



College of Education and Human Development
**SCHOOL OF SPORT, RECREATION,
AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT**
George Mason University®

SPMT 490—Internship (12)
Summer 2026

DAY/TIME: 30-40 hours/week
PROFESSOR: Julie Aylsworth
OFFICE: Krug 213D

LOCATION: **Job Site**
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OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

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PREREQUISITES: 90 hours, SPMT 241 (Practicum), SPMT 475 including SPMT major and 20+ hours in SPMT courses.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This paid or voluntary supervised professional experience provides a continuous and structured opportunity to apply principles and skills developed in the classroom to the solution of practical problems in a sport industry setting. This course meets the general education synthesis/Apex requirement.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Work placements are selected by the student, pending approval of faculty supervisor. A minimum period of 10-12 weeks of *full-time employment* is required for sport management students. The internship includes meetings and assignments prior to, as well as during, the internship.

MASON APEX

The newly named Mason Apex course (SPMT 490) will provide George Mason students with a high-impact culminating experience, requiring students to utilize critical thinking skills and preparing them for life-long learning. Students are challenged to draw connections across their George Mason undergraduate academic experience. Mason Apex courses provide students opportunities to apply and communicate their knowledge, and involve integrative, applied or experiential projects. Upon completing a Mason Apex course, students will be able to:

1. Integrate skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained across a Mason student's undergraduate education to explore complex issues in original ways.
2. Communicate effectively the results of the student's work with awareness of audience, purpose, and context using an appropriate modality (for example: written, oral, visual, material, embodied, multimodal).

WRITING IN SPORT MANAGEMENT (*new initiative*)

Writing plays a vital role in the field of sport management—often more than people realize. Sport professionals—whether working in management, coaching, media, or administration—engage in a wide range of writing tasks that must be clear, persuasive, data-informed, and tailored to specific audiences.

Throughout their careers, sport professionals produce a wide range of written materials to support the operations and communication needs of the industry. These include strategic plans, marketing plans, event schedules, facility documents and financial reports. They also write compliance and policy documents, training plans, scouting reports, and recruiting materials. In addition, sport professionals create media content such as press releases, sports commentary, social media posts, and communication materials like game notes, programs and media guides.

Throughout the sport management major, you will complete writing assignments designed to help you develop the skills needed to meet the real-world communication demands of the sport industry. Each course will offer different types of writing experiences that reflect the diverse formats and audiences you will encounter as a sport professional.

COURSE DELIVERY

This course is delivered as a *guided* work experience. Part of the course delivery is regular contact with the instructor every week, through weekly reports, monitoring Canvas announcements, Canvas or Zoom conferences and checking student's GMU email account for course-related messages from the instructor.

You will log in to the Canvas course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available no later than May 18, 2026, 11:59 PM.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Apply, in an appropriate and professional work setting, theories, concepts, and philosophies learned through previous academic and other experiences;
2. Demonstrate skills and competencies in routine business administration (e.g., accounting and record keeping, planning, public relations, assessments, and staff relations);
3. Apply decision-making and problem-solving skills through the formulation, evaluation and implementation of alternative solutions to problems and issues;
4. Attend or participate in professional board and committee meetings, conferences, hearings, state meetings, training sessions and workshops in order to acquire practical career enhancing skills;
5. Describe and evaluate the overall agency/company organizational structure and its management philosophy (or corporate culture) and clientele base, as well as the agency's relative position to other local, national and/or global competition in the market place;
6. Assess personal strengths and weaknesses in light of demands and expectations of employment in the various roles and responsibilities assigned in a work setting;
7. Set personal objectives for a career in a sport management setting utilizing both personal assessment and evaluation by the academic institution and the internship agency; and

8. Compile a list of industry professionals that can be used when seeking full-time employment.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course satisfies the University general education requirement for the Mason Apex (formerly synthesis or capstone course). The purpose is to provide students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills and values gained from the general education curriculum. Synthesis courses strive to expand students' ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills across disciplines. Sport management interns should be able to connect issues they encounter at the work site to wider intellectual, community or societal concerns. They should strive to improve their written and oral communication skills. When interns come upon an issue at the work place that requires critical thinking, they will be able to apply research skills they have learned to tackle the problem.

Students will comply with the academic standards of the George Mason University. Students are expected to meet all course requirements as listed below as well as fulfill their duties and responsibilities as stipulated by the on-site supervisor. Students are representing **George Mason University** and the **Sport Management Program** at the work site. Through the work with fellow employees and the supervisor(s), students are not only leaving an impression as to their skills, attitude and abilities, but are also providing the individuals encountered during their internship with a snapshot of George Mason University and the Sport Management program. **Please take this role very seriously.** The Sport Management program wants to be able to place students at this site in the future; the Sport Management program also want students to be considered for permanent employment at all of these sites.

