Faculty
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Office Hour: By appointment
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Email: jgoffena@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/ Corerequisites
None

Course Description
Psychological theories of personality, motivation, and anxiety explored in sport environment.
Examines social-psychological research on audience effects, team cohesion, leadership, and
fan behavior.

Course Overview
This course will review the major social & psychological theories utilized in current
sport and exercise psychology and applied sport psychology research. The practical
applications of these theoretical constructs will be emphasized through discussion of
techniques used by professionals in the field to maximize sport participation and enhance
athletic peak performance.

The course will be presented in multiple segments in the form of theories (part one; i.e.,
research based constructs) and the application of theories (part two; i.e., mental skills
training). The first part will introduce major social and psychological theories that explain
sport behaviors. Personality, motivation, self-confidence and self-efficacy, self-regulation,
attentional focus and anxiety are examples of the constructs that will be explored. The
second part of the course will discuss intervention strategies and techniques with emphasis
on the practical applications of sport psychology. Goal setting, energy management, self-
talk, and imagery for peak performance are examples of the applications that will be
explored.

Course Delivery Method
The course will be delivered through a face-to-face lecture format.
Learner Outcomes and 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.
2. Understand the major antecedents and consequences of sport participation and performance.
3. Critically evaluate social and psychological research.
4. Identify appropriate intervention strategies for sport performance enhancement.
5. Conduct an applied intervention plan, teaching plan, or research project for mental skills training in sport or exercise psychology.

Student Expectations
Students are expected to engage by doing the following:
1. Arrive to class on time and be prepared to discuss the readings for the given day.
2. Actively listen to other students’ contributions during discussions and group work.
3. Respect the opinions of other students, although disagreement is allowed.
4. Get to know your peers in class, because you may one day need them.
5. Not use laptops for work irrelevant to the course.
6. Not use cell phones for personal non-emergency texting, email, or other social media.

Required Readings
2. Online articles on Blackboard.

Course Performance 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 on blackboard by midnight 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.

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<tr>
<th>Evaluation Outline</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Particpation</td>
<td>A+ = 98-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Reflections (2)</td>
<td>A = 93 - 97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams (2)</td>
<td>A- = 90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project/ Paper</td>
<td>B+ = 88 - 89</td>
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Assignment Outline
*Participation (20 pts. total)*
- Attendance, Classroom Discussions, & Mental Skills Practice (10 pts.)
- Inspirational Presentation & Autobiographical Sketch (10 pts.)

*Application Reflections (20 pts. total)*
- Application Reflection #1: Movie Reflection (10 pts.)
• Application Reflection #2: Podcast Reflection (10 pts.)

Exams (30 pts. total)
• Exam 1 (15 pts.)
  o Covers content from Part 1 & Part 2
• Exam 2 (15 pts.)
  o Covers content from Part 3 & Part 4

Final Project (30 pts. total)
• Pick one of three options:
  o Option 1: Mental Skills Training – MST Intervention
  o Option 2: Mental Skills Training – MST Teaching Plan
  o Option 3: Sport Psychology Research Proposal

Assignment Descriptions

Participation

Inspirational Presentation & Autobiographical Sketch

What you present in class:
This 3-5 minute presentation should give the class the opportunity to see life through your eyes!! Reflect on you past and inform us on what has truly inspired you. You can talk about sports, music, movies, or any other personal experience(s) that have inspired you to be who you are.

You have full control over the method of delivery, so you can utilize technology to make a video, PowerPoint, Prezie or anything else that you may know of. You can play a movie excerpt or YouTube clip. You can read a letter or article that has meaning; present a book that has impacted your life; bring in a picture; or talk about a specific experience growing up that has made a huge impact on you. Last but certainly not least: Be Creative!! Express yourself: this is your opportunity to show what’s important to you.

What you turn in online:
(1) A brief description of your presentation. Tell me what it was that you presented (e.g., movie clip, film, pictures, ppt presentation, etc.), provide of copy of the presentation (e.g., the link to the video/ film, attach the pictures or ppt document, etc.), and tell me why it is an inspiration to you.

(2) In a 3-5 page paper, I want you to tell YOUR story. This can be based on what inspires you, but I want you to think more specifically about your life experiences in sport, in school, and/or in anything that involves a performance, and how those experiences impacted your journey thus far. What moments/individuals have been most impactful? This is your opportunity to express your identity/ athletic identity. This reflection on your past experiences is important for this course in that it will help you directly connect the course content to your past and current (sport) experience. Finally, I want you tell me why you are taking this course. Is it possible that one of your prior sport experiences helped lead you to taking a course such as this? Is it because it’s a requirement for your major? Be honest, authentic, and write a story which reflects your journey as an athlete, student, and future professional in the sport industry.

