

Course Syllabus

Department of Psychology

PSY 1001: Psychology of Personal Development

3 units

Fall 2026

Meeting Days/Time: Monday/Wednesday 1:30-2:25pm (course section) and Thursdays 12:30-1:20pm (small group)

Meeting Location: Taylor 313 (course section), small group location TBA

Final Exam: Monday December 14, 1:30-4:00pm

Instructor: Dr. Kendra Oakes Mueller

Office Location: Culbertson Hall #206

Office Hours: zoom appts Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

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PLNU Mission Statement

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 Statement

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 cultures.

Course Description

A first-year introduction to issues and various theories in psychology which allow students to reflect on their personal social, mental, and spiritual development. The course emphasizes various attitudes and skills which contribute to academic success as well as providing a better understanding of the specific religious and social culture of Point Loma Nazarene University. Discussions, lectures, and small group experiences are the major components of this course. Required of first-year freshmen up through age 20, as well as transfer students with fewer than 24 transferrable units. All other transfer students are required to take PSY 103, General Psychology. Letter Grade.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to...

- Describe self-development to date using psychological tools
- Identify critical thinking and abstract thinking as tools for college success
- Discover social and cultural blocks to successful college and life experience
- Detect tools to resolve social and cultural blocks to successful college and life experience
- Detect alternative ways of thinking
- Develop curiosity about yourself as a stimulus to learning to learn
- Identify Psychology as a resource for learning and solving academic, personal, spiritual, and cultural problems

General Education Learning Outcomes

This course is also one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the learning outcome, "Students will develop an understanding of self that fosters personal wellbeing" (GELO 2a). This learning outcome is assessed through the Autobiography assignment. By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports the pursuit of personal awareness and skill development; focusing on the analytical, communicative, and qualitative skills necessary for successful living in modern society.

Course Spirit

Due to the nature of this class, you will be asked to share personal information. However, you are never required to share anything that you do not feel comfortable sharing, either in papers or in class. This is intended to be a safe place. Professor and students alike must respect and honor one another.

Textbook

Peck, S. (1978). The road less traveled. NY: Simon and Schuster.

Attendance



The faculty members strongly believe that you should be exposed to all elements of PSY 1001. Regular class attendance and participation are considered minimal requirements to be met. There are no allowed or excused absences except when absences are necessitated by certain university-sponsored activities and are approved by the Provost. 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 required to pass the course.

Final grades will be weighted and determined based on the scale below:

- 40% Exams (4)
- 20% Autobiography
- 10% Small Group Attendance, Participation & Assignments (given by your small group leader)
- 10% Attendance & Participation (& assignments)
- 20% Course Reflections

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

Assignments

Course Reflection Papers

In addition to your autobiography (which will be discussed in class), you will be required to submit additional 12 written pages over the course of the semester. Specifically, each student will write 3



page papers demonstrating an understanding and integration of the course material. Specific prompts for each of these papers will be on canvas. The goal of these additional papers is help you reflecting on your personality and story, with the hope of being used as a springboard for your autobiography. Your reflection papers should be a minimum of four pages, be typed, and double-spaced using **1 inch margins with 12-point font size in Times New Roman**. Grade reductions will result from large font, large margins and/or large spacing between lines on the page. You must do your own work. Plagiarized work will earn 0 points. Papers will be submitted via canvas.

Autobiography

You will complete an autobiography. This is an opportunity to reflect on who you are as a person using narrative psychology as the framework. Here is how one author describes narrative psychology: "In the realm of narrative psychology, a person's life story is not a biography of the facts and events of a life, but rather the way a person integrates those facts and events internally- picks them apart and weaves them back together to make meaning. This narrative becomes a form of identity, in which the things someone chooses to include in the story, and the way they tell it, can both reflect and shape who they are. A life story doesn't just say what happened, it says why it was important, what it means for who the person is, for who they will become, and for what happens next" (Beck, nd). It is your opportunity to tell your story and reflect on your journey so far. What it IS NOT: A discussion of where you grew up, where you went to school.....What it IS: It is the narrative you will construct from the events of your life thus far.

You will complete 8 pages that both tell your story and reflect/interpret upon your story. Your autobiography should be typed, and double-spaced using **1 inch margins 12-point font size in Times New Roman**. Papers will be submitted through canvas. You will be graded on a) spelling and grammar, b) telling your story, c) effort/coverage, d) interpreting your story, and e) insight.

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 (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 \(https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=46&navoid=2650#Class_Attendance\)](https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=46&navoid=2650#Class_Attendance) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

Small Group

Your final small group grade will be given to your section professor the last week of classes by your small group leader. The points for your small group grade will be comprised of: letters (8), attendance, evaluations of your leader (through qualtrics survey), descriptions of organizational methods use



attending/exploring different campus related events, and a self-assessment of your own participation within the group.

Late Policy

Any missed or late assignments will result in a **5% deduction** taken from the final grade of that exam or assignment. These deductions occur one time for each exam or assignment and are not cumulative by length of time. All late or missed work must be turned in by the last week of classes (**Friday by 11:59pm**), prior to final exams to receive credit.

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 (<mailto: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 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://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/tug-catalog/academic-general-policies/) (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/tug-catalog/academic-general-policies/>) 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.

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

Use of Technology

In order to be successful environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](https://help.pointloma.edu/TDClient/1808/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=108349) (<https://help.pointloma.edu/TDClient/1808/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=108349>) information. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible nor allowable) to complete exams online.

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

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](http://www.pointloma.edu/experience/academics/class-schedules) (<http://www.pointloma.edu/experience/academics/class-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.

Content and Trigger 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 1001, 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. There may also be some information you might find triggering. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics may include traumatic events that have occurred in the lives of individuals. 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.

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 human sexuality, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

General Course Concerns

If you have a concern related to the content or structure of this course, please bring your concern(s) to me (the instructor) in a timely manner, so that we have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts and work together toward a solution.

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 your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation \(https://www.pointloma.edu/offices/student-life-formation\)](https://www.pointloma.edu/offices/student-life-formation).

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



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.

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.

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 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 public use of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.



Professor will notify students ahead of time if and when anything will be recorded in class.

LomaBooks Instructions for Students

For both digital and print materials, please add these student instructions to your syllabus and Canvas Course. Prior to the start of class, the PLNU Bookstore will also be sharing student instructions in a standalone email on how to access their content. 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 LomaBooks materials.

