

Course Syllabus  
**Psychology 4010**  
*Issues in Psychotherapy-Theology Integration*

Fall 2019

Wednesday 4:15-7:50 in Taylor 313

Semester Units: 3

Instructor: *G. Michael Leffel, PhD, Professor of Psychology*

Office: *Culbertson Hall*

Office Phone: (619) 849-2278

E-mail: [michaelleffel@pointloma.edu](mailto:michaelleffel@pointloma.edu)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND DESIGN**

The University catalog describes this course as: *A more detailed study of issues in the integration of theological insights and psychotherapy approaches within the therapeutic setting. Includes an overview of the historical relationship between religion and psychotherapy, differing models of the therapeutic relationship, and various models for integrating psychotherapeutic theory with theological issues.*

The purpose of each class session is to highlight selected topics from the required readings and to supplement this material with related ideas. *Students are responsible for all assigned readings, whether or not discussed in class.* A “graduate style” discussion format will be used in the course. *Each student is expected to have read the assigned reading for class discussion (course Schedule below), and be prepared to think together about the reading in class.*

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

#### **A. Attendance and “Great Divorce” Reading Response (20%)**

Each week you will complete and turn-in a Reading Response to one of our texts, *The Great Divorce* (explained in class). These Reading Responses help you prepare for class discussion, and they provide a record of your attendance. *Attendance* each time is 3 pts, and your Great Divorce reading response is graded 0-7 pts, for a total of 10 pts. each week. Please see Attendance Policy below.

#### **B. Reading Discussion Guide Summary (30%)**

Additionally, *approximately every THIRD week* you will complete and turn-in a summary/response to this week’s reading. These Discussion Guides help you prepare for class discussion, and for the Mid-term and Final Exams. We will use your summary as a guide to class discussion. Discussion Guide is graded 0-10 pts.

#### **C. Mid-term(s) and Final (50%)**

There will be two (2) take-home mid-term essay exams (15% each) and a take-home Final Exam (20%). Points totaled and grade assigned according to Department standards as described below (p. 2).

Point Loma Nazarene University  
Psychology Department  
Academic Guides

DEPARTMENT FACULTY NORMAL CURVE GUIDES

**Z Score**

A	1.33	0.0918	9.2%	
A-	1	0.1587	6.7%	15.9%
B+	0.67	0.2514	9.3%	
B	0.33	0.3707	11.9%	
B-	0	0.5	12.9%	34.1%
C+	-0.33	0.6293	12.9%	
C	-1	0.8413	21.2%	
C-	-1.33	0.9082	6.7%	40.8%
D+	-1.67	0.9525	4.4%	
D	-2	0.9772	2.5%	
D-	-2.33	0.9901	1.3%	
F	<-2.33	1	1.0%	9.2%

**Percentage Score**

A =	93-100%	Total points
A -	90-92%	
B +	88-89%	
B	84-87%	
B -	80-83%	
C +	77-79%	
C	70-76%	
C -	65-69%	
D +	62-64%	
D	55-61%	
D -	50-54%	
F	49%	or below

A minimum of 50 % is needed to pass the course.

DEPARTMENT FACULTY STUDY AND ATTENDANCE GUIDES

**STUDY TIME:** A faculty member should design courses with the expectation that a student would spend an average daily study time of two (2) hours outside class for each hour of time spent in classroom.

**STUDY SCHEDULE:** It is not the faculty member's responsibility to schedule the two hours of outside study. A student should learn to use this time without explicit direction nor coercion. It takes most students this much time to do regular assignments.

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance is required for all classes. If a faculty member establishes the student as responsible for his/her attendance, it does not mean that absences are excused. The catalog lists the only excused absences.

## Required Text and Readings

1. University Reader. Article and chapter selections described in Reading Schedule below.
2. C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*.

## Attendance Policy and Contribution to Grade

Please come to class. When you are not present, the class dynamic changes. Inconsistent class attendance/tardiness impacts your final grade in the following way:

1. In a once-a-week course, following **ONE (1) unexcused** absence, *beginning with the second unexcused absence*, five (5) points will be deducted from your Final Total for each absence. In this class this deduction usually has a substantial impact on your grade.
2. In addition: "Whenever the number of accumulated absences in a class, **for any cause**, exceeds 10% percent of classes (equivalent to one and one-half weeks in a 15-week semester course), the faculty member sends a written report to the Associate Provost for Academic Administration which may result in de-enrollment" (Catalog, p. 37). **In this course, that would be after two (2) absences in this class.**

## PLNU Attendance Policy and Reporting

### What is an "Unexcused" Absence?

1. "There are no allowed or excused absences except when absences are necessitated by certain University-sponsored activities and are approved in writing by the Provost" (Catalog).
2. In addition, the Professor will excuse (legitimate) illness only with MD note. No exceptions please.
3. Medical (check-ups) and Dental appointments ARE NOT excused absences.

