

George Mason University – Spring 2017
SPMT 320-001
Psychology of Sport

Day/ Time: T/R 10:30-11:45 pm
Professor: Mary Schumann, Ph.D.
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Office hours: Tuesday 12:00-1:00 pm or by arrangement

Location: West 1004

Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

This course will review the major social / psychological theories utilized in current sport psychology research. The practical applications of these theoretical constructs will be emphasized through discussion of techniques used to maximize participation and healthy behavior in sport. This course is being taught in a **hybrid format**, with most classes being conducted face to face, and some being conducted asynchronously online. You will need to access the online content through blackboard using your computer.

Course Overview

The course will be presented in three components. The first section will introduce major social/psychological theories that explain sport behaviors. Motivation, learning principles as they affect coaching, self-efficacy and communication are examples of constructs that will be explored. The second section of the course will discuss intervention strategies and techniques. This will emphasize the practical applications of sport psychology such as mental training, goal setting and imagery. In the final section of the course issues such as injury, staleness and burnout, and findings from exercise psychology. Throughout all of this theoretical information, experiential exercises will be woven into each class, to teach and demonstrate the power of using the mind to control the body.

Course Delivery

This course will be delivered using a hybrid format, meaning a combination of lecture format 75% (in class, face to face) and online format 25% (asynchronous, meaning classes are available via video format and readings/assignments will be done on your own time schedule and submitted online).

Course Objectives

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

1. Identify and explain major theoretical frameworks used in sport psychology research, specifically the application of mindfulness to the improvement of human performance.
2. Critically evaluate current research.
3. Learn intervention strategies for sport performance enhancement.
4. Employ a number of methods using mindfulness to increase awareness and attention.
5. Conduct an applied research project utilizing a theoretical framework and a quasi-experimental design.

Required Readings

1. Williams, J.M. (2015). Applied Sport Psychology: Personal Growth to Peak Performance (7th ed.). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.
2. Selk, J. (2009). 10-Minute Toughness .
3. Online postings on blackboard. There will be a few additional readings.

Evaluation:

Students are held to the standards of the George Mason University honor code. You are expected to attend all class sections, 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**. 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.

PLEASE be PRESENT—this means no texting, emailing or facebook during class. If you have a situation in which you must be available (emergency) please see me before class. 20% of your grade is based on participation.

Requirements:

1. Participation grades will be based on active, thoughtful participation in class discussions and exercises, as well as online written entries to queries about some of the exercises done in class. These entries will not be lengthy, but are there to solicit honest feedback about what you learned in doing the exercises.
2. There are 2 papers. One is a journal article review papers and will consist of a 2 to 3 page, typed paper related to the current topics being discussed. The paper should include a brief summary of the article and a discussion of a theoretical construct discussed in the readings or in class and your personal experience or reaction to this idea. Journals should be current. There is also a paper in which you apply a technique from the applied book.
3. The final project will consist of the application of a psychological intervention to a specific problem an athlete is struggling with. The study will be written up and presented in class.
4. Two exams will be administered. The format of the exams will be multiple choice, short answer and essay response.
5. 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>
Class Participation/Journals	15	A+ = 98 -100, A = 94 -97, A- = 90 - 93
Assignments (3)	20	B + = 88 - 89, B = 84 - 87, B- = 80 - 83
Final Project	25	C + = 78 - 79, C = 74 – 77, C- = 70 –73
Exams (2)	40	D = 60 - 69
		F = 0 - 59

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments	Activities
Jan 24 (T)	History of Sport Psychology	W & K Ch. 1		Intro to mindfulness
Jan 26 (R)	Introduction & Motor Skill Learning	W & K Ch 2		5 min breathing
Jan 31 (T)	Positive Approach to Coaching	W & K Ch 3		Mindful eating
Feb 2 (R)	Motivation	W & K Ch 4		Energy meditation
Feb 7 (T)	Self-fulfilling Prophecy	W & K Ch. 5	Paper 1 Due	Expectancy
Feb 9 (R)	Leadership	W & K Ch 6		
Feb 14 (T)	Self Efficacy	Readings posted		Loving kindness
Feb 16 (R)	Group Cohesion	W & K Ch 7		Group exercises
Feb 21 (T)	Communication	W & K Ch 8		Listening exercise

