

George Mason University – Fall 2010  
SPMT 320 Psychology of Sport

Day/ Time: T/R 10:30-11:45 am

Location: Recreation & Athletic Complex- 2203

Professor: Mary Schumann, Ph.D.

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Office hours: T/R 11:00-12:00 noon or by arrangement Aquia Bldg, Room 337.

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.

#### 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 the social/psychological response to environment will be explored. Factors such as, aggression, audience effects, team behavior, and drug abuse will be discussed.

#### 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.
2. Understand the major antecedents and consequences of sport participation.
3. Critically evaluate current research.
4. Identify appropriate intervention strategies for sport performance enhancement.
5. Conduct an applied research project utilizing a theoretical framework and a quasi-experimental design.

#### Required Readings

1. Williams, J.M. (2006). Applied Sport Psychology: Personal Growth to Peak Performance (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.

#### 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**. 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:

1. Participation grades will be based on active, thoughtful participation in class discussions and exercises.
2. There are 3 papers. Two are 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 movie analysis paper which will be described in more detail in this document.
3. The final project will consist of an administration and presentation (written and oral) of an experimental study that explores some psychological aspect of sport.
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>
Participation	10	A+ = 98 -100, A = 94 -97, A- = 90 - 93
Assignments (3)	15	B + = 88 - 89, B = 84 - 87, B- = 80 - 83
Project	25	C + = 78 - 79, C = 74 - 77, C- = 70 -73
Exams (2)	50	D = 60 - 69
		F = 0 - 59

Course Content:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading / Assignment Due</u>		
August	31	Introduction		
September	2	Sport Psychology	Ch. 1	
	7	Motor skill learning	Ch. 2	
	9	Reinforcement	Ch.3	
	14	Motivation	Ch. 4	<b>Paper # 1</b>
	16	Self-fulfilling Prophecy	Ch. 5	
	21			
	23	Leadership	Ch. 6	
	28	Cohesion	Ch. 8	
30				
October	5	<b>Exam # 1</b>		
	7	Project discussion		
	12	No Class – Columbus Day break		
	14	Peak Performance	Ch. 11	<b>Paper #2</b>
	19	Goal setting	Ch. 13	
	21	Arousal & performance	Ch. 14	
	26	Imagery	Ch.16	
	28	Movie		<b>Paper # 3 (movie analysis)</b>
November	2	Conducting Psychologically Oriented Coach-Training Programs	Ch. 18	
	4	Injury	Ch. 25	
	9	Staleness & burnout	Ch. 22	
	11	Exercise psychology	Ch. 27	
	16			
	18	<b>Exam # 2</b>		
	23	Movies		
	25	No Class- Happy Thanksgiving!		
30				
December	2	Projects		
		Projects		
	7	Projects		
	9	Projects		
	14	FINAL EXAM 10:30 am -1:15 pm		

### Other Information

- All students are held to the standards of the George Mason University 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.gmu.edu/departments/hfr/HFRNetAnnouncements.htm>

**Journal Article Review Papers:** 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](http://www.swets.nl/backsets/catalogue_result_0047-0767.htm)
- Journal of Applied Sport Psychology - <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/tf/10413200.html>

**Movie Analysis Paper**

The purpose of this exercise is to have you apply what you have learned in this class as it relates to the psychology of sport as found in the movie you have chosen to see. Please discuss some of the psychological skills that have been covered in this class that are seen in the movie. The paper should be two to three pages in length. The movie must be one that deals with sports. You need to see the entire movie, while noting the various psychological aspects as seen in the movie (motivation, leadership, etc.). The following list of movies, while not complete, would prove to be acceptable. If you would like to review a different film, please run it by me.

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Rocky               | Blue Chips            |
| Million Dollar Baby | A League of Their Own |
| Remember the Titans | Chariots of Fire      |
| The Natural         | Bull Durham           |
| Rudy                | The Rookie            |
| Hoosiers            | Miracle               |
| Coach Carter        |                       |

What your analysis should include:

- Introduction to the movie
- A. Why you picked it
- B. The movie's plot
- II The psychological skills addressed
- III Conclusion

**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 one week 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.
- 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 7 to 10 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.