



Psychology Department: School of Behavioral and Social Sciences

## **Psy 3041: Group Counseling (Fall 2026)**

3 units

Monday/Wednesday 12:15-1:10; Thursday 12:30-1:20

**Cabrillo Hall 101**

**Final Exam: Wednesday 12/16/26 10:30am**

| <b>Course Information</b>         | <b>Specifics for the Course</b>         |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Instructor title and name:</b> | <b>Kendra L. Oakes Mueller, Ph.D.</b>   |
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| <b>Office location:</b>           | <b>Culbertson Hall</b>                  |

### **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 is designed as a group method experience for students to participate both as a small group “facilitator” (with a small group of Psychology 1001 students), and a small group

member. Students will be the facilitator of a small group of first-year students which will meet each week on Thursdays from 12:30pm-1:20pm. Students will lead the students in a series of activities and discussions designed to facilitate their transition to college life at PLNU.

## Program and Course Learning Outcomes

1. Improve interpersonal skills.
2. Deepen understanding of the art and science of small group leadership.
3. Define in detail the concept of a “community of Love” (based on Wesleyan theology).
4. Identify stages of small group development.
5. Demonstrate effective communication skills in supervision group.
6. Pass an on-line quiz consisting of textbook test bank questions regarding small group counseling.
7. Discuss effective leadership in handling common small group dilemmas.
8. Plan interactive exercises with their group of first year students.

## Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

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.

*Chen, M., & Rybak, C. J. (2004). Group leadership skills – 2nd edition. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.*

## Assessment and Grading

1. Participation: Participation is required and is figured into your final grade.
2. Quizzes: Students are expected to read the assigned text and complete all 10 reading quizzes. Descriptions of all quizzes are listed on canvas.
3. Reflection Assignments: There will be a total of 10 reflection assignments due throughout the semester. Descriptions of all reflection assignments and grading rubrics are listed on canvas.
4. Group Perceptions Paper: Students are required to write a paper in which they will be asked share their observations about the individual group members, their own participation, and the group process. A description of the group perceptions paper and the grading rubric is listed on canvas.
5. Final Reflection Paper: In lieu of a final exam, students are required to write a paper in which they will be asked to demonstrate what they have learned about themselves, others, and the process of small group development though this course. A description of the final reflection paper and the grading rubric is listed on canvas.
6. Data Entry: Students are expected to enter small group member attendance and indicate the completion of any relevant small group assignments in canvas on a weekly basis. Successful entry of this data into canvas is required and figured into your final grade.

Grades will be based on the following:

**Participation: 40%**

**Assignments: 20%**

**Quizzes: 20%**

**Papers: 10%**

**Data Entry: 10%**

**Total: 100%**

### **Grade Scale Based on Percentages**

| <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>F</b>       |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| 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 |                |

### **Introductory Group Comments:**

The Psychology 1001 small groups are designed to allow first-year students the opportunity to create a community of love where they can find support and encouragement during what can be a very stressful transition to college. The actual format and content of each of these communities will vary depending on the personality makeup of the group. The role of the Psychology 3041 facilitator is to facilitate the development of the community but not to do the work for their group.

Perhaps the best way to acquire the skills to lead a group is the experience of being in a group. For this reason, Psychology 3041 will give you the opportunity to have a “group experience” where you can discuss areas of your own personal development in the same way you hope your group members will. As a result, this class will likely be one of the easiest and most difficult classes you have ever taken!

Given this, our class time will focus on handling administrative issues, processing issues that arise in the first-year groups, and using the class time to create a “community of love” discussion group ourselves. This course will use a didactic format in the first few weeks, and then will switch to an experiential method. Students who are uncomfortable and unwilling to participate in both aspects of the class should drop at the beginning of the semester. In this practicum the learning experiences will come as you interact with others and experience the stages of group development.

People experience feelings, thoughts, and exhibit behaviors and problems for a variety of reasons (e.g., cultural, gender-related, childhood upbringing, spiritual history). Yet, all people are embedded in a matrix of social relationships. We are social beings that become persons through relationships, develop problems and idiosyncrasies in and through relationships, and learn, grow and develop strengths and resiliencies in relationships. Perhaps the greatest task of the human person is to develop and maintain close meaningful relationships.

