

Psychology of Sport  
SPMT 320 – 002



Day/Time:	T/R 12:00-1:15	Location:	SciTech – Bull Run Hall 257
Instructor:	Jordan Thibodeaux, MS	Office:	BRH 220/DK 1030
Phone:	337-288-2512	Office Hour:	Thursdays 10:30 – 11:30, or Skype
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### Course Description

Sports are often a metaphor for life. Whether the goal is achieving a personal best, or working with others on a team, the skills we will be learning from psychological principles of sport and exercise will facilitate your future career. In this course, we will discuss topics of exercise and sport psychology through the theoretical approaches, innovative research, and the wisdom of experience. The course will apply psychological principles of learning and motivation to sport and exercise performance, and relate the science of psychology to current issues facing sport professions. The course will also encourage students to invent ways of promoting participation and healthy behavior in sport. I aim to engage your understanding of sport and exercise psychology, whether you are an athlete, coach, or weekend warrior.

### General Course Objectives and Expectations

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 psychological research.
4. Identify appropriate intervention strategies for sport performance enhancement.
5. Conduct an applied research project to design a mental skills program.

Students sometimes say (e.g., RateMyProfessors.com) that my lectures are too long. I actually like to engage my class, so I try to keep my end short. Engagement is a two-way process. Thus, 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. Listen to other students' contributions.
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 Textbook

Williams, J. & Krane, V. (Eds.) (2014). *Applied sport psychology: Personal growth to peak performance* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Locate the book with this - ISBN: 0078022703/ 9780078022708

### Technology

On Blackboard, three main types of documents will be available:

- Current syllabus
- Non-textbook readings
- Handouts based on assignments
- PowerPoint slides

### Course Requirements and Assignments

- Participation 10%

The easiest way to do well in this class is to simply show up having done the readings. Class sessions include days when we will discuss the assigned texts. This discussion will be held in small groups I like to call Circles of Learning (CoL), and as an entire class. Everyone is expected to participate, so please come prepared. Students will pick two days on which to lead class discussion from their small group. On the days the student selects to lead discussion, they will also turn in a reflection paper (See Reflection Papers). Discussions will be lively and engaging, and are intended to get students critically thinking about the readings. Cell phone usage during class could result in an absence and no credit or half-credit participation awarded on that day.

- Exams 60%

You will have three non-cumulative exams administered on the date specified in the course schedule. These tests will primarily consist of multiple choice and short answer items. *These exams will rely heavily on material covered in class and readings.* The lowest test grade will be dropped.

Every exams, unless the instructor notifies, will be accessible through Blackboard the day scheduled on the syllabus. Once logged on, students will have 2 hours to complete it. There is no pausing the exam, so be prepared to complete it in one sitting. There is no collaboration on the exam, and all submitted work must be the student's own. Exam availability will close by 10:30 the following class period – No exceptions.

- Reflection Papers 10%

Four reaction papers are required during the semester. The student has the ability to turn in each reflection paper each week of class, but may only submit one reflection paper per class. Each paper will consist of a two page, typed reaction to the current topics being discussed. The paper should include a brief discussion of a theoretical construct discussed in the readings or in class and a personal experience or reaction to this idea.

- Final Project 20% (See Final Project Instructions)

The final project will consist of an administration and presentation (written and oral) of an experimental study that explores some psychological aspect of sport. More information will be provided in a separate,

writing project guidelines document. Grading will be based on a rough draft (20% of the total) and a final draft (75% of the total). Final presentations (5% of the total) will also be given at the end of the semester during the day of the scheduled final. Writing projects submitted after the deadlines (rough draft and final) will not be accepted, and students who do so will receive a "0" for the paper grade.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

>93% = A, 90 – 92 = A-, 87 – 89 = B+, 83 – 86 = B, 80 – 82 = B-, 77 – 79 = C+, 73 – 76 = C, 70 – 72 = C-, 60 – 69 = D, < 60 = F

### **The Honor Code**

Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code. (<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>). Students are encouraged to study together as much as possible throughout the course, however, no assistance, sharing of information, or discussion of exam items or answers between students may take place. For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student's. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

### **Other Important Information**

The deadlines for adding and dropping classes are as follows:

Last Day to Add Classes (Drop with no tuition penalty) - September 8

Last Day to Drop (33% tuition penalty)-September 15

Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)-October 2

Official Communications via GMU Email: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason email account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly

Recording of classroom lectures is not allowed without explicit permission by the instructor.

Students may not reproduce (including uploading to the Internet) any portion of the exam. Students who attempt to photograph or in any way capture information about the exam for others' use will be reported for an honor violation.

If you are a student with disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 709-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (3129 Student Union Building I, <http://caps.gmu.edu/>) at 993-2380 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.

