

## SYLLABUS

### PSY 4090 – Special Topics in Psychology – Forensic Psychology - Spring 2022 - Section 1

Faculty: Mitchell R. Spezzaferrri, M.A.

Semester Units: 3

Schedule: Wednesdays 3:00-5:30 pm

Final Exam: Week 16, 5/2/22 – 5/6/22

Class meetings held online via Zoom

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Office hours: By appointment only

#### PLNU Mission Statement

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is molded and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire 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 to introduce students to the areas and issues that define forensic psychology to instill a broad understanding of the field. This broad understanding will include the areas of psychology, law, criminal justice, and forensic mental health. Students will gain a basic knowledge and understanding of the role of psychology and other mental health professionals and learn how to apply psychological principles within the criminal justice system.

#### Program Learning Outcomes

1. Identify basic tenants of psychology.

#### Course Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a basic working knowledge of the role of psychology and psychologists in a forensic setting.
2. Demonstrate a basic understanding of how the integration of psychological principles into legislation affects public policy.
3. Incorporate Christian values and ethics considering the application of theories into law.
4. Critically analyze and integrate information from a variety of sources into a comprehensive understanding of law and psychology.

#### Textbooks

1. Bartol, C. R. & Bartol, A. M. (2022). *Introduction to Forensic Psychology*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA. ISBN-13: 978- 1071815342

- An older edition (i.e., 5<sup>th</sup> Edition) of this book is a reasonable option for the course as well

#### 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 4-unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course,

students will spend an estimated 150 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

### Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance at all **synchronous** class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or 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 postdeadline dates. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

### I. Grading

A minimum of 50% is needed to pass the course. The final grade will be computed on the following basis:

- 20% Weekly Journal Entries and Replies

- 10% Attendance and Participation
- 20% Midterm Exam
- 30% Forensic Research Topic Paper
- 20% Final Exam

Point Loma Nazarene University: Psychology Department, Academic Guides

### DEPARTMENT FACULTY NORMAL CURVE GUIDES

Z Score Percentage Score

A	1.33
A-	1
B+	0.67
B	0.33
B-	0
C+	-0.33
C	-1
C-	-1.33
D+	-1.67
D	-2

D-	-2.33
F	<-2.33

A =	93-100%	Total points
A -	90-92%	
B +	88-89%	
B	84-87%	
B -	80-83%	
C +	77-79%	
C	70-76%	

C -
D +
D

D -	50-54%	
F	49% or below	

### Test Policies

If a student cannot take a test due to any circumstances the student needs to notify the professor prior to the examination (in person or by phone/email). Any missed exam will result in a **5% deduction** taken from the final grade of that exam (whether taken early or late).

### Assignments

#### Weekly Journal Entries and Replies

Weekly journals are meant to cover material in class lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. The idea is to help the students integrate the information from class into real life scenarios. Each journal entry (250 words) is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday (3:00 PM) and two replies (100-150 words each) are due by Friday at 11:59 PM. There will be 12 given, 10 points each.

#### Class Attendance and Participation

Course attendance is mandatory and a necessity to be successful in the course, especially given the online modality. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each synchronous class session. It is vital that any excused absences be addressed before, if possible, or immediately after missing a class to avoid a loss of points. In addition, students are required to bring materials, notes, articles, etc. as outlined in the syllabus and to be prepared to engage and discuss them in class. This course is very discussion intensive, and students must come prepared to fully participate to make the most of their learning experience. Here are some requirements to help you make the most of our online, synchronous format:

1. Show up to Zoom on time.
2. Turn on camera and make sure your camera is turned on for the entire length of the class. 1. If you need to have camera turned off an email **MUST** be sent to me prior to class otherwise I will consider this an unexcused absence.
  2. Excused reasons for intermittent camera being off: need to use the restroom, may need to protect roommate.
3. Participate with professor and peers by unmuting OR using the chat.
4. Make sure you are in a quiet space (when possible) free of distractions.
  - a. Students will not get participation points if they are driving in a car, at work, etc.
  - b. You should reserve this class time just like you would if you were in a face-to-face class.

#### Midterm and Final Exams

The exams will cover information discussed in class lectures as well as the Bartol & Bartol text. Each exam is valued at 100 points.

