



College of Health Sciences | MA in Clinical Counseling

PSY6009: Multicultural Theories and Development

3 Units

Course Information:

Spring 2026 | Quad 1

Course Dates: January 12 - March 8

Meeting days/times:

Monday/Wednesday 2:00–4:45 p.m.

Meeting location: Mission Valley Campus 301

Instructor Information:

Instructor title and name: Natalie Hsieh

Email: nhsieh@pointloma.edu

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

The study of social and cultural foundations of the behavior of individuals, families, and diverse groups, including contextual factors effecting treatment (poverty, resilience, stress, divorce, family systems, etc.). Exploration of how therapeutic interventions impact culturally distinct populations.

Program Learning Outcomes

The educational goals of Point Loma Nazarene University's *Masters of Arts in Clinical Counseling (MACC)* are to develop graduate students and clinicians who are:

1. competent clinicians and professionals that practice from a wide-range of clinically valuable and research-based approaches;
2. able to cultivate self-awareness and apply professional ethics to the practice of clinical counseling; and,
3. providing services that are respectful of individuals and families as well as the cultural contexts that shape them, particularly focusing on those who are underserved.

PLO 1: Demonstrate competent application of theoretical models and research-based clinical interventions to therapeutic work with individuals, couples, groups and/or families

Competency 1: Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of theories, principles, and practices relevant to clinical counseling, particularly across the lifespan and in family systems.

Competency 2: Utilize assessment tools effectively to diagnose, develop treatment plans, and monitor progress.

Competency 3: Apply clinical knowledge by effectively implementing theory-informed intervention with individuals, couples, groups, and families.

Competency 4: Evaluate and apply relevant research to the practice of clinical counseling.

PLO 2: Develop and apply self-awareness and professional ethics to the practice of clinical counseling.

Competency 1: Demonstrate knowledge of the ACA/AAMFT code of ethics and identify ethical issues when they arise with clients

Competency 2: Demonstrate awareness and effective use of self in the therapeutic process

Competency 3: Develop personal characteristics that enhance professional competence, most importantly effective communication, empathy, boundaries, self-awareness, and respect for others

PLO 3: Demonstrate competence in working with clients from diverse backgrounds, particularly in settings where sociocultural factors influence treatment and there is limited access to care.

Competency 1: Integrate contextual factors, apply multicultural theories, and modify treatment approaches to effectively work with diverse client populations.

Competency 2: Demonstrate awareness of how personal values, beliefs, and sociocultural context impact work with clients.

Competency 3: Attend to the spiritual dimensions of clients and apply faith integration processes as clinically appropriate.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to prepare students to meet the licensure standards in Clinical Mental Health programs as a clinically competent multicultural counselor. This will be achieved by preparing the student to demonstrate required knowledge pertaining to the cultural and social context of topics, trends, and relationships in a multicultural society:

Foundations of Sociocultural Attunement and Ethical Practice

1. Describe how larger ecological contexts and sociocultural systems impact the worldview of clients and counselors, as well as the counseling relationship.
2. Identify ways that societal structures and norms, along with historic and contemporary inequities, influence client identity development, well-being, access to care, and the therapy process, particularly for marginalized populations.
3. Integrate personal and cultural values, spiritual and professional ethics to foster sociocultural attunement and a posture of hospitality, mutuality, and solidarity in work with clients.

4. Exercise self-reflectiveness and self-differentiation by recognizing how one's sociocultural identities, values, and lived experiences impact the therapeutic process, demonstrating flexibility to honor the unique needs and cultural identities of clients.

Culturally Responsive Clinical Skills and Client-Centered Advocacy

1. Integrate sociocultural attunement principles with counseling/MFT theories in case conceptualization and treatment planning.
2. Apply strengths-based, culturally responsive approaches to assess and integrate clients' sociocultural contexts, relational orientations, values, and meaning-making in therapy.
3. Track relational flow of power in therapeutic relationships in order to promote relational safety, shared responsibility, mutual influence, and respect.
4. Engage with professional organizations and community resources to support ongoing growth in sociocultural attunement, and client-centered advocacy.

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.

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 8 weeks. Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided upon request.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

- Cook, J. M., & Clark, M. (2025). *Multicultural & social justice counseling: a systemic, person-centered, and ethical approach*. Cognella.
- [ChenFeng, J., & Stone, D. \(2019\). *Finding your voice as a beginning marriage and family therapist*, Routledge.](#) Routledge.
- [McDowell, T., Knudson-Martin, C., & Bermudez, J. M. \(2022\). *Socioculturally attuned family therapy: Guidelines for equitable theory and practice \(2nd ed\)*. Taylor & Francis Group.](#)
- Other assigned readings and videos will be directly linked to Canvas under Course Schedule and in the Session Agendas

Recommended Texts

- Hays, D. G., & Erford, B. T. (2022). *Developing multicultural counseling competence (4th ed.)*. Pearson Education (US).
- McGoldrick, M., & Hardy, K. V. (2019). *Re-visioning family therapy: Addressing diversity in clinical practice (Third edition)*. The Guilford Press.