## Tentative Schedule

Date			Topic	Read for that class!	Assignment Due
T	SEPT	1	Introduction		
R		3	Sport Psychology	Ch. 1+Rotella	
T		8	Learning Sport Skills	Ch. 2+Williams	CoL #1
R		10	Coaching the Coaches I	Ch. 3 + Munsey	
T		15	Coaching the Coaches II	Ch. 17+Gilbert et al. (2009)	CoL #2
R		17	Motivation	Ch. 4	
T		22	Self-Fulfilling Prophecy	Ch. 5	CoL #3
R		24	Cohesion	Ch. 7+Hoffman	CoL #4
T		29	<b>Exam #1</b>		
R	OCT	1	<b>Discuss Final Project</b>		
T		6	Peak Performance	Ch. 9+Hutchinson	CoL #5
R		8	Awareness	Ch. 10	
T		13	Concentration	Ch. 15	
R		15	Goal-Setting	Ch. 11	CoL #6
T		20	Managing Sport Stress	Ch. 12+Smoll	<b>Project Ideas</b>
R		22	Burnout	Ch. 21+Kaleth & Mikesky (2010)	CoL #7
T		27	Injury	Ch. 22	
R		29	Imagery	Ch. 13	
T	NOV	3	Self-Talk	Ch. 14+Zourbanos (2013)	<b>(Project Draft)</b>
R		5	Mental Skills Training	Ch. 16	
T		9	<b>Exam #2</b>		
R		12	Counseling Athletes	Ch. 19	
T		17	Substance Use in Sport	Ch. 20+9.79*	CoL#8
R		19	Special Topic: Disordered Eating in Athletes	Bratland-Sanda & Sundgot-Borgen (2013); Petrie & Greenleaf (2012)	CoL #9
T		24	Sport-Based Youth Development	Forneris et al. (2013); Petitpas et al. (2005)	CoL #10
R	DEC	1	Cultural Competence	Ch. 18	<i>Project Updates</i>
T		3	Life After Sport	Ch. 23	
R		8	Exercise Psychology	Ch. 24+Gay	CoL #11
T		10	<b>Exam #3</b>		
R		17	Final Presentations during final period (10:30 to 1:15)		<b>Final Project Due @ 10:30</b>

Supplementary Readings (on Blackboard)

- Bratland-Sanda, S., & Sundgot-Borgen, J. (2013). Eating disorders in athletes: Overview of prevalence, risk factors, and recommendations for prevention and treatment. *European Journal of Sport Science*, *13*, 499-508. doi: 10.1080/17461391.2012.740504
- Forneris, T., Conley, K. A., Danish, S. J., & Stoller, L. M. (2014). Teaching life skills through sport: Community-based programs to enhance adolescent development. In J. L. Van Raalte & B. W. Brewer (Eds.) *Exploring Sport and Exercise Psychology* (3rd ed.). , (pp. 261-276). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
- Gay, J. (2015, April). We all need to shape up fast. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from: [http://www.wsj.com/articles/we-all-need-to-shape-up-fast-1430089775?mod=trending\\_now\\_4](http://www.wsj.com/articles/we-all-need-to-shape-up-fast-1430089775?mod=trending_now_4)
- Gilbert, W., Gallimore, R., & Trudel, P. (2009). A learning community approach to coach development in youth sport. *Journal of coaching education*, *2*(2), 1-21.
- Hoffman, J. (2014, January). My coach, the bully. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from: <http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/29/my-coach-the-bully/>
- Hutchinson, A. (2013, September). How to build mental muscle. *Runner's World*. Retrieved from: <http://www.runnersworld.com/print/race-training/how-to-build-mental-muscle>
- Kaleth, A. S., & Mikesky, A. E. (2010). Impact of early sport specialization: A physiological perspective. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance (JOPERD)*, *81*(8), 29.
- Munsey, C. (2010). Coaching the coaches: Promoting a 'mastery climate' motivates young athletes to do their best, says this scientist-practitioner team. *Monitor in Psychology*, *41* (4), 58-59.
- Petitpas, A. J., Cornelius, A. E., Van Raalte, J. L., & Jones, T. (2005). A framework for planning youth sport programs that foster psychosocial development. *The Sport Psychologist*, *19*(1), 63-80.
- Petrie, T. A., & Greenleaf, C. (2012). Eating disorders in sport. In S. M. Murphy (Ed.) *The Oxford Handbook and Performance Psychology*, 635-659. 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199731763.013.0034
- Shurtleff, A. (2015, August). Charlottesville's Rotella a master of the mental game. *Cavalier Insider*.
- Smoll, F. L. (2015, July). Are youth sports too stressful? Sport-related anxiety can rob youngsters of the benefits of participation. *Psychology Today*.
- Williams, M. A. (2003). Learning football skills effectively: Challenging tradition. *Insight: The FA Coaches Association Journal*, *6*(2), 37-39.
- Zourbanos, N. (2013). The use of instructional and motivational self-talk in setting up a physical education lesson. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance*, *84*, 54-58. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2013.827555>

More Guidance on Reflection Papers: Choose one or more of the readings to be discussed in class, and write a reflection. A reflection paper is often based on a reaction to the issue being presented. You may want to include your own experiences (e.g., a personal story) and why you are interested in this topic. Be sure to do your own thoughtful analysis of the topic, and critical thinking about the way the authors presented the topic (i.e., Could it be done better?). Critically evaluate the texts, and do not simply summarize facts. Rather, bring your own meaning to the reading. Below are some sport journals that can be used for citing articles and their evidence to support your position. Basic compliance with APA means double-spaced text with 1 inch margins on the paper, and a title page (see Blackboard example). The rest is up to you to discover through using the APA Publication Manual - 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

### BRIEF FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

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).

A. 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:

- a) You may only work with someone that you know.
- b) You must submit your program idea to me before you intend to start working with the person (see due date). You may not begin the program until I have approved your techniques.
- c) Your program must be based on the techniques discussed in our text OR learning in class (mindfulness exercises for example)
- d) 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).

B. Your written report must include\*\*:

- a. 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),
- b. A body in which you give a detailed account of your procedures and techniques
- c. 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?).
- d. Your written report should be in APA style 6<sup>th</sup> edition, and between 7 to 9 double-spaced typed pages. You should provide your client a CoLy of your final report; also, you will present your findings from your project to the class at the end of the semester.

\*\*For the draft, each component of the final report is "planned." The draft is expected at least to include the background bio, a planned intervention/skills program, and some expectations about the progress of the program.

### Sport Specific Journals Worthy of Pursuing:

- Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology (APA Div. 47) - <http://www.apadivisions.org/division-47/publications/journals/index.aspx>
- 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/>
- Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance  
<http://www.shapeamerica.org/publications/journals/joperd/>
- 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>