

# 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 program allows juniors and seniors to obtain training in specific psychological skills through opportunities to work with first-year students in a facilitator and support role. Supervised by 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

Alexandra Bitter, Ph.D.  
*University of Wyoming*

Max Butterfield, Ph.D.  
*Texas Christian University*

G. Michael Leffel, Ph.D., Emeriti

*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/2024-2025/tug-catalog/degree-program-information/>) page.

- Psychology B.A. (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/prior-catalogs/2024-2025/tug-catalog/colleges-schools-departments/cnss/psy/psychology-ba/>)
- Data Analytics Minor (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/prior-catalogs/2024-2025/tug-catalog/colleges-schools-departments/cnss/psy/data-analytics-minor/>)
- Pre-Therapeutic Psychology Minor (<https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/prior-catalogs/2024-2025/tug-catalog/colleges-schools-departments/cnss/psy/pre-therapeutic-psychology-minor/>)