## Office Hours

To schedule an appointment with me: Either (i) arrange a time with me after class, or (ii) write me a note with your available times and telephone number.

*Making an appointment* will insure that you have the uninterrupted amount of time you wish to speak with me. Please call me or ask me in class.

## Academic Accommodations

"All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should discuss options with the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of class. The ASC will contact professors with suggestions related to classroom needs and accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the start of the semester."

**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 Class Schedules site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

**PLNU Copyright Policy**

PLNU, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by laws 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 Mission**

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. To Teach, To Shape, To Send

**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, examination, or the course, depending on the seriousness of the offense. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Note: This syllabus is not a contract. The Professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus to accomplish the learning objectives of the course.

**PSY 4010**  
***Course-at-a-Glance***

**Indwelling Goodness:  
Spiritually Integrative Therapy in the Age of Relational Neuroscience**

**Unit 1**

***Dis-Connected***

***The Crisis in Contemporary Psychotherapy and “Spirituality”***

*There are metaphysical assumptions behind our personal theory of therapy, our view of the person, our view of the good life, the nature of good and evil, and our notion of psychological health . . . so it is important that the therapist be conscious of them.*

-L. Corbett, *The Sacred Cauldron*

**Themes to Develop:** What is spiritually integrative therapy, and why is it important; the “reductionist” trend in contemporary therapy; distinctions between *medical* and *relational* models of therapy; how spirituality is relevant both to client and therapist; the ambiguity of “spirituality”; the significance of psychotherapy-theology integration (clinical integration); Christian theology as a resource for developing a spiritual vision of therapeutic activity.

**Unit 2**

***“The Brain’s Rules of Change”***

***Therapeutic Healing in the Paradigm of Relational Neuroscience***

*A person cannot choose to desire a certain kind of relationship, any more than he can will himself to ride a unicycle, play the Goldberg Variations, or speak Swahili. The requisite neural framework for performing these activities does not coalesce on command. . . A patient doesn’t become generically healthier; he [she] becomes more like the therapist.*

-Lewis, Amini, & Lannon, (2000). *A General Theory of Love*

**Themes to Develop:** How is relational neuroscience changing how we think about therapy?; the non-presenting “problem” in therapy; the concept of implicit and explicit memory and multiple “levels” of personality; the difference between “counteractive” vs. “regulatory” vs. “memory reconsolidation” therapies; the meaning of “corrective” relational experience; principles of relationally-oriented, experientially-focused therapies; Internal Family Systems Therapy (IFS) as example of memory reconsolidation therapy.

**Unit 3**

***Implicit Spirituality***

***Transforming the Relational Deep Structure of Human Goodness***

*Is there a line that separates the spiritual path from therapeutic progress? What actually takes place in psychotherapy when seen against the vision of human nature offered by sacred tradition? . . . Spiritual guides and psychotherapists, what do your names mean? Behind these names, which of you are the real spiritual guides and which the real psychotherapists? We need to know. I need to know.*

-J. Needleman, *On the Way to Self-Knowledge*

**Themes to Develop:** Is there a difference between psychological and spiritual change?; the “psycho-spiritual unity” of personality; lost moral vision of S-I therapy; the concept of relational deep structure and implicit spirituality; spirituality as transformation of the implicit moral self.

**Unit 4**  
**The Quest**  
*A Spiritual Theology of Psychotherapy*

*The mind can believe correct doctrines and leave the heart unaffected; a person can follow the practices and observances commanded by conventional religious wisdom and leave the self at its deepest level untransformed.*

-M. Borg, *Jesus the Sage*, p. 109

**Themes to Develop:** Is there/what is the model of “healing” in Christian theology?: contrasting goals and models of Christian spirituality; spiritual maturity in the moral likeness model Christian spirituality; features of the healing quest in the Christian narrative of *theosis*; foundational theological principles of implicit spirituality.