Recommended Study Resource

- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition)*. American Psychological Association.

NOTE: Students are responsible to have the required course 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.

Assessment and Grading

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the due date listed on Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned under extremely unusual circumstances.

Academic Honesty Verification

Students must complete the verification before gaining access to the rest of the content.

PRE-CLASS PREPARATION

(1) Attendance and Participation (10%--50 points)

Richer learning happens when we converse and connect with each other to learn concepts experientially in community. As such, class sessions are designed to be a relational experience, characterized by personal conversation, professional skill practice, and shared wrestling with ideas and principles and questions with others in class. It is expected that you come to class on time, which will help you practice self-management in order to be ready and prepared for sessions with clients. The assessment of participation will be given based on the above criteria. Per PLNU Attendance Policy, one absence is permitted without penalty, two absences results in 50% credit for attendance, and you will be at risk of de-enrollment or a failing grade with more than two absences. *Please talk to me as soon as possible if you have extenuating circumstances.*

(2) Professionalism (10%--50 points)

You will also be expected to be intentional to be mindful and growing in other avenues of professionalism and accountability for your contributions and manner toward your colleagues inside and outside of class. At mid-course and final course survey check-ins, we will also be completing confidential self-assessments and group peer assessments regarding areas of strength and needs for growth in professionalism. These opportunities to self-reflect and give and receive peer feedback are intended to affirm your strengths and offer gracious support for areas where growth is needed.

(3) Light Week Assignments & Pre-Class Check-Ins (15% -- 75 points)

There will be a light week pre-course survey and discussion board, followed by pre-class session check-ins based on session learning objectives that students will use to focus and get ready for class. They are due before each class period, or otherwise noted.

IN-CLASS CLINICAL CASES & DEMONSTRATIONS

Teamwork in learning. You will be assigned to a regular weekly peer consultation group for this class, to invite depth of connection and space to enrich your ability to exercise hospitality and humility, practice active and reflective listening, personal sharing, negotiation, and teamwork. You have several opportunities to work with your group on case conceptualization, clinical skill building, and offering personal support.

(4) In-Class Clinical Cases and Role Play Practice (16% -- 80 points)

Each week, clinical consultation group members will practice sociocultural attunement and teamwork through working on initial case conceptualization for an assigned clinical case vignette, and engaging in “clinical moment” skills practice role plays where members rotate being therapist, client, and observers who offer reflective feedback. Group members must submit their work by the end of class.

(5) Group Clinical Case Presentation & Role Plays (10% -- 50 points)

Groups will be assigned a clinical case that deepens one of the topics covered in class during the second half of the course (Weeks 5-7). Each group will share according to the flow of clinical case work above:

- Group intro, brief recap of POTC and POTT, summary of case consult research (6 min)
- Role play of two “clinical moments” that demonstrate sociocultural attunement and clinical skills (10 min)
(Client can stay the same; please rotate therapist role among multiple members)
 - Early phase - Sociocultural intake/assessment

- Working phase - Sociocultural attunement and/or advocacy.
- CCA resources page and group process reflection (4 min)

The total presentation should not exceed 20 min. See assignment for full details and presentation example. Groups should engage at least 3 consult resources (can include a personal contact who can speak from lived experience or professional experience), ensure members are invited to participate equitably, and upload the group presentation to Canvas before class on the day of presentation.

SUMMATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

(6) Integrative Clinical Process Reflection (10% -- 50 points)

You will select one of the clinical cases that we have discussed in class (2/week) that you would like to think through more critically and receive individual feedback from the instructor. You will then present your clinical case process in written narrative format, personalizing sections to you as an individual therapist. For assessment themes, you will choose a counseling/MFT theory of choice to integrative your clinical reflections.

- Recap of clinical case
- Person of the Client - sociocultural contexts and considerations
- Person of the Therapist - self of therapist, posture and ethical considerations
- Therapy - assessment, attunement and advocacy activities
- Client centered advocacy resources

(7) Sociocultural Person of The Therapist Reflection Papers (14% -- 70 points)

Throughout the course, you will be encouraged to self-reflect on your sociocultural location as a developing therapist. For each paper, please respond to the provided questions and prompts with reflections that synthesize readings (with citations), class activities, independent self-reflection clinical assessment activities, and personal reflections. Full credit will be given to reflections which are completed on time and are characterized by thoughtful responses, grounded examples, and high-rated engagement with reading and class activities. Note that point reductions will follow PLNU late policy.

- Reflection 1: Sociocultural Person of The Therapist, Roots and Resilience (4-5 pages) - 50 points
- Reflection 2: Final Course Reflection and Continued Sociocultural Attunement Learning (2-3 pages) - 20 points

(8) Client Centered Advocacy Project (14% -- 70 points)

You will choose a clinical issue or client population you are passionate to learn about or to serve in the future. You will work on this project in stages, including engagement with professional and academic resources as well as relational engagement (an interview or community site visit). For our final week of class, you will design a creative and professional 2 page handout with academic/professional, community and web resources that can be shared with the rest of the class and MACC program in a "networking fair" as an expression of client centered advocacy. The digital file should be uploaded to Canvas prior to class. Please print 2 copies to bring to class to share in class; 1 copy for the instructor.