SUGGESTED READING

- *Wong, G.M. (2013) *Careers in sports*. Northampton, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishing.
- *Taylor, J. (1992) *How to get a job in sports*. New York: Collier Books.
- *Plunkett, J. (2024) *Plunkett's sports and recreation industry almanac*. Houston, TX: Plunkett Research, Ltd.

MANDATORY READING

Internship Manual and other Course Content posted during the semester; essay instructions, schedule, weekly module link, interview tips, job postings, resume ideas, career planning materials, discussion board, instructor comments on assignments, etc.

EVALUATION

Requirements

During the internship, students must fulfill specific requirements and complete specified forms and assignments in order to be evaluated and receive a grade for their internship. These include:

- attending mandatory internship seminars (if interning in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area) or complying with other arrangements such as telephone conferencing and/or GMU Canvas or Zoom conferencing (if interning outside of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area);
- **responding promptly** to emails from the GMU internship instructor of record;
- working full-time at an approved agency for a minimum of 400 hours of professional practice over a period of 10 to 15 consecutive weeks, for no less than 30 hours per week/no more than 40 hours per week;
- completing *Weekly Progress Reports* and *filing them each Monday (Posted on Canvas/Assignments)*
- submitting signed copies of the *Midpoint and Final Internship Performance Assessment Forms* completed by the Agency Supervisor after discussion with and agreement, by the intern (**posted on Canvas/Assignments**);

- develop and complete a *Special Project* in cooperation with their Agency Supervisor. The intent is to provide the agency and/or its clientele with a tangible and useful finished resource or service. The project provides the intern with an opportunity to demonstrate and improve their problem solving and communication skills. The project should be realistically and reasonably ‘doable’ and be of interest to the intern and the site supervisor. **Work on the special project should be considered part of an intern’s hours and is to be completed in incremental stages throughout their internship;**
- meet with their Agency Supervisor and the University Supervisor during a routine visit at their placement agency. Alternative arrangements are made for those interns based outside the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area;
- presenting a power point and overview of their internship site work experience and special project at a mandatory closing panel session attended by all working interns, University Supervisor(s), Departmental Internship Program Coordinator, relevant faculty advisors and other staff members, as warranted toward the end of the synthesis/Apex course. Other arrangements may be made if the placement site is located outside the Washington D.C. metropolitan area;
- joining Linked In, Teamwork Online and Handshake (GMU Career Center);
- *internship, SPMT experience, goals summation essay of four pages* (see Canvas under course content), and
- submitting an internship e-portfolio, including the essay above, on Canvas which encapsulates the cumulative experience of their internship [**e-Portfolio Guidelines**];
- student evaluation [**Appendix 11**]
- updating resume (at beginning and end of internship), update LinkedIn, Teamwork and Handshake profile.

Grading Scale

The University Supervisor assigns the grade based on the intern meeting the above course requirements. The grade will be either ‘Satisfactory’ (S) (reflecting a C grade or better for undergraduates) or a ‘No Credit’ (NC, which is equivalent to a failing grade). Any intern receiving a NC grade for their overall performance in their internship program will be required to begin a new internship, including re-enrollment and repayment for the 9-12 credit hours. An ‘Incomplete’ (IN) grade or ‘In Progress’ (IP) may be assigned until all course work requirements are completed and submitted to the University Supervisor, who is responsible for overseeing the internship. Once all requirements have been met, the University Supervisor changes the ‘Incomplete/In Progress’ grade to ‘Satisfactory’ by submitting a *Change of Grade Form* to the Registrar. Credits for this course count toward General Education and Professional Course work for graduation requirements.

Artificial Intelligence and GMU Academic Standards

- *Use of Generative AI tools should be used following the fundamental principles of Mason’s Academic Standards. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.*

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

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

Professionalism is an important job skill and one by which you will be judged at your job site by co-workers, other interns, customers, clients and your supervisors. ‘All times’ includes social gatherings at the office and off-site with those who students work with at the internship site. ***This is important.***

CEHD Commitments

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Common Policies Affecting All Courses at George Mason University: <https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/home/gmu-common-course-policies/>
 - Academic Standards
 - Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
 - FERPA and Use of GMU Email Addresses for Course Communication
 - Title IX Resources and Required Reporting
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of your LMS should be directed to:
 - Canvas: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/>
- For information on student support resources on campus, see: <https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/knowning-mason-students/student-support-resources-on-campus/>
 - TimelyCare: <https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/>
 - Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development's Student Success Resources, please visit: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.