Application Reflections
All papers will be typed in APA format (e.g., cover page, running head, headers, etc.). See the APA reference under course resources for additional information. Other guidelines: standard margins, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, double space. You are required to submit your reflections electronically on the blackboard site under the provided sections.
Application Reflection #1: Movie Reflection
In a 3-5 page paper, you will reflect on the in-class movie. More information TBA.

Application Reflection #2: Podcast Reflection
In a 3-5 page paper, you will reflect on a podcast. More information TBA.

Exams
There will be two exams in this course in order to assess your understanding of course content. Both exams combined will count as 30% of your final grade in the course. The first exam will cover content from Part 1 (Setting the Stage for Learning) and Part 2 (Participation & Persistence in Sport). The second exam will cover content from Part 3 (The Role of Self-Belief in Sport) and Part 4 (Peak Performance in Sport). Exams are not cumulative. The exams will consist of multiple choice, T/F, fill in the blank, and short answer.

Final Project
As we go through the semester we will learn about sport psychological theories and the applications of the theories in practice. Therefore, the final project will provide you with an opportunity to practice sport psychology. Each assignment consists of two parts: a written report and a presentation. All papers will be typed in APA format (e.g., cover page, running head, sections, etc.). Other guidelines: standard margins, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, double space, and approximately 8 pages. For your convenience, you will have the choice between three different options. The 3 options are described below. In addition, there will be two project Check-In’s where you will communicate your thoughts on which option you are interested in (Check-In #1) and which option you will participate in (Check-In #2).

EACH STUDENT’S ASSIGNMENT MUST BE APPROVED BY THE INSTRUCTOR BEFORE YOU START!!

Option 1: Mental Skills Training – MST Intervention
The overall purpose of Option 1 is to give you 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. After meeting with an athlete for the first time, you will decide which mental skills you will help the athlete learn and practice. The sport psychology theories/ mental skills will be based upon the content in the coursework. Use the W&K chapters and classroom materials to help you decide the skills. See Option 1 rubric for specific details.
Part 1- Interviews and Written Report (20 pts.)
Part 2- Mock Poster Presentation (10 pts.)

Option 2: Mental Skills Training – MST Teaching 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. See Option 2 rubric for specific details.
Part 1- Written MST Plans (20 pts.)
Part 2- Mock Poster 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. See Option 3 rubric for specific details.

Part 1- Written Report (20 pts.)
Part 2- Mock Poster Presentation (10 pts.)

Professional Dispositions
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: http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see http://ods.gmu.edu/).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/.

- The George Mason University 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/).

- The George Mason University 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/).

- The George Mason University 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 by going to http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/.
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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>How do we get Sport Psychology Theories?</td>
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<td>Framework for Mental Skills Training</td>
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<td>W&amp;K Chapter 2 Ormrod, Ch. 6 -p.111-127</td>
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<td>W&amp;K Chapter 4 -p. 66-71 Mageau &amp; Vallerand Article</td>
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<td><strong>Part 3 – The Role of Self-Belief in Sport</strong></td>
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<td>Kitsantas &amp; Kavussanu Article</td>
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<td>Self-Talk</td>
<td>W&amp;K Chapter 14 Final Project Check-In 2</td>
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<td><strong>Part 4 – Peak Performance in Sport</strong></td>
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<td>Arousal &amp; Anxiety</td>
<td>W&amp;K Chapter 12 -p.207-216</td>
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<td>Peak Performance &amp; Flow</td>
<td>W&amp;K Chapter 9</td>
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<td>W&amp;K Chapter 10 W&amp;K Chapter 12 -p.216-231</td>
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<td><em>Reading Day</em></td>
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**Note:** This schedule is tentative and is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Finals; R 12/13 10:30a – 1:15p  
Final Project Mock Poster Session  
All Mock Posters Presented during Final
**Mental Skills Training: MST Intervention (Option 1)**

The overall purpose of Option 1 is to give you 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. After meeting with an athlete, you will decide which mental skills you will help the athlete learn and practice. The sport psychology theories/mental skills will be based upon the content in the coursework. Use the W&K chapters and classroom materials to help you decide the skills.