Feb 23 (R)	Peak Performance factors	W & K Ch 9		
Feb 28 (T)	Movie			
March 2 (R)	EXAM #1	ONLINE		
March 7 (T)	Mindset, Attribution & Perception	Readings on Blackboard		How we explain things
March 9 (R)	Goal Setting	W & K Ch 11	Paper 2 Due	Goals
March 14 & 16	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS		
March 21	Managing Stress in Sport	W & K Ch 12		Sing & HR
March 23	Using Imagery in Sport	W & K Ch 13		Imagery exercise
March 28	Using Self Talk	W & K Ch 14		TED talk
March 30	Concentration	W & K Ch 15	TED talk Paper Due	Focus exercise
April 4	Psychological Skills Program	W & K Ch. 16		Write about project
April 6	Movie -	TBD		Write reflection
April 11	IN CLASS - Injury	W & K Ch 22		Imagery to heal
April 13	Staleness & Burnout	W & K Ch 21		Group exercise
April 18	When to Refer an Athlete	W & K Ch		Mindfulness
April 20th	EXAM # 2	In Class		Pre exam exercise
April 25	Projects	Presentations		Mindfulness
April 27	Projects	Presentations		Mindfulness
May 2	Projects	Presentations		Mindfulness
May 16	Projects	Presentations during exam block		10:30-1:15

Honor Code: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

Students are expected to be familiar with and to follow the **GMU Honor Policy**. **All work should be your own and should be cited properly using APA format.** Students should be advised that the honor code specifically applies to and has enforced disciplinary procedures for:

- Plagiarism Cheating or attempted cheating
- Stealing Lying (to administration or faculty) or falsifying documents

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Student with disabilities, who need academic accommodations, have to contact the instructor and the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

TED talks:

Choose one of the following TED talks related to sport:

1. Diana Nyad [Extreme swimming with the world's most dangerous jellyfish](#)
2. David Epstein [Are athletes really getting faster, better, stronger?](#)
3. Billie Jean King [This tennis icon paved the way for women in sports](#)
4. Gonzalo Vilariño [How Argentina's blind soccer team became champions](#)
5. John Wooden [The difference between winning and succeeding](#)
6. Aimee Mullins [Changing my legs - and my mindset](#)
7. Matthew Williams [Special Olympics let me be myself — a champion](#)

Watch the TED talk, and do a short write up 1 to 2 pages, double spaced, discussing what you thought. First, tell me a little about yourself (year in school, major, why you chose to take this class). Then reflect on the talk. Did it change how you think about sport? How? Did it challenge you or inspire you? Have paper copy ready to hand in next class.

Paper 1: Journal Article Review Paper: Choose a topic of interest that relates to subjects covered in the class. Choose an article from one of the following journals and write a brief summary of the findings of the study/article, discuss how it relates to class topics and why you are interested in this topic. Be critical of the research or findings.....do the conclusions drawn make sense? Was it a good study and why? How could it be better?

Sport Specific Journals:

- ACSM's Health and Fitness Journal - <http://www.acsm-healthfitness.org/>
- Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly - <http://www.humankinetics.com/products/journals/journal.cfm?id=APAQ>
- American Board of Sport Psychology Journal - <http://www.americanboardofsportpsychology.org/default.asp?pSec=10&pTyp=Cover&pID=1045>
- Athletic Insight – <http://www.athleticinsight.com/>
- British Journal of Sports Medicine - <http://bjsm.bmjournals.com/>
- Coaching Science Abstracts - <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/coachsci/search.htm>
- Human Movement Science - <http://www.elsevier.com/inca/publications/store/5/0/5/5/8/4/>
- International Journal of Sports Psychology - http://www.swets.nl/backsets/catalogue_result_0047-0767.htm
- Journal of Applied Sport Psychology - <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/tf/10413200.html>

Paper 2: Choice between applied topic or a theoretical discussion topic

Choose a **technique chapter** that you find particularly interesting or helpful in the 10 Minute Toughness book. I would like you to apply the techniques in the chapter to yourself in some area of performance over a period of a couple weeks (does not have to be sport, but can be). Write a 3-4 page summary of what you learned in terms of its usefulness, how it relates to class material from the textbook, and whether you would use in the future.