#### Forensic Research Topic Paper

There will be one topic paper assignment. This paper is meant to evaluate your ability to integrate your knowledge of psychological principles into current legal topics. A list of suggested topics and more information about this paper will be given both in class and on Canvas. As this is an upper-division psychology course, APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition standards will be strongly enforced – non-psychology students should

write in this format as well and will be given resources to assist them. This paper is worth 50 points.

#### Research Paper Grading:

- Accuracy and comprehension of information (15 pts)
- Synthesis with textbook and journal materials (10 pts)
- Demonstrates need of research/problem needing to be researched (5 pts)
- Outline and organization of paper (10 pts)
- Use of appropriate writing conventions (e.g., grammar, syntax, etc.) (5 pts)
- Adherence to APA requirements in writing and citations (5 pts)

#### 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 class **Friday by 11:59pm**, prior to final exams to receive credit.

#### 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 online (distance education) outside of California.

#### Use of Technology

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. If a student needs technological resources, please contact [student-tech-request@pointloma.edu](mailto:student-tech-request@pointloma.edu).

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

#### Academic Accommodations

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic adjustments, modifications, or auxiliary aids/services. At Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), these students are requested to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center ([DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu) or 619-849-2486). The DRC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students' equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. After the student files the required documentation, the DRC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to

meet that student's specific learning needs. The DRC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. The AP must be implemented in all such courses.

If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course. PLNU highly recommends that DRC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all the elements of their AP in that course.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As stated in the university catalog, "Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course." See [Academic Policies](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

### **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.

### **FERPA Policy**

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by (each faculty member choose one strategy to use: distributing all grades and papers individually; requesting and filing written student permission; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also, in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

### **Final Exam**

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. In the rare case that a student is scheduled for more than three (3) final examinations on the same day, the student is authorized to contact each professor to work out an alternative time for one of those examinations. This professor needs to be contacted at least 2 weeks prior to finals for any and such arrangements.

### **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.

**Note:** Given the hybrid and online modalities being used in the 2021-2022 academic year, the content of the course schedule and assignments will be posted in Canvas.

**Week Date Day Assignment Due**

1	1/11/22	T	Spring Semester Starts
1	1/12/22	W	Introduction to Course/Syllabus B&B Ch. 1 Introduction to Forensic Psychology
2	1/19/22	W	B&B Ch. 2 Police and Public Safety Psychology <i>Journal 1</i>
3	1/26/22	W	B&B Ch. 3 Psychology of Investigations <i>Journal 2</i>
4	2/2/22	W	B&B Ch. 4 Consulting and Testifying <i>Journal 3</i>
5	2/9/22	W	B&B Ch. 5 Consulting with Criminal Courts <i>Journal 4</i>
6	2/16/22	W	B&B Ch. 6 Family Law & Civil Litigation <i>Journal 5</i>
7	2/21/22	M	<i>Submit research topic proposal</i>
7	2/23/22	W	B&B Ch. 7 Dev. Of Delinquent & Criminal Behavior <i>Journal 6</i>
8	2/28/22	M-F	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
9	3/7/22	M-F	<b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</b>
10	3/16/22	W	B&B Ch. 8 Psychology of Violence & Intimidation <i>Journal 7</i>
11	3/21/22	M	<i>Two research articles due</i>
11	3/23/22	W	B&B Ch. 9 Psychology of Sexual Behavior <i>Journal 8</i>
12	3/30/22	W	B&B Ch. 10 For. Psych. & Victims of Crime <i>Journal 9</i>
13	4/4/22	M	<i>Research paper outline due</i>

13	4/6/22	W	B&B Ch. 11 Fam. Violence & Child Victimization <i>Journal 10</i>
14	4/11/22	M	<b>FORENSIC RESEARCH TOPIC PAPER DUE</b>
14	4/13/22	W	**Special Topic Lecture**
15	4/20/22	W	B&B Ch. 12 Correctional Psychology in Adults <i>Journal 11</i>
16	4/27/22	W	B&B Ch. 13 Juvenile Justice & Corrections <i>Journal 12</i>
17	5/2/22	M-F	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>