**Indwelling Goodness**  
*Spiritually Integrative Therapy in the Age of Relational Neuroscience*

**Week 1 (Sept 4)**

Introduction and Overview of the Course  
*A Story about a Prince Who Became a Turkey*

**Unit 1**

***Dis-Connected***

***The Crisis in Contemporary Psychotherapy and “Spirituality”***

*There are metaphysical assumptions behind our personal theory of therapy, our view of the person, our view of the good life, the nature of good and evil, and our notion of psychological health . . . so it is important that the therapist be conscious of them.*

-L. Corbett, *The Sacred Cauldron*

**Themes to Develop:** Why develop a spiritual vision of therapy; the problem of “reductionism” in contemporary therapy and spirituality theory; the ambiguity of spirituality; what is spiritually integrative therapy; distinctions between the *medical* and *relational* models of therapy; the meaning and significance of psychotherapy-theology “integration” (clinical integration); Christian theology as a resource for developing a spiritual vision of therapeutic activity.

**Week 2 (Sept 11)**

- Topic 2.1**      Turkeys and Squares in “Flatland”  
*The Crisis in Contemporary Psychotherapy*  
**Reader:** Haidt (Happiness Hypothesis)
- Topic 2.2**      Swimming Pool or Quest?  
*Two Meta-Visions of Therapy*  
**Reader:** Frattaroli (Healing the Soul in the Age of the Brain)
- Topic 2.3**      The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 1: Forgiveness and Healing Are Not the Same Things*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Preface

**Week 3 (Sept 18)**

- Topic 3.1**      Relational Neuroscience and the New View of Therapeutic Healing  
*What Undergraduate Textbooks Are Not Telling You*  
**Reader:** Elkins (The Human Elements of Psychotherapy)
- Topic 3.2**      “Unlocking the Emotional Brain”  
*Basic Assumptions of the Neurodynamic Model of Therapeutic Change*  
**Reader:** Ecker et al. (Psychotherapy Networker)
- Topic 3.3**      The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 2: Healing through Death of the “False” Self*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 1 AND Ch. 2

**Take-home Exam 1 Questions Distributed in Class. Due: Fri, Oct 11**

**Week 4 (Sept 25)**

- Topic 4.1**      “Spirituality” and Spiritually Integrative Therapy  
*Where Are We Now?*  
**Reader:** Vieten & Schammell (Spiritual and Religious Competencies)
- Topic 4.2**      The “Dimensional” Model of Spiritually Integrative Therapy  
*Why the Dimensional Model Misses the Point*  
**Reader:** Sperry (Spirituality in Clinical Practice)
- Topic 4.3**      The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 3: Healing for “Goodness” Sake*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 3 AND Ch. 4

**Week 5 (Oct 2)**

- Topic 5.1**      “Clinical Integration”  
*What is It, Why Does it Matter?*  
**Reader:** McMinn et al. (Just What is Christian Counseling Anyway?)
- Topic 5.2**      Therapy Situations and Varieties of Integration  
*What Would You Do?*  
**Reader:** McMinn (Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality)
- Topic 5.3**      The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 4: Restoration of the Freedom and Capacity for Mature Love*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 5

**Week 6 (Oct 9)**

- Topic 6.1**      The Dilemma of “Life Below the Waterline”  
*Contrasting Theological Models of Spiritual Change*  
**Reader:** Crabb (Inside-Out)
- Topic 6.2**      Top-Down or Bottom-Up Change?  
*Good Therapy in Search of a Different Theology*  
**Reader:** Jones (Transference and the Dynamics of Religion)
- Topic 6.3**      The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 5: Healing as Cooperant, Multi-Action Process*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 6 AND Ch. 7

**Reminder: Take-home Exam 1 Due end of week, Friday Oct 11**

**Unit 2**  
**“The Brain’s Rules of Change”**  
*Therapeutic Healing in the Paradigm of Relational Neuroscience*

*A person cannot choose to desire a certain kind of relationship, any more than he can will himself to ride a unicycle, play the Goldberg Variations, or speak Swahili. The requisite neural framework for performing these activities does not coalesce on command. . . A patient doesn't become generically healthier; he [she] becomes more like the therapist.*

-Lewis, Amini, & Lannon, (2000). *A General Theory of Love*

**Themes to Develop:** How relational neuroscience is changing how we think about therapy; the non-presenting “problem” in therapy; the concept of implicit and explicit memory and “levels” of personality; the difference between “counteractive” vs. “regulation” vs. “memory reconsolidation” therapies; using “corrective” relational experience to change the impact of past experiences; Internal Family Systems Therapy (IFS) as example of memory reconsolidation therapy.