**Part 1a- Interview Guidelines**

Your program should be focused on at least two MST skills learned in class. Your program must conform to the following requirements:

1. You may only work with a participant/athlete that you know.
2. You must submit your program idea to me before you intend to start working with the person (via check in 1 & 2). You may not begin the program until I have approved your techniques. **Again, this must be approved before you can start!**
3. Your program must be based on the techniques discussed in our text OR learning in class (energy management, goal setting, self-talk, mindfulness, or imagery).
4. Your program should consist of a minimum of 3 meetings of approximately 30 minutes (expect this to take a minimum of 3 weeks).
   i. The first meeting should consist of a general dialog to understand your chosen athlete’s sport/ background/awareness of sport psychology. You will use the first meeting to decide which mental skills would be most appropriate; decide this together, but come to the meeting with an idea of which mental skills you want to use.
   ii. The following meetings will then be dedicated to working on the MST skills and to seek feedback on the effectiveness of your program from your client. You should include some measure of how well the program worked (can be a rudimentary measure/rating scale or a qualitative questionnaire with open-ended questions).

**Part 1b- Written Report Guidelines**

Your written report should be approximately 8 pages outlining the following sections:

1. An **Introduction** that includes background information (e.g., a short bio of your person, your reason for selecting this person, what you hoped to achieve by doing the program with this person, etc.) and a short (2-4 paragraph) literature review on MST skills chosen (e.g., your reason for selecting the MST skills that you) with a minimum of 5 credible, scholarly sources.
2. A **Methods** section in which you give a detailed account of your procedures and techniques. Outline the timeline you used for interview/teaching. This section will answer questions such as: what assessments did you use? What interview scripts did you use? How did you track performance/perception?
3. A **Results/Discussion** section will indicate and explain what occurred/resultsed from the intervention. How did the athlete score? How did they respond to the interview questions?
4. 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’s performance (e.g., What do they do well? Poorly?). Also, knowing what you know now, what would you do different?

**Part 2- Presentation Guidelines**

1. You will present your findings from your project to the class at the end of the semester.
2. The presentation will be 8-10 minutes in length.
Evaluation of MST Intervention

Evaluation Criteria for Written Assignment (20 pts.):
Introduction- quality and accuracy of participant description & theory citation/ literature review:
1………2………3………4

Methods- specificity and appropriateness of assessments/ interviews used & procedures used:
1………2………3………4

Results/ Discussion- indicate results and elaborate results relative to performance:
1………2………3………4

Conclusion- provides thoughtful analysis of participant’s performance & personal performance:
1………2………3………4

Follows format, shows organized thought, APA style, and grammatically correct:
1………2………3………4

Written Score: _____/20

Evaluation Criteria for Mock Poster Presentation (10 pts.):
Mental Skills/ Theories:  What were they? Citations?
0………1………2

Participant Details:  What were the contextual factors?
0………1………2

Methods: How did you set it up?
0………1………2

Results and Discussion:  What did you find?
0………1………2

Conclusion: What did you get out of it?
0………1………2

Presentation Score: _____/10

Total Score: _____/30
Mental Skills Training: MST Teaching Plan (Option 2)

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 3 educational lessons to teach a group or team about 3 different 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. You may include course material (e.g., Mental Skills Minute material); however, your plans should not be unoriginal or totally duplicated from example materials provided in class.

Part 1- MST Teaching Plan Guidelines
The written report should be approximately 3-4 pages per lesson.
1. Develop a specific and appropriate presentation/activity for a target person or audience.
2. You should decide exactly what material you will use within a specific area (can't do everything), and come up with a catchy title that captures the nature of your presentation.
3. The key is to select, organize, and customize material that will be of interest and use to your target audience. Develop a theme, overall objective, and/or final take-home message.
4. Keep it simple; don’t try to do too much. Make the key, important points in a way they can use.
5. Get participants active and engaged - don't just talk at them. Use questions and activities to immediately get your audience engaged.
6. Give participants something they can use - specifically and immediately.
   a. Create a handout; there will not be access for a PowerPoint in the field!!
   b. Make readable, usable, simple, and visually stimulating handouts or materials for participants.
7. Entertain, work to keep their attention, get them involved, and be innovative!
8. Each plan should follow these 4 Sections: (See Option 2: MST Teaching Plan Format on Blackboard for the specific format.)
   a. Introduction:
      i. A catchy title, specification of the mental skill/key words, brief description of the importance of the session, contextual factors,
   b. Rationale:
      i. A brief rationale and research basis/background for the session information and activities. Cite sources as necessary.
   c. Explanation:
      i. How will the lesson flow? This section will elaborate on the process and specific procedures of the lesson. Use the 5 E’s method in this section!
   d. Handouts: The activities or any other materials provided to the participants. This is something that will directly engage the participants during the lesson.