We have probably all longed, at one time or another, to clarify a relationship, to be really honest about our positive and negative feelings toward someone. We have probably also desired to receive honest reciprocal feedback about how we affect each other. In society this open communication is rarely engaged in due to many rules about who can say what to whom, including fear of hurting others and losing friends. In many families there are “no talk” rules about certain subjects. In the social laboratory of this class group these kinds of honest exchanges are not only allowed but encouraged. You can learn an incredible amount about yourself and your self-in-relation by honest Psychology 3041-2: Spring 2024 6 interpersonal exploration. This may not be easy and at times may actually be very stressful, but if you can understand and work out your relationships with the members of the group, it often has significant rewards that carry over to the outside world.

The way you can best help yourself and the group is to be honest and direct about your feelings in the group at that moment (in the here-and-now) , especially feelings toward other group members and the professor. This is the core of the group! This is not a forced confessional as all individuals have different rates for developing trust and openness.

At first the group may seem strange and frustrating. You may develop feelings of annoyance with the professor wanting them to supply you with answers. I urge you not to give up on the process too early. Help will come as you discuss your feelings and from other group members. Your two major tasks are to discuss your thoughts and feelings about anything and everything that comes to mind (especially as these relate to the other members of the group), and to consistently attend and be on time. My role is group facilitator. This is different from “professor” who supplies you with information which you passively receive. I will assist you to understand the group and yourself. I will not, however, do the work of the group. This can come only as you risk and strive to be genuine with your feelings and experiences and present with yourself.

Obviously, this group is a place to process what is happening in your own small groups, but you will only be really effective as a group facilitator if you understand yourself. By understanding yourself you can come to understand why you feel and do what you do in your own groups. At times you may also experience some confusion going from group facilitator (in 1001) to group member (in 3041). This is okay and something that we would simply encourage you to bring up during our class sessions and to talk about within this context of community.

### **Privacy and Responsibility:**

It is essential that all members enter into a verbal contract of privacy (both in 1001 and 3041). This means that no one discusses anything that is spoken about in the group outside the group. The professor will also abide by this principle except in cases where consultation is needed or where he is required to report by law (e.g., child, elder, dependent adult, or spousal abuse, or risk to hurt self or others, or court orders). You may share your experience of the group (what you are learning about groups and yourself) with others outside the group but never disclose the names or experiences of other members. It is also best if group members do not discuss the group together outside the group, but if you do we ask that you take responsibility to discuss the salient aspects of the conversation inside the group. It is also expected that all group facilitators serve as positive role models to their group and have signed a contract in the application agreeing to this. In the very rare circumstance that we find a leader has not modeled positive appropriate behaviors to his or her group, the professors reserve the right to remove the student as a 1001 facilitator, reduce the grade of, or even fail a student after consultation with the department.

### **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.

## 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 Psy 3041, we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. 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 psychology, 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 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 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. Please consult the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#) 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](#).

### **PLNU Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy**

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) to generate ideas, or as a learning tool. 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.

## **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](#)

## **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.

### Assignments At-A-Glance/Canvas Course Summary

| Date                    | Details                                                | Due            |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Mon Aug 31, 2026</b> | Class 1 Participation                                  | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Sep 2, 2026</b>  | Class 2 Participation                                  | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Fri Sep 4, 2026</b>  | Quiz 1 - Ch. 1 Theories and Assumptions                | due by 11:59pm |
|                         | Reflection Assignment 1 - Tips for Small Group Leaders | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Sep 7, 2026</b>  | Class 3 Participation                                  | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Fri Sep 11, 2026</b> | Quiz 2 - Ch. 2 On Becoming a Group Leader              | due by 11:59pm |
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|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                         | Reflection Assignment 2 -<br>First Impressions of Your<br>Small Group              | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Sep 14, 2026</b> | Class 4 Participation                                                              | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Sep 16, 2026</b> | Class 5 Participation                                                              | due by 12:15pm |
|                         | Quiz 3 - Ch. 3 Types of<br>Groups and How to Start<br>One From Scratch             | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Fri Sep 18, 2026</b> | Reflection Assignment 3 -<br>Boundaries, Privacy, and<br>Self-Disclosure           | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Sep 21, 2026</b> | Class 6 Participation                                                              | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Sep 23, 2026</b> | Class 7 Participation                                                              | due by 12:15pm |
|                         | Quiz 4 - Ch. 4<br>Fundamental Skills for<br>Group Facilitation and<br>Intervention | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Fri Sep 25, 2026</b> | Reflection Assignment 4 -<br>Interpersonal Perceptions                             | due by 11:59pm |