- Proposal of Topic - 5 points
- Reflection 1: Professional Learning and Self Reflection - 20 points
- Reflection 2: Relational Engagement - 25 points
- Client Centered Advocacy Flyer & Sharing - 20 points

(9) Final IDEA Course Eval (1% -- 5 points)

Assignment Distribution by Percentage

The final grade will be computed on the following basis:

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ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS	PERCENTAGE
(1) Attendance and Participation	50	10%
(2) Professionalism	50	10%
(3) Light Week Assignments & Pre-Class Check-Ins	75	15%
(4) Group In-Class Clinical Cases	80	16%
(5) Group Clinical Case Presentation & Role Plays	50	10%
(6) Integrative Clinical Process Reflection	50	10%
(7) Sociocultural Person of The Therapist Reflection Papers (2)	70	14%
(8) Client Centered Advocacy Project (3)	70	14%
(9) Final IDEA Course Eval	5	1%
TOTAL	500	100%

Grading Scale:

Grade Scale Based on Percentage of Points Earned				
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F ≤ 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Students must achieve a minimum grade of B- to pass this class.

GROUND RULES OF THE COURSE

Together we will create a dynamic learning environment where:

1. Learning is challenging but safe
2. Learning is experiential and active
3. Communication is open . . . opposing viewpoints are welcomed
4. All are learners and all are teachers . . . we will learn from each other
5. Mistakes are okay . . . this is a no-guilt, no-blame zone
6. The point is to learn and grow ... grades are a by-product and not the goal
7. Integrity and honesty are expected

Please jot down some of your expectations for this course.

PLNU Spiritual Care

Mission Valley: 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 Mission Valley (MV) campus we have an onsite chaplain who is available during class break times across the week. If you have questions for or a desire to meet or share any prayer requests with the onsite chaplain, you may email Dr. Sylvia Cortez Masyuk at scortezm@pointloma.edu.

In addition, on the MV campus there is a prayer chapel on the third floor. It is open for use as a space set apart for quiet reflection and prayer.

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 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.

Note: Additionally, include the below if this pertains to your course:

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.

[MLA Style Center: Citing Generative AI](#)

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

[Chicago Manual of Style: Citing Content Developed or Generated by AI](#)

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 [PLNU Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

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 [PLNU 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 or find a list of campus pastors at [PLNU Title IX](#) or as shown in the PLNU Spiritual Care section of this syllabus.

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

PLNU Course Modality Definitions

1. Online Courses: These are courses with class meetings where all instruction and interaction is fully online.
 - Synchronous Courses: At least one class meeting takes place at a designated time.
 - 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).

PLNU Attendance

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.

PLNU Policy: 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 (equivalent to two (2) classes in the MACC program), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

Note: If a student incurs a third absence, they may petition the faculty to remain enrolled in class. The faculty will provide a make up assignment proportionate in length and difficulty to the class missed. This third absence may also result in a referral to the Student Development Committee.

In addition to the university policy, 10% of your course grade will reflect your attendance. Coming to class is mandatory and expected. As extenuating circumstances may happen that prevent you from attending class, a student may incur one absence without losing points. Each subsequent absence will drop this portion of the grade by 5% of the total course points (up to 10%). Note: absences are not categorized as excused or unexcused.

Attending class on time is essential to promote a respectful and professional learning environment. Arriving to class more than 15 minutes late is counted as a tardy. Two tardies count as one absence. Arriving 30 minutes or more late to a class will be considered an absence.

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

Professionalism

Student professionalism will be assessed in each course, constituting 10% of the total course grade. Professionalism indicators include class participation, interactions with peers and instructors, and self-awareness. The full rubric can be found here: [PLNU MACC Professionalism Rubric](#).

Late Policy

Assignments submitted up to 24 hours past the due date will be deducted 25% of the grade. Assignments submitted up to 48 hours past the due date will be deducted 50% of the grade. Any assignment turned in after 48 hours past the due date will receive no credit. Students are encouraged to alert the professor if an assignment is anticipated to be late. Professors can extend these late penalties if arrangements are made in advance.

Use of Technology

MACC is committed to a distraction-free learning environment. Students are welcome to bring devices to class, but they *must remain stored* throughout class time unless directed otherwise by the instructor. Phones, laptops, iPads/tablets, and other personal devices are not permitted to be passively used during lectures, discussions, or any other activity unless expressly communicated by the instructor.

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.

We are here to support you! Contact us anytime: GPSWritingCenter@pointloma.edu

Course Schedule and Assignments

Please see [Course Schedule](#) page

Note: The Professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus throughout the semester to accomplish the learning objectives of the course. Schedule changes will be noted in class and posted on eclass.

Note: Full assignment details and rubrics to be distributed as semester develops.