OR.... choose a **theory of psychology** that you are particularly interested in. Explore the psychological theory of your choice. These theories pertain to, but are not limited to: personality, learning, motivation, self-efficacy, self-regulation,

communication/reinforcement, leadership, self-fulfilling prophecy, and cohesion. Write a 3-4 page paper about your reasoning for choosing the topic, your reflections about this theory, the application to sport and or your interests.

OPTION 1: FINAL PROJECT: MENTAL TRAINING PROGRAM

Get a taste of what it might be like to be a Sport Psychologist. The text discusses many psychological training methods that are typically used to improve performance. Pick a chapter in our text's *Part Two Mental Training for Performance Enhancement* or a chapter in *Part Three: Implementing Training Programs* and create a unique training program. Use the training program on another person (client). Your program should be focused on at least two psychological skills (e.g., Arousal Regulation, Imagery, et cetera). Your program must conform to the following requirements:

You may only work with someone that you know.

- You must submit your program to me at least two weeks before you intend to start working with the person. You may not begin the program until I have approved your techniques.
- Your program must be based on the techniques discussed in our text OR learning in class (mindfulness exercises for example)
- Your program should span 6 to 8 weeks and should include at least one meeting with you and your client each week. During these meetings you should work on the psychological skills, but also seek feedback on the effectiveness of your program from your client. You should include some measure of how well the program works (can be a crude measure or rating scale).
- Your written report must include:
 - An introduction that includes background information (e.g., a short bio of your person, your reason for selecting the particular psychological skills that you did, your reason for selecting this particular person, what you hoped to achieve by doing the program with this person, et cetera),
 - A body in which you give a detailed account of your procedures and techniques
 - A conclusion in which you reflect on the program, telling what you learned, an exit interview with your client in which they give their reaction to your program, and lastly you should give an objective evaluation of your client (e.g., What do they do well? Poorly?).
- Your written report should be between 6 to 8 double-spaced typed pages.
- You should provide your client a copy of your final report; also, you will present your findings from your project to the class at the end of the semester.
- Written Report = 15 points ; Presentation 10 points

OPTION 2: Mental Skills Training Plan

The overall purpose of Option 2 is to develop a sequential plan for mental skills teaching/consulting. This option will go into explicit detail for three educational lessons to teach a group or team about 3 mental skills. Taking the time to plan and prepare your lessons is an important part of being a sport psychological consultant. You will choose the mental skills based on the content in the W&K text and course discussions. Further, you will introduce the skills by tailoring the lesson/teaching the participants, the theory it is based on, and then you will go into importance of the mental skill/ what the mental skill is.

Written Paper detailing Training Plans (15 pts.)

Presentation (10 pts.)

Option 3: Sport Psychology Research Proposal

The overall purpose of Option 3 is to give you a taste of what it might be like to be a Sport Psychology Researcher. Here, you will design a research proposal that could be conducted for participants in the area of sport and exercise psychology. Expanding on the sport psychology theories that most interest you, you will devise a research study that could help show evidence toward the advancement of knowledge in the field. This proposal can be basic or applied in nature, can use quantitative or qualitative methods/designs, can be on athletes, coaches, or any other participant in the sport world, and can be in the area of any theory as presented in the first half of the semester or in the W&K text. The aim of this section is to give you an opportunity to think like a researcher.

Written Report - 15 pts

Presentation 10 pts

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- d. The Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance (See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>).
- e. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester (See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g. The Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing (See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).
- h. The Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community (<http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>) and the staff will follow up with the student.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

