



Department of Kinesiology and Health Sciences

KIN 3089 Orthopedic Assessment

3 Units

Fall 2026

Meeting days/times: Wednesday, 7 am – 9:30 am

Meeting location: KIN1

Final Exam: Wednesday, Dec. 16th, 7:30am

[Download Syllabus Here](#)

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor title and name:	Casey Waller, PT, DPT, OCS
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Office location and hours:	Zoom, upon request

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 equips students to implement the S.O.A.P. method of assessment in the assessment of orthopedic injuries and dysfunctions. Clinical role-playing in the lab setting will allow students to practice and master injury/illness examination through the use of the differential diagnosis process.

Through class lectures, course readings, and designated lab classes, you will be asked to engage in the critical process of differential diagnosis while conducting orthopedic assessments for all major joint regions. Classes will vary between a lecture, discussion, and lab format in order to enable us to cover the wide expanse of material. During lab classes, you will refine your clinical assessment skills by using your colleagues as patients. This course is technology-enhanced in the sense that I've made all lecture slides, readings and discussion boards available on Canvas. You are upper division students and should naturally be actively engaged with the course material. My goal in taking this approach is for you to take

ownership of your learning and to actively seek knowledge and develop the “clinical mind” rather than being passive ‘receivers of knowledge’.

To be successful in this course, you should always take the mindset of actively synthesizing information presented in lecture and lab and applying it to the clinical setting. Specifically, this means that studying for quizzes and tests should involve reviewing and integrating the essential ideas by asking the “Why?” and “So what does this mean?” questions.

Program and Course Learning Outcomes

KIN3089 will prepare you to:

- *Utilize and master the components of the orthopedic examination process (i.e. perform a thorough history, palpate, and utilize objective tests) to determine the presence of physical problems in patients.*
- *Discover and execute the process of differential diagnosis, which involves determining which pathology-from among a variety of conditions-is the probable cause of an individual's symptoms.*
- *Describe and appraise the etiology, symptoms, signs and management of orthopedic injuries.*
- *Through laboratory sessions, practice and become proficient in the clinical evaluation of posture, range of motion, strength, movement mechanics, and neurological function.*

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

Students are accountable for completing all assigned readings and research articles as posted in the Canvas course. All research articles have been specifically chosen to enhance discussion and inform clinical reasoning.

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 16 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.

Assessment and Grading

1. Weekly Quizzes (9 quizzes, 10 pts each)

- *We will use weekly quizzes to assess understanding, keep on track, and then answer any questions that may come up throughout the semester. These quizzes are meant to be low-stakes, non-stressful, and ultimately focused on keeping our class on track.*
- *Quizzes will be made available each Wednesday after class, and will be due by the end of Friday in order to receive full credit. If quizzes aren't completed by Friday, one point will be deducted for each day that the quiz is late.*

2. Pop Quizzes (4 quizzes, 5 pts each)

- *Pop quizzes will be made available at 7 AM on the day of class without advanced notice. These will be used as a knowledge check and as a means of ensuring on time class attendance.*

3. Evidence Based Practice Assignment (6 EBP Assignments, 10 pts each)

- *These assignments require you to read current evidence as it relates to a specific joint region or class topic. The purpose is for you to be up to date on the best evidence for lower extremity diagnosis and functional assessment.*
- *For each article you will be required to respond to the following prompts:*
 - *What was the author's primary clinical question? (1 sentence)*
 - *Please summarize the author's primary findings. Were these findings what you expected? How so? Please elaborate. (4-6 sentences)*
 - *How might you incorporate the article's findings into how you educate, evaluate, or treat your future patients? (4-6 sentences)*

4. Patient Cases (8 quizzes, 5 pts each)

- *We will use weekly patient cases to apply what we are learning to life-like situations. Each case will help us connect course concepts to real-world patient scenarios. You will analyze patient information, identify key concerns, and apply concepts from class. These cases are designed to strengthen clinical reasoning and help you understand how the material can be used in practice.*
- *Patient cases will be due prior to each Wednesday class in order to receive full credit.*

5. Lab Practicals (2 midterms, 30 pts each; Final practical, 50 pts)

- *Lab practicals will be assigned at the completion of each anatomically specific unit to evaluate student mastery of the psychomotor skills required of the allied health care professional. You will be given a patient case, and asked to demonstrate and interpret the results of the most pertinent assessments.*
- *These will take place on the day of each unit exam. You and a partner will be given a patient case with prompts. An example has been posted on canvas to be used in preparation.*
- *During the practical exam you should demonstrate:*
 - *Creation of comprehensive objective exam for the involved region*
 - *Specific direction on patient positioning, direction of testing, S/S of a positive test, and pathology that each test rules in/out*
 - *Ability to interpret exam findings in order to rule up or down a suspected pathology*
 - *Wherever possible, comment on the reliability, sensitivity, specificity and predictive ability of the special tests that you choose (It is critical to understand which are the most clinically useful and valuable tests to choose when conducting a differential evaluation.*

6. Lecture Exams (2 midterms, 50 pts each; Final exam, 100 pts)

- *We will have unit examinations to measure your mastery of the material. The final exam will be comprehensive and will require that you have a firm grasp of the orthopedic evaluation process for all joints of the upper extremity that we cover in class. It benefits you to speak with me early about if you will be unable to complete the exam by the indicated date, or if a family emergency*

has come up. There are no provisions for early or make-up examinations if you do not communicate clearly in advance.

