This is intended to allow students the opportunity to drop a low score or an assignment that wasn't completed in time. This also allow students the opportunity to miss three class periods without any penalty.

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.

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.

Spiritual Care

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

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain, or if you have prayer requests, you can contact the [Office of Student Life and Formation](#).

Academic Accommodations

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.

Academic Honesty

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As stated in the university catalog, "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. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course." For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) [Links to](#)

[an external site.](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

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 at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. 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 at 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

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.

FERPA Policy

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by (each faculty member choose one strategy to use: distributing all grades and papers individually; requesting and filing written student permission; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

Final Exam

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.

Course Schedule

This syllabus is not a contract. It is designed to help you organize your study and meet the requirements of the course. Professor reserves the right to make changes from time to time.

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 www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

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.

PLNU Recording Notification

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.

Professor will notify ahead of class time when any plans for recording will occur.