

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Purposes

- To develop mature personalities in students, so they will be able to meet problems of adjustment with realism and intelligence;
- To integrate the religious faith of students with the study of psychology;
- To prepare students who plan to undertake graduate study in psychology for careers related to mental health, such as marriage and family counseling, clinical psychology, community psychology, and health psychology;
- To educate students preparing for careers in non-mental health/related fields, such as ministry, business, medicine, and law.

Tradition of Excellence

The Department of Psychology at Point Loma Nazarene University emphasizes several features in striving for excellence in undergraduate education. The Department's fieldwork program allows juniors and seniors to obtain training in specific psychological skills through a community mental health or social service agency. Supervised by an agency representative and a psychology professor, this program is an effective way for Psychology majors to complement course work with real world experience. Point Loma also offers classes designed to deal with the integration of psychology and the Christian faith. Additionally, select students join with faculty to conduct research that may be presented at a national or regional psychology conference. The Department also maintains an active PsiChi organization (The International Honor Society in Psychology) that sponsors presentations in the field, preparatory workshops for those interested in graduate school, and special social events.

Career Opportunities

It is the goal of the faculty that all students desiring to pursue graduate studies be prepared to do so and to present a strong graduate application. Such an application results from a Department that emphasizes areas foundational to entrance and success in graduate school. In addition to strong academic achievement, these areas include fieldwork experience, research experience, and sufficient contact with faculty that allows a student to earn a credible letter of recommendation. Recent alumni surveys indicate that over one-half of PLNU Psychology majors eventually receive a graduate degree of some kind, with one-third of those receiving a degree one to three years after graduating from PLNU. When these graduates were asked about their level of satisfaction with the preparation received at Point Loma, over ninety-five percent reported that they were very satisfied or satisfied. There is a strong tradition of excellence in the Department of Psychology at PLNU that attempts to prepare students for their next step into the future.

Faculty

Chair - Kendra Oakes Mueller, Ph.D.

Alexandra Bitter, Ph.D.
University of Wyoming

Max Butterfield, Ph.D.
Texas Christian University

G. Michael Leffel, Ph.D.
University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

Rosemond Lorona, Ph.D.
Baylor University

Kendra Oakes Mueller, Ph.D.
Fuller Theological Seminary, Graduate School of Psychology

Ross Oakes Mueller, Ph.D.
Fuller Theological Seminary, Graduate School of Psychology

Joel Sagawa, Ph.D.
Fuller Theological Seminary, Graduate School of Psychology

Kim Schaeffer, Ph.D.
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

John Wu, Ed.D.
Harvard University, School of Education

To view requirements for majors, minors, and certificates, see the Degree Program Information (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/prior-catalogs/2022-2023/tug-catalog/degree-program-information/>) page.

- Psychology B.A. (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/prior-catalogs/2022-2023/tug-catalog/colleges-schools-departments/cnss/psy/psychology-ba/>)
- Computational Science Minor - Psychology (Psychology) (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/prior-catalogs/2022-2023/tug-catalog/colleges-schools-departments/cnss/psy/computational-science-minor-psychology/>)
- Pre-Therapeutic Psychology Minor (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/prior-catalogs/2022-2023/tug-catalog/colleges-schools-departments/cnss/psy/pre-therapeutic-psychology-minor/>)

Psychology

PSY 1001 Psychology of Personal Development - First Year Experience (FE) (3 Units)

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 for all first-time freshman up through age 20, as well as transfer students with fewer than 24 transferrable units. All other transfer students are required to take PSY 1003. Letter grade.

PSY 1003 General Psychology (FE) (3 Units)

A survey of psychology as an empirical/behavioral science. Topics include biological correlates of behavior, learning, cognition, emotion, motivation, personality, assessment, development, psychopathology, psychotherapy, and social psychology. Students should take PSY 1003 if they do not meet the criteria for PSY 1001.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 1001 (may be taken concurrently)

PSY 2070 Career Exploration (2-4 Units)

Students are placed in local mental health or social service agencies to obtain direct exposure in the field. The goal is to help them evaluate their career options and direction.

May be repeated up to a total of six (6) units. Credit/No Credit.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor and approval of departmental faculty.

"C" Designation is for California Internships. "E" Designation is for Out of State Internships.

PSY 3000 Personality and Adult Development (4 Units)

An introductory survey of classic theories and contemporary empirical research in the fields of personality and adult development psychology. Distinct domains of knowledge regarding human nature, individual differences, and adult development and aging are covered. Emphasis is placed on developing a greater capacity for self-awareness and critical thinking.

PSY 3001 Physiological and Neuropsychology (4 Units)

A study of the anatomical and physiological bases of mental events and behavior.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 1003 and PSY 3090 or consent of instructor.

PSY 3008 Developmental Psychology - Birth Through Adolescence (4 Units)

A systematic study of the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of the individual from birth through adolescence.

PSY 3015 Positive Psychology (3 Units)

An examination of the scientific study of optimal functioning. Emphasis is placed on leading a meaningful and fulfilling life that benefits both person and society. Small group activities and daily assignments are required.

Not repeatable. Letter grade.

Pre or Corequisite(s): PSY 1003 or consent of instructor.

PSY 3020 Social Psychology (3 Units)

A study of the theories and methods of social interactions in the development of personal and group behavior. Topics include attitudes, communication, and pro-social and anti-social behaviors.

Also offered as SOC 3020.

PSY 3021 Abnormal Psychology (3 Units)

Study of etiology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of various forms of abnormal behavior from various psychological perspectives.

Prerequisite(s): One of CHD 1050, PSY 1003, PSY 3008, or consent of instructor.