- *Examinations should be regarded as an assessment of your readiness to progress toward your given allied health care profession. They will also serve as a learning experience because I will provide detailed feedback for you. Finally, they are an opportunity to be accountable for your learning.*

Grades will be based on the following:

Quizzes 9 x 10 pts each=90 pts

Pop Quizzes 4 x 10 pts each=40 pts

Evidence Based Practice Assignment 6 x 10 pts each=60 pts

Patient Cases 8 x 5 pts each=40

Midterm Lab Practicals 2 x 30 pts each=60 pts

Midterm written Exams 2 x 50pts each=100 pts

Final Exam Written=100 pts

Final Exam Practical=50 pts

Grades will be based on the following:

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

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.

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 [class name], all of 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 [list topics]. 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 the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include [list topics]. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

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.

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

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 distance education outside of California.

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

PLNU Academic Behavior Policy

Both faculty and students at Point Loma Nazarene University have the right to expect a safe and ordered environment for learning. Students are expected to take the initiative to learn and conduct themselves in a mature and civil manner in the classroom environment. Any student behavior that is disruptive or

threatening is a serious affront to Point Loma Nazarene University as a learning community. Students who fail to adhere to these behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from class or further university sanctions. For a full definition of disruptive behavior, response procedures, and the appeal process, please consult the [Academic Behavior Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

ou are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) to generate ideas, as a learning tool, or in some cases generate portions of work you will submit. I will specify in individual assignments what constitutes appropriate use of AI for that assignment. Please use this Purdue resource to guide your citations when using 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, [by email](#) or phone at 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 approved 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 approved accommodations in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive; as such, 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-related need should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. In accordance with ADA, accommodations cannot constitute a fundamental alteration to course outcomes; therefore, planning ahead is vital in establishing appropriate accommodations for equal access to this course. 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 eligibility 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) has experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [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](#). 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](#) or [consult the list of campus pastors](#).

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [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. 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.

PLNU Course Modality Definitions

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

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.

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.

Loma Writing Center

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar, and polishing final drafts, and more.

Walk-ins are welcome, but we recommend making an appointment in advance. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Email](#)

Assignments At-A-Glance/Canvas Course Summary ⓘ

Fri Sep 11, 2026

Quiz

due by 11:59pm

Quiz 1: Introductory Topics,
Evidence Based Practice

Wed Sep 16, 2026	Assignment	
	Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Assignment: Ankle	due by 7am
	Assignment	
	Foot and Ankle Patient Case	due by 7am
Fri Sep 18, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 2: Foot, Ankle, Lower Leg	due by 11:59pm
	Assignment	
	Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Assignment: Knee	due by 7am
Wed Sep 23, 2026	Assignment	
	Knee Patient Case	due by 7am
	Quiz	

Fri Sep 25, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 3: Knee and Thigh	due by 11:59pm
Wed Sep 30, 2026	Assignment	
	Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Assignment: Hip	due by 7am
	Assignment	
	Hip Patient Case	due by 7am
Fri Oct 2, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 4: Hip	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 7, 2026	Quiz	
	EXAM 1: Lower Extremity	due by 9:30am
Wed Oct 14, 2026	Assignment	
	Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Assignment: Lumbar	due by 7am
	Assignment	
	Lumbar Patient Case	due by 7am

Fri Oct 16, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 5: Lumbar Spine and SIJ	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 21, 2026	Assignment	
	Cervical Patient Case	due by 7am
	Assignment	
	Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Assignment: Cervical	due by 7am
Fri Oct 23, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 6: Cervical Spine	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 28, 2026	Assignment	
	Head Injury Patient Case	due by 7am
Fri Oct 30, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 7: Brain Injury	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 4, 2026	Quiz	due by 9:30am

EXAM 2: Spine, Abdomen,
Brain

Wed Nov 11, 2026	Assignment	
	Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Assignment: Shoulder	due by 7am
	Assignment	
	Shoulder Patient Case	due by 7am
Fri Nov 13, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 8: Shoulder Complex	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 18, 2026	Assignment	
	Elbow, Wrist, and Hand Patient Case	due by 7am
Fri Nov 20, 2026	Quiz	
	Quiz 9: Elbow, Wrist, Hand	due by 11:59pm

	Assignment	
Wed Dec 2, 2026	Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Assignment: Rotational Sports	due by 11:59pm
	Quiz	
Wed Dec 16, 2026	FINAL EXAM	due by 9:30am
	Assignment	
	Final Lab Practical	
	Assignment	
	Lab Practical #1	
	Assignment	
	Lab Practical #2	