Part 2- MST Teaching Plan Presentation Guidelines
1. You will choose 1 of the 3 written plans to teach to the class. The presentation should last approximately 10 minutes.
2. The presentation will thoroughly explain how you anticipate the lesson to go.
Evaluation of MST Teaching Plan

Evaluation Criteria for Written Assignment (20 pts.):
Quality and accuracy of theories/ citations & application of material presented:

1…….2…….3…….4

Specificity and appropriateness for level/sport; Shows thoughtfulness of contextual factors:

1…….2…….3…….4

Clearly identifies and uses 5 E’s method for lesson plan:

1…….2…….3…….4

Provokes interest of participants & directly engages participants; Provides innovative activities:

1…….2…….3…….4

Follows format, shows organized thought, APA style, and grammatically correct:

1…….2…….3…….4

Written Score: _____/20

Evaluation Criteria for Mock Poster Presentation (10 pts.):
Purpose/ Key Words/ Importance

0…….1…….2

Background and Rationale: What were the Mental Skills/ Theories? Citations?

0…….1…….2

Participant Details: What are the contextual factors?

0…….1…….2

Lesson Plan Outline: What were the 5 E’s? What were the Handouts/ Activities?

0…….1…….2…….3…….4

Presentation Score: _____/10

Total Score: _____/30
**Sport Psychology Research Proposal (Option 3)**

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.

Similar to that of the supplemental articles we read in class, this option will follow a particular format. For the purpose of this course, the research proposal will outlined as such:

1. **Introduction:** Research question, hypothesis, & underlying theories.
2. **Methodology:** Participants, measures, procedures, & design of the research study.
3. **Discussion:** Potential results, limitations, and future research

**Part 1- Written Report Guidelines**

Your written report should be approximately 8-10 pages outlining the following sections:

1. **Introduction:** Provide a brief statement of the topic you will be presenting, its importance, and review the relevant literature (minimum 5 citations). It should be clear as to how your study addresses gaps in the literature or extends previous research. In the later part of this section your research questions/hypotheses should also be clearly stated.
2. **Methodology:** Describe the study you are proposing. You should describe:
   a. **Participants:** This section will indicate the proposed sample/participants. Provide as much detail as possible about the sample (e.g., sport, level of sport, age, gender, etc.)
   b. **Measures:** The measures or data collection techniques that you plan to use
   c. **Procedures:** How you plan to conduct the study and collect the data? You must use an existing measure and provide justification for your selection (i.e., why did you choose those measures?). In describing your measures, it is a good idea to include sample items or include the measures in the appendices.
3. **Discussion:**
   a. **Expected Results:** In this section you will offer a discussion of your expected results based on the current literature as indicated in the introduction. Hint: the expected results will be similar to your hypothesis. However, add at least one alternative to the hypothesis (e.g., what else could happen?).
   b. **Limitations and Future Directions:** From the literature guiding your proposal and from your perspective, indicate possible limitations of the proposal. Further, what implications: What are the educational or practical implications of this study? In other words, who will this research benefit, how, and why?
4. **Conclusion:** In this short section you will reflect on the process of creating a research project. What did you learn? What went well? What was difficult? What would you change in the design process knowing what you know now?

**Part 2- Mock Poster Presentation Guidelines**

Your Presentation must include:

a. You will present your findings from your project to the class at the end of the semester.

b. The presentation will be 8-10 minutes in length.
**Evaluation of Research Proposal**

**Evaluation Criteria for Written Assignment (20 pts.):**
Introduction- introduce topic, rationale for theory/ citations, indicate research question(s):

1………2………3………4

Methods- specificity and appropriateness of methodology & procedures:

1………2………3………4

Discussion/ Expected Results- discuss results, limitations/ future directions, & implications:

1………2………3………4

Conclusion- provides thoughtful reflection on the research process:

1………2………3………4

Follows format, shows organized thought, APA style, and grammatically correct:

1………2………3………4

**Written Score: _____/20**

**Evaluation Criteria for Mock Poster Presentation (10 pts):**
Introduction/ Pertinent Literature: What is the main research in this area? Citations?

0………1………2

Expected Participants: What are the contextual factors?

0………1………2

Methods: How did you set it up? Qualitative or Quantitative Design?

0………1………2

Data Analysis and Results: How will you assess the data? What do you expect to find?

0………1………2

Limitations and Implications: What might limit your study? How does your study apply to the field?

0………1………2

**Presentation Score: _____/10**

**Total Score: _____/30**