PSY 3025 Clinical and Community Interventions (4 Units)

This course provides an overview of the fields of clinical and community psychology. It focuses on individual, family and systems, social-community, bio-psycho-social, and health interventions. Career directions within the mental health professions are introduced. Theories and interventions include cognitive-behavioral, humanistic-existential, psycho-dynamic-psychoanalytic, and systems. Focus is on how therapists apply therapeutic knowledge in a variety of settings.

PSY 3030 Moral Psychology and Cultural Values (4 Units)

Introduction to the psychological study of morality, prosocial behavior, and character development, including a survey of historical and contemporary theories of morality. Includes a particular emphasis on the role of cultural norms and values, as well as an analysis of the ways in which such values are developed and transmitted in contemporary culture (e.g., media, academics, family, etc.). Small group activities are included.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 1001

PSY 3041 Group Counseling (1-3 Units)

A group method experience which introduces theories used to modify, ameliorate, or change personal behavior. Each student is required to lead discussions with a group of up to ten freshmen students in order to discuss and explore various topics pertaining but not limited to social, mental, and spiritual development as they transition to college.

May be repeated once for up to a total of six (6) units.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

PSY 3045 Group Dynamics (3 Units)

A laboratory learning experience in the formation and development of small group processes with emphasis upon understanding the effects of individual dynamics on the group.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 3041 and consent of instructor.

PSY 3049 Intimate Couples (3 Units)

A laboratory learning experience in building intimate and long-lasting marriage relationships. The course utilizes research based interventions that have effectively decreased the risk of divorce. This course must be taken with your spouse or fiancé.

Letter grade.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

PSY 3050 Clinical and Research Assessment (3 Units)

A detailed study of selected psychological assessment instruments used in clinical and research settings. Emphasis is placed on reliability and validity, as well as selection of tests for diagnosis, treatment planning, and research.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 3090

PSY 3060 Human Sexuality (3 Units)

Survey of behavioral, personality, and psycho-biological components of human sexuality, with emphasis upon delineation of facts from sexual myths, social context, and values.

Open to students who are not Psychology majors.

PSY 3080 Family Development and Family Therapies (3 Units)

Introduction to the normative stages and crises affecting families over the life span, and to the major theories of family and marital psychotherapy. Emphasis on how various models work with relational systems to facilitate development through times of crisis and developmental transition. Also focuses on therapeutic issues of substance abuse, and on legal issues involved in child, spousal, and elder abuse. Family developmental theories are applied to community organizations in order to assist students in understanding how system principles are used in community consultation.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 3021 or consent of instructor.

PSY 3090 Research Methods and Statistics I (4 Units)

Students gain experience in methods of design, data collection, management, and analysis. Students begin a significant research project. This course must be taken in the semester immediately preceding PSY 3091.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 1003

PSY 3091 Research Methods and Statistics II (4 Units)

Study of design and of research in psychology and the use of statistics. Practice in the integration of design and statistics is included. Students finish a significant research project.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 1003 and PSY 3090 or consent of instructor.

This course must be taken in the semester immediately following PSY 3090.

PSY 4000 History and Contemporary Issues in Psychology (2 Units)

A study of important ideas and debates in the history of psychology as they reappear in contemporary theory and research (e.g., the mind-body problem; nature-nurture). This course also provides a comprehensive review of important theories and findings in psychology in preparation for the GRE Subject Exam. An overview of the graduate school application process is offered.

Prerequisite(s): Psychology Major and PSY 1003

PSY 4009 Psychology of Cognition and Learning (4 Units)

A study of the major theories and empirical findings in the fields of cognition and learning, as well as practical applications to human behavior.

Laboratory activities may be included.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 1003 and PSY 3090 or consent of instructor.

PSY 4010 Issues in Psychotherapy-Theology Integration (3 Units)

More detailed study of issues involved 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 world views. Introduces specific issues that arise in conducting therapy with religious persons, including criteria for evaluating healthy and unhealthy forms of religious belief.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 3025 or PSY 3080 or consent of instructor.

PSY 4020 Pursuing Goodness: The Science of Moral Change (Senior Capstone) (4 Units)

This course surveys some of the latest research in positive and moral psychology that concerns how we live a good life in a world with others. It addresses three perennial questions about personal and social well-being: What makes a good life good? What makes a good relationship good? And, how do persons change for good? It examines theory and research in three new psychological literatures: the science of a flourishing life, the science of love and virtue, and the practical neuroscience of moral change. Students will participate in experimental exercises that this new science suggests will enhance our motivation and capacity for moral goodness.

Prerequisite(s): BIB 1001 or BIB 1002 and PSY 1001 or PSY 1003. Senior standing or consent of instructor.

PSY 4040 Psychology of Religion (4 Units)

An introduction to selected topics in this sub-division of psychology, including religious conversion and spiritual development (especially Christian); dynamics of religious experience; the nature of altruism and love; and the impact of spiritual practices on character development, psychological well-being, and health. The course prepares students for graduate study in topics related to the integration of psychology and Christian (especially Wesleyan) practical theology.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 1001 or PSY 1003.

Recommended: PSY 3030 is strongly recommended.

PSY 4070 Fieldwork in Psychology (2-4 Units)

Students are placed in local mental health or social service agencies to obtain training in specific psychological skills.

May be repeated up to a total of twelve (12) units. Credit/No Credit.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor and approval of departmental faculty.

"C" Designation is for California Internships. "E" Designation is for Out of State Internships.

PSY 4090 Special Studies in Psychology (1-4 Units)

Detailed study of selected individual topics in psychology. Designed for advanced students to go deeply into an area not included in the curriculum.

May be repeated up to a total of eight (8) units.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

PSY 4099 Research in Psychology (1-4 Units)

Open to students of proven ability. Designed for students to undertake a significant self-initiated research project.

May be repeated up to a total of twelve (12) units.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor and approval of departmental faculty.