



College of Natural & Social Sciences: Department of Psychology

**PSY3021 Section 4 Abnormal Psychology**

3 Units

*Fall 2023*

**Meeting days/times (Wednesdays 2:45 pm- 5:15 pm)**

**Meeting location (Taylor Hall Room 312)**

**Final Exam: ( Wednesday, 12/15/23, 1:30 – 4:00 pm, Taylor Hall 312)**

<b>Instructor title and name:</b>	Nicholas Furnari, MA
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<b>Office location and hours:</b>	Culbertson Hall, By Appointment Only

## **Some Opening Thoughts**

...every patient with mental illness was more afraid than he could tolerate when he was a baby, and the faults in his psychic structure represent the gallant attempts to allay this intolerable feeling by the inadequate means at his disposal.

–H.V. Dicks, *Clinical Studies in Psychopathology*, 1939

“Mental illness is a misnomer. People suffer from emotional disturbances. The word *emotion* is composed of the prefix ‘e’ and the stem ‘motion’. Emotion means to move out. An emotional disturbance is an inability to move out towards people and the world. By definition, one can say that emotional conflicts distort or limit the motility of the body. They impede movement outward. Similarly, any disturbance in the ability of an organism to move out denotes an emotional conflict. One can, therefore, determine emotional conflicts in a person from the way he moves.”

–Alexander Lowen, *Breathing, Movement and Feeling*, 1965

## **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.

## **Foundational Explorations Mission**

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 culture.

## **Course Description**

This course is designated as a general study of etiology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of various forms of abnormal behavior from various psychological perspectives. Accordingly, this class will provide a general introduction into concepts of normality vs. abnormality, explorations into what is meant by ‘psychopathology’, and an overview of various treatment methods for psychological adaptations. Additionally, this course will review the contextual, historical factors that impact diagnosis and treatment of psychological difficulties. A general overview of the classification of mental disorders per the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V)* will be presented. Critical attention will be given to understanding the origins and validity of diagnostic procedures as well as the efficacy of various treatment methods. We will examine various methods of conceptualizing symptomatic expression and their accompanying treatment recommendations. Learning will be supported through theoretical texts and case material.

## **Program and Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Develop the ability to think critically regarding the complex nature of psychological difficulties and their treatment.
2. Explain some of the cultural, ethical, and legal issues regarding diagnosis in the field of psychology.
3. Outline possible antecedents for various disorders from different psychological paradigms including but not limited to psychodynamic, humanistic/existential, behavioral, cognitive, and biological perspectives.
4. Formulate an opinion regarding the value of diagnosing mental illnesses when taking into consideration the benefits, limitations, critiques, and implications of diagnosis and classification
5. Analyze several case studies and accurately define the key diagnostic features of relevant psychological disorders as listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5).
6. Understand the complexities regarding designations of ‘evidence based treatment’ and identify the various empirically supported therapeutic treatments for different psychological difficulties.

## Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources\*

Comer, R.J. (2016). *Fundamentals of abnormal psychology* – 8th edition. New York: Worth Publishers. American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Desk Reference to the Diagnostic and

Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5 th edition. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

## Course Credit

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 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 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

## Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following scale:

### Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

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	

## Assignments:

### 1. Case Studies (20%):

Students will be provided excerpts from real-life, de-identified patient vignettes. Students are to review the material presented and discuss diagnostic impressions and potential treatment considerations. There

will be a total of four reports provided throughout the semester, each with a different focus and considerations. Students will be required to choose two (one each assignment) and provide a brief synopsis of their diagnostic considerations, using specific data points from the client's history and testing results. Students will also be asked to briefly discuss possible treatment considerations given what they know from the course material. Two case studies will be given before the midterm and two after. Students will choose one of the two presented before the midterm and one of the two presented after the midterm, to turn in. Accordingly, one is due on the day of the midterm and one on the day **BEFORE** the final exam.

2. **Reading Quizzes (10%)**: Students are expected to read the assigned texts before class. This course generally follows the chapter headings of your required text. There will be a total of 2 Quizzes throughout the semester. These quizzes will focus on the readings **ONLY**.

3. **Midterm Exam (25%)**: The midterm exam will cover information pertaining to **Ch. 1-8** of your required text **as well as material covered in class lectures/activities**. As such, the midterm will be open book/open note.

