

Course Syllabus

 Edit



Department of Psychology

PSY 1003-4: General Psychology

3 Units

Spring 2026

Meeting Days/Time: Mondays 3pm-5:30pm

Meeting Location: Taylor 105

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 8th, 10:30am-1pm

Professor Information

Instructor: Sierra McGovern, MA, LMFT

Email: smcgover@pointloma.edu

I welcome your questions and would enjoy hearing from you throughout the semester. I will give prompt email replies as I am able during the work day. Please note that I am not available evenings or weekends and will get back to you during the next work day.



Office Hours: by appointment only. Office hours are a time to the professor questions, get help on assignments, or review past work, or seek academic support.

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.

General Education 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 DESCRIPTION

Catalog Description: A survey of psychology as an empirical/behavioral science. Topics include biological correlates of behavior, learning, cognition, emotion, motivation, personality, assessment, development, psychopathology, psychotherapy, and social psychology. Students should take PSY 1003 if they do not meet the criteria for PSY 1001. Letter Grade. Prerequisite(s): PSY 1001 (may be taken concurrently).

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Identify the foundations and history of the field of psychology, including important people and theories.
2. Describe the scientific approach to answering questions, critically evaluate claims made by others, and compare the various research methodologies used in psychological science.
3. Apply and reflect on psychological phenomenon in everyday life.



4. Identify and compare psychological theories and perspectives within various areas of psychology (e.g., biopsychology, cognition, learning, development, personality, social psychology, and psychological disorders and treatments)

General Education Learning Outcomes

- Students will develop an understanding of self that fosters personal well-being (GE outcome 2a).
 - To assess this outcome, all students will complete the Psychology and You Paper. The instructions and rubric can be found within the Canvas assignment.

REQUIRED RESOURCES

- **Required Textbook:** Myers, D. G., DeWall, C. N., & Gruber, J. (2026). *Psychology in Everyday Life* (7th ed.). ISBN:9781319606459

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.

- **Notebook:** This course will be primarily technology free. Students should plan to take notes by hand in a notebook dedicated to this class. Students who have particular needs or preferences to use a computer for note taking should contact the professor in the first week of class.
- **Technology for homework:** Assignments will be submitted through Canvas. Students can also utilize computers in the library for assignments.

*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.

*For more information about **LomaBooks**, please go: **HERE** (<https://www.pointloma.edu/lomabooks>).*

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Professionalism and In-Class Engagement (10% of final grade). We will engage in activities, short assignments, and discussion in class. To earn full professionalism points, students should attend class, arriving on-time and staying for the entirety of the class period; keep all electronics (phones, laptops) away, except at times where it is expressly allowed for a class activity (e.g., an electronic poll); make a substantive contribution to class discussion, either through a thoughtful question and/or response; and shows critical thinking and understanding of the course readings; and participate in any in-class activity.



To account for potential absences from class, each student will have 1 participation grade dropped. This means that 1 absence (or one week's worth of class) is allowed before absences begin to impact your grade.

Chapter Quizzes (20% of final grade). For this assignment, you will demonstrate your learning of each chapter by completing chapter reading quizzes. Quizzes will follow the assigned readings and will take place in the first several minutes of class when that chapter will be discussed. Arriving late to class may prevent you from taking the quiz for that day. To account for potential absences or low scores, the lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped.

Midterm Exams (3 midterms; 30% total): The exams may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or fill-in-the-blank questions that will require not only recognition of concepts, but comparisons, evaluations, and applications of concepts. Exams will emphasize material that we talked about in class and was addressed in lectures, but to earn an A, you will need to also study the assigned readings. Each exam will be cumulative.

Final Exam (20%): You will demonstrate your learning by responding to multiple choice and written questions that will require cumulative knowledge. Successful completion of this course requires the on-time completion of the final exam at its scheduled time.

Psychology Myth-Buster Presentation (10% final grade). Students will create and give a presentation to the class critiquing and debunking a myth or misconception related to psychology. Detailed directions and grade expectations are on Canvas.

Psychology and You Paper (10% final grade). Toward the end of the semester, you will complete a paper that will focus on concepts from throughout the semester. This paper is a departmental standard for students to demonstrate application of psychological concepts to their lives. Detailed directions and grade expectations are on Canvas.

GRADING

Student grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book. It is important to read the comments posted in the grade book as these comments are intended to help students improve their work. Final grades will be posted within one week of the end of the class. Grades will be weighted as listed above and determined based on the following:

A = 93-100%

A- = 90-92.9%

B+ = 87-89.9%

B = 83-86.9%

B- = 80-82.9%



C+ = 77-79.9%

C = 73-76.9%

C- = 70-72.9%

D+ = 67-69.9%

D = 63-66.9%

D- = 60-62.9%

F = 59.9% or less

Course Policies and Expectations

General

- Any changes to the syllabus (including course expectations and assignments) are possible. Changes will be announced in class and/or as a Canvas announcement. Students are responsible for actively monitoring Canvas updates.
- Students are responsible for all content/material that is found within the Canvas course.
- No audio or video recordings of class are permitted without written consent of the instructor.
- As part of this course, we will discuss topics that may relate to culture, social attitudes/perceptions, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, trauma, mental illness, health, grief, and/or death. These topics may come up without warning (i.e., I may not give content warnings in class.). If you encounter a topic that is challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of psychology, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.
- When participating in class and completing assignments, students should be mindful to use appropriate language that is inclusive and prejudice free. Inclusive language is the standard outlined by the APA. Professional writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated, irrelevant, or demeaning generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation.

