

PRLS 317 - Social Psychology of Play and Recreation
Spring 2010

Professor: Mary Schumann, Ph.D.

Day/Time: M/W 12:00-1:15

Phone Number: (703) - 716-4644

Office Hour: Wed after class or by appt.

Place: Thompson Hall, Fairfax Campus, Rm. 222

Email: mschuma1@gmu.edu or mfschumann@aol.com

Prerequisites: Tour 200, PRLS 210, SPMT 201 or PHED 200

Course Description:

This course explores theories of play and recreation behavior with emphasis on learning, effectance and arousal theories. Empirical research evidence of antecedents to and consequences of play and recreation involvements are examined. Motivation for and satisfaction from play and recreation activity are also explored.

Course Overview:

The focus of this course is on application of social psychological theories and research to the study of leisure, play and recreation behavior (the social psychology of leisure). This course will have two major components. During the first portion, emphasis will be placed on defining the social psychology of leisure: "revisiting" the definitions and theories of play, recreation and leisure; and introduction to the social psychology approach; the evolution of social psychological interest in leisure; ethics and values in research; and on-going work to conceptualize and measure leisure.

The second portion of the course will be devoted to exploring some of the correlates, antecedents, constraints and consequences of leisure, play and recreation behavior: an exploration of the role of freedom and self-determination, personality, rewards, competition and motivation; an identification of early life socialization influences and the impact of change over the lifespan; an examination of constraints that may prevent people from taking advantage of leisure opportunities and how leisure can contribute to psychological well-being and mental health, and the quality of experience in other life domains.

Course Objectives:

At the completion of the course students should be able to:

1. Define and describe the major theories and models of play, recreation and leisure.
2. Define and describe the major social psychological concepts and theories that have been applied to the study of play, recreation and leisure.
3. Understand the major correlates, antecedents, constraints and consequences of leisure, play and recreation behavior and their relevance to planning for one's own leisure and that of others.
4. Analyze theoretical and empirical literature relevant to the study of the social psychology of leisure, play and recreation.
5. Write a research paper exploring leisure experiences over the lifespan.

Required Readings:

Mannell, R. and Kleiber, D.A. (1997). A Social Psychology of Leisure. State College: PA: Venture.
You will receive a couple of emailed articles in addition to the text for reading and discussing in class.

Evaluation:

Students are held to the standards of George Mason University's honor code. You are expected to attend all classes, actively participate in class discussion and fulfill assignments. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the specified due date or **no credit will be given**. Assignments have been scheduled in advance to provide you with sufficient time to complete the assignment. Only students with emergencies, documented medical excuses or University sponsored functions (discussed with the professor in advance) will be considered for exception. Please see the professor for individual clarifications. All written work must be typed and follow APA guidelines. It is recommended that students make copies of all submitted work.

Requirements:

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points.

<u>Requirements</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>		
Participation	5	A+ = 98-100	A = 94-97	A-=90-93
Assignments(3)	15	B+ = 88-89	B= 84-87	B-=80-83
Project	20	C+ = 78-79	C= 74-77	C-=70-73
Exams (3)	60	D = 60-69	F = 0-59	

Other information:

- All students are held to the standards of the GMU Honor Code.
- Students with disabilities: students having documentation on file with the Disability Support Services office should bring this to the attention of the professor.
- The department's website is: <http://www.rht.gmu.edu>

Course Content:

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading/Assignment</u>
January 20	Introduction	
25	Leisure & Social Psychology	Ch. 1
27	History	Ch. 2
February 1	Behavior, Setting & Time	Ch. 3
3	Freedom Center (PW Campus)	
8	Assignment # 1 due	
10	Psychological State	Ch. 4
15		
17	Intrinsic Motivation	Ch.5
22	Exam #1 (ch. 1-4)	
24	Perceived freedom	
March 1	Personality	Ch.6
3	Assignment #2 due	
15	Motivation	Ch. 7
17	Satisfaction	
22	Socialization	Ch. 8
24	Assignment #3 Due	
29	Exam #2 (ch. 5-8)	
31		
April 5	Leisure over the Lifespan	Ch. 9
7	Project Discussion	
12	NO CLASS	
14	Leisure Benefits	Ch. 10 & 11
19		
21	Leisure Constraints	Ch. 12
April 26	Final Project Due	
28		
May 3	Exam # 3 (ch. 9-12)	

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Assignments: (3) (15% of your grade)

Each has a 2 page reaction paper that goes with the assignment.

#1 Experiential activity at the Freedom Aquatic Center – write a 2 page reaction paper describing your role in the activity and what the experience was like; what surprised you?

#2 Personality and Leisure choices- you will take a personality test on the internet and consider the results and your own personal leisure choices; how do they relate?

#3 Interview of a person in a particular decade and their leisure choices. Preferably, this is someone who can reflect on their leisure in their 20s, 30s, or 40s.

Leisure over the Lifespan (Final Project) (20% of grade)

Interview someone who is at least 70 years old. Do both quantitative and qualitative assessment (e.g. give them one of the leisure assessment scales from your text and conduct interviews) and integrate this with one of the theories of lifespan development and leisure. Write a 10 page, double spaced, APA style paper describing your results. Use graphical display of data (e.g. charts/graphs) for the quantitative data. You must get some details in their history--- don't just tell me they played softball in their 30s. You must get a sense of what was happening in their life (e.g. major life events, significant persons, etc.) and how this relates to their leisure choices when considering a theory from the course.