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|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Mon Sep 28, 2026</b> | Class 8 Participation                                                      | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Sep 30, 2026</b> | Class 9 Participation                                                      | due by 12:15pm |
|                         | Quiz 5 - Ch. 5 The First Session and the Forming Stage                     | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Fri Oct 2, 2026</b>  | Reflection Assignment 5 - Interpersonal Patterns and Responses to Conflict | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Wed Oct 7, 2026</b>  | Class 11 Participation                                                     | due by 12:15pm |
|                         | Quiz 6 - Ch. 9 Working with Unspoken Tension and Open Conflict             | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Fri Oct 9, 2026</b>  | Reflection Assignment 6 - Transference and Countertransference             | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Oct 12, 2026</b> | No class (10/12)- Discussion board video and posts                         | due by 5pm     |

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                         | Class 12 Participation                           | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Oct 14, 2026</b> | Data Entry -<br>Mid-Semester Check               | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Oct 19, 2026</b> | Class 13 Participation                           | due by 12:15pm |
|                         | Class 14 Participation                           | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Oct 21, 2026</b> | Paper 1 - Group<br>Perceptions Paper             | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Oct 26, 2026</b> | Class 15 Participation                           | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Oct 28, 2026</b> | Class 16 Participation                           | due by 12:15pm |
|                         | Quiz 7 - Ch. 10 Taking<br>Risks in Communication | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Fri Oct 30, 2026</b> | Reflection Assignment 7 -<br>Telling Your Story  | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Nov 2, 2026</b>  | Class 17 Participation                           | due by 12:15pm |

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Wed Nov 4, 2026</b>  | Class 18 Participation                                       | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Fri Nov 6, 2026</b>  | Quiz 8 - Ch. 11 Advanced Steps into the Here-and-Now         | due by 11:59pm |
|                         | Reflection Assignment 8 - Gifts and Growth Areas             | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Nov 9, 2026</b>  | Class 19 Participation                                       | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Nov 11, 2026</b> | Class 20 Participation                                       | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Fri Nov 13, 2026</b> | Quiz 9 - Ch. 12 Process Illumination                         | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Nov 16, 2026</b> | Class 21 Participation                                       | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Nov 18, 2026</b> | Class 22 Participation                                       | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Fri Nov 20, 2026</b> | Quiz 10 - Ch. 14 Skills of Termination: Completing the Cycle | due by 11:59pm |

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                         | Reflection Assignment 9 -<br>Letters to a New Leader                     | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Nov 23, 2026</b> | No class (11/23)-<br>Discussion board video<br>and posts                 | due by 5pm     |
| <b>Tue Nov 24, 2026</b> | Reflection Assignment 10<br>- Saying Goodbye to Your<br>1001 Small Group | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Nov 30, 2026</b> | Class 23 Participation                                                   | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Dec 2, 2026</b>  | Class 24 Participation                                                   | due by 12:15pm |
|                         | Quiz 11- Ch. 7 Leading<br>Semi-Structured Groups                         | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Fri Dec 4, 2026</b>  | Reflection Assignment 11<br>- Saying Goodbye to Our<br>Leader Group      | due by 11:59pm |
| <b>Mon Dec 7, 2026</b>  | Class 25 Participation                                                   | due by 12:15pm |
| <b>Wed Dec 9, 2026</b>  | Class 26 Participation                                                   | due by 12:15pm |

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**Fri Dec 11, 2026**

Data Entry - Final Check

due by 11:59pm

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**Mon Dec 14, 2026**

Class 27 Participation - if  
needed

due by 10:30am

**Wed Dec 16, 2026**

Paper 2 - Final Reflection  
Paper

due by 11:59pm