**Week 7 (Oct 16)**

- Topic 7.1**      “The Ties That Bind”  
*Symptoms and Ghosts of Relationships Past*  
**Reader:** Vaughn (Half Empty, Half Full)
- Topic 7.2**      How (and Why) the Past is Still Happening  
*The Old, New Concept of “Transference”*  
**Reader:** Yalom (The Gift of Therapy)
- Topic 7.3**      The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 6: The Therapeutic Action of “Discovery”*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 8

**Week 8 (Oct 23)**

- Topic 8.1**      The “Non-presenting” Problem in Therapy  
*Thinking Deep Even if You're Brief*  
**Reader:** Cozolino, Ch. 3 (Why Therapy Works)
- Topic 8.2**      Those Things We Don't Remember Yet Never Forget  
*The Distinction Between Explicit and Implicit Memory*  
**Reader:** Cozolino, Ch. 5 (Why Therapy Works)
- Topic 8.3**      The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 7: Priority of the “Subtractive” Action of Therapy*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 9

**NOTE: Get Reading for next class in class TODAY (A Primer on Memory Reconsolidation)**

**Take-home Exam 2 Questions Distributed in Class: Due: Fri, Nov 13**

**Week 9 (Oct 30)**

**Topic 9.1** “The Brain’s Rules of Change” (Part 1)  
*Assumptions and Principles of Memory Reconsolidation*  
**Reading:** Distributed last class (*A Primer on Memory Reconsolidation*)

**Topic 9.2** “The Brain’s Rules of Change” (Part 2)  
*The Process of Memory Reconsolidation*  
**Reading: con.** *A Primer on Memory Reconsolidation*

**Topic 9.3** The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 8: The Therapeutic Action of “Addition”*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 10

**NOTE: Get Reading for next class in class TODAY (*The Body Keeps the Score*)**

**Week 10 (Nov 6)**

*No Class* (Dr. Leffel at Conference)

**Reminder: Take-home Exam 2 Due end of week, Friday Nov 13**

**Week 11 (Nov 13)**

**Topic 11 .1** Putting the Pieces Together  
*“Internal Family Systems” Therapy as Memory Reconsolidation*  
**Reading:** Distributed last class (*The Body Keeps the Score*)

**Topic 11.2** “Welcoming the Guests”  
*The Role of Mindful Self-Compassion in Memory Reconsolidation*  
**Reading:** TBD

**Topic 11.3** The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 9: Receptivity to and Acceptance of Multiple “Parts”*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 11

**Unit 3**  
**Implicit Spirituality**  
*Transforming the Relational Deep Structure of Human Goodness*

*Is there a line that separates the spiritual path from therapeutic progress? What actually takes place in psychotherapy when seen against the vision of human nature offered by sacred tradition? . . . Spiritual guides and psychotherapists, what do your names mean? Behind these names, which of you are the real spiritual guides and which the real psychotherapists? We need to know. I need to know.*

-J. Needleman, *On the Way to Self-Knowledge*

**Themes to Develop:** Is there a difference between psychological and spiritual change?; the “psycho-spiritual unity” of personality; lost “moral” vision of S-I therapy; the concept of relational deep structure and implicit spirituality; spirituality as transformation of the implicit – procedural moral self.

**Week 12 (Nov 20)**

- Topic**            The Capacity to Love and “Imago Dei”  
*The Concept of Relational Deep Structure*  
**Reader:** Hall, pp. 234-236 (Psychology in the Spirit)
- Topic**            How Human Attachment Shapes “Relationship with God”  
*Your Two Gods*  
**Reader:** Hall, pp. 236-260 (Psychology in the Spirit)
- Topic**            The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
*Principle 10: Relational Dilemmas Are Resolved Relationally*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 12

**Final Essay Exam Questions Distributed in Class**

**Note:** Get Reading for next class in class today (*Emotion & Spirit*, Symington)

**Week 13 (Nov 27)**

*Happy Thanksgiving*

**Week 14 (Dec 4)**

- Topic 14.1**      The “Psycho-spiritual Unity” of Personality  
*Re-Conceptualizing the Focus of Spiritually Integrative Therapy*  
**Reader:** Benner (Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest)
- Topic 14.2**      “Lost” Moral Vision of Spiritually Integrative Therapy  
*The Relationship of Morality, Spirituality, and Religion*  
**Reading:** (Distributed before Break) *Emotion & Spirit*, Symington
- Topic 14.3**      From Ghosts to Solid Persons: A Story of the Spiritual Quest  
*Principle 11: Transformation of Character, Not Education of Mind*  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 13

**Week 15 (Dec 11)****Topic 15.1**    **TBD****Topic 15.2**    The Quest: From Ghosts to Solid Persons  
**Book:** *Great Divorce*, Ch. 14**Finals Week (Wed, Dec 18)**

Bring Final Essay Exam to class