4. **Research Paper (20%)**: Students will choose a particular clinical disorder that they would like to learn about in more depth. (e.g., eating disorders, depression, anxiety, personality disorder, trauma, schizophrenia, etc.). Include:

1. Overview of the disorder (criteria, clinical presentation, etiology, prevalence rates, etc.)
2. Overview of a clinical model of intervention that is used to treat it
3. Inclusion of a discussion of a controversial or difficult dialogue regarding either the etiology or development of the disorder, presentation of the disorder, or treatment of the disorder (examples include: spiritual underpinnings of pathology, controversies around the development and treatment of dissociative identity disorder; psychotropic medications in the treatment of young children; development and treatment of personality disorders; methadone treatment for opioid dependence)

**\*\*Three (3) additional references in APA format in addition to the required books are required for this paper. Papers are to be written in APA format, i.e. Times New Roman, 12pt font, double space, 1" margins. Between 5-7 pages in length.**

See Assignment Section for **Due Date**

5. **Final Exam (25%)**: The final exam will cover information pertaining to **Ch. 9-16** of your required textbook **as well as material covered in class lectures/activities**. The final exam will be open book/open note.

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Points</b>
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Case Study 1	10%	50
Case Study 2	10%	50
Reading Quiz 1	5%	25
Reading Quiz 2	5%	25
Midterm Exam	25%	125
Research Paper	20%	100
Final Exam	25%	125
<b>Totals</b>	100%	500

## **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. 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 & 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 PSY3021, 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 the complexities of human suffering from various standpoints. If you encounter a topic that is challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort. 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 Abnormal Psychology, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course. If at any time you need to remove yourself from a class setting due to the content being overwhelming, please do so.

Renowned trauma researcher Gabor Maté notes that “Trauma is not what happens to you but what happens inside you”. Thus, virtually anything has the potential to be traumatic. How each of us responds to events, circumstances, etc. is uniquely their own. As, if you encounter any subject material that makes you feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate, 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 Abnormal Psychology, and I

will support you throughout your learning in this course, but please know that I care more about you personally, than any material discussed 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. If you need extra time on an assignment, please come talk to me.

### **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](#).

### **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.

### **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 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](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

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

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, etc.) in this course. Use your resources! However, use of these platforms are restricted during tests and quizzes.

### **PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy**

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. 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 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

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 and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

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.

### **Language and Belonging\***

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As scholars attempting to emulate the Christ, 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.



You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

### **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 at [pointloma.edu/Title-IX](http://pointloma.edu/Title-IX). 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 at [counselingservices@pointloma.edu](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) or find a list of campus pastors at [pointloma.edu/title-ix](http://pointloma.edu/title-ix).

### **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.

### **Course Modality Definitions\***

In-Person: This is an in-person course that occurs once per week.

### **Assignments At-A-Glance**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics/Chapters Covered</b>	<b>Assignments (Before Class)</b>
Week 1: 8/30	Welcome! Syllabus Review, Overview of course	Read Ch. 1
Week 2: 9/6	Models of Abnormality and Clinical Assessment	Read Ch. 2 & 3
Week 3: 9/13	Anxiety and Related Disorders	Read Ch. 4
Week 4: 9/20	<b>Quiz 1 in Class CH. 1-4</b> Trauma Related Disorders	Read Ch. 5
Week 5: 9/27	Mood Disorders	Read Ch. 6 & 7
Week 6: 10/4	Somatic Disorders	Read Ch. 8
Week 7: 10/11	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Case Study Due</b> Exam covers CH. 1-8
Week 8: 10/18	Eating Disorder & Substance Use Disorders	Read Ch. 9 & 10

Week 9: 10/25	Sexual Disorders	Read Ch. 11
Week 10: 11/1	Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders	Rad Ch. 12
Week 11: 11/8	Personality Disorders	Read Ch. 13
Week 12: 11/15	<b>Quiz 2 in Class CH. 8-13</b> Disorders Common Among Children and Adolescents	Read Ch. 14
<b>Week 13: 11/22 NO CLASS</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>	<b>HAVE FUN!</b>
Week 14: 11/29	Disorders of Aging and Cognition & Social Implications for Psychology	Read Ch. 15 & 16
Week 15: 12/6	Review for Final	<b>RESEARCH PAPER DUE</b>
FINALS WEEK	FINAL EXAM	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Case Study Due</b> <b>Thursday 12/14 11:59PM</b> Friday, 12/15 1:30-4PM, Taylor Hall Room 312