Attendance

- Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. Attendance will be taken during class. Students who miss 15+ minutes of class may be counted absent. If the student is absent for more than 10% of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20%, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.
- Out of respect and care for one another, please do not attend class if you are feeling ill in any way. You **do not** need to obtain a doctor's note or email the professor. Class participation cannot be



up, but you can miss up to 3 classes before it begins to impact your grade.

- **Missing Class**

- You do not need to email me if you need to miss class. You should check the syllabus and course outline to see what will be missed. I do not send notes to students, Zoom students into class, nor record lectures.
- If you miss class, you are responsible for obtaining [from a classmate] lecture material, class exercises, and all in-class announcements AND submit any assignments on time, if applicable. Students may then see me during office hours to clarify any material as desired.

- **Missing an Exam**

- A make-up exam is available in cases of emergency or illness or if the student provides at least 2 weeks' notice of a non-emergency absence. The make-up exam must be taken within 2 weeks of the original test date and it is up to the student to contact the professor to schedule a time to take the exam in a proctored setting. Each student may not have more than one make-up exam per semester. There is no option to re-take a exam that was previously attempted.
- Students arriving late to an exam will not be granted extra time for the exam.

- **Final Exam**

- Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. 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. Students arriving more than 30 minutes late will not be permitted to take the final exam. Students arriving late to the exam will not be granted extra time for the exam.
- "Incompletes" will only be granted in extreme emergency situations.

Submitting Assignments and Late Work

- All due dates are posted in advance on Canvas. You may submit assignments early.
- Work submitted on Canvas must be in .doc, .docx, or .pdf file types only. The student is responsible for making sure Canvas files are correctly uploaded and go through Turnitin. Files that do not open, are in the wrong file type, and/or can't go through Turnitin will be considered late until the problem is rectified.
- **Late Work**
 - Late work is accepted for 10 days, including weekend days, after the original due date. Canvas will automatically deduct 10% from the grade for each late day. For example, an assignment submitted 3 days late can earn up to 70% of the available points. End-of-semester assignments may not be submitted late after the final exam (to accommodate faculty grading deadlines). In other words, no coursework will be accepted after May 8th, 2026 @10:30am. Work submitted late will also be graded later.



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. Dedicating adequate time to your learning will help you succeed and is especially important if you want an A in the course because deep learning takes time! Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided upon request.

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.

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** (<https://www.pointloma.edu/offices/office-educational-effectiveness/disclosures>) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

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. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies (<https://catalog.pointloma.edu/index.php>) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further information.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

You may use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas (brainstorming), 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. In other words, you may not submit work created by AI, as it is not your work. Unless a specific assignment specifies otherwise (i.e., the assignment is specifically geared toward using or critiquing



AI), submitting work created by AI will be treated as academic dishonesty. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

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.

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 Life and Formation** (<https://www.pointloma.edu/offices/spiritual-development>).

TITLE IX OFFICE

If you or someone you know would like help related to an experience of sexual violence including sexual assault, harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or other type of non-consensual sexual conduct, please contact the Title IX Coordinator at PLNU, Danielle Brown Friberg (619-849-2313). Reporting is also available on the Title IX website. The Title IX office understands the sensitive nature of these situations and can provide information about available on- and off-campus resources. Staff members at the office will also explain your rights and the judicial process options, if you choose to file a complaint. If you or someone you know feels unsafe or may be in imminent danger, please call the PLNU Department of Public Safety (619-849-2525) or local police department (9-1-1) immediately.

STUDENT SUCCESS & WELLNESS

If you or someone you know would like assistance related to a physical or mental health problem, (e.g., depression, anxiety, difficulty focusing on school or managing daily needs, grief, trauma resolution, sleep or eating changes, etc.), and/or would like academic assistance, please contact the appropriate office using the following information.

- Counseling Services (619) 849-3020; counselingservices@pointloma.edu (<mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu>)
- Educational Access Center 619-849-2533; eac@pointloma.edu (<mailto:eac@pointloma.edu>)



- Medical Services 619-849-2280; sdwellnesscenter@pointloma.edu (<mailto:sdwellnesscenter@pointloma.edu>)
- Tutorial Services 619-849-2953; tutorialservices@pointloma.edu (<mailto:tutorialservices@pointloma.edu>)
- Loma Writing Center: first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221; writingcenter@pointloma.edu (<mailto:writingcenter@pointloma.edu>); <https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center> (<https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center>)

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING

Please see the weekly Modules for assignments due each week. Assignments and due dates will always be posted and available in advance.

Unit 1 -

Foundations in Psychology (Psychology as a Science, Biological, Developmental, Gender founda

Week 1: Psychology's Roots, Critical Thinking, and Self-Improvement Tools (Chapter 1)

Week 2: The Biology of Behavior and Consciousness (Chapter 2)

Week 3: Developing Through the Life Span (Chapter 3)

Week 4: Sex, Gender, and Sexuality (Chapter 4)

Unit 2 - Perception, Cognition, Learning, Language

Week 5: Sensation and Perception (Chapter 5)

Week 6: Learning (Chapter 6)

Week 7: Memory (Chapter 7)

Week 8: Thinking, Language, and Intelligence (Chapter 8)

Spring Break

Unit 3 - Individual Differences and Social Psychology

Week 9: Motivation and Emotion (Chapter 9)

Week 10: Social Psychology (Chapter 11)

Week 11: Personality (Chapter 12)

Week 12: Catch-up, Presentations

Unit 4 - Psychological Well-Being and Psychological Illness

Week 13: Stress, Health, and Flourishing (Chapter 10)

Week 14: Psychological Disorders (Chapter 13), Final Paper due



Week 15: Therapy (Chapter 14)

Finals Week

