

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**School of Sport, Recreation and Tourism Management (SRTM)**  
**Sport and Recreation Studies (SRST)**  
**Summer [A] 2020 (3 credits)**

SPMT 480 AO2 – Special Topics in Sport Management: Leadership and Management in Professional Sports

SRST 598 AO2 – Special Topics in Sport and Recreation Studies: Leadership and Management in Professional Sports

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

SPMT 480: None

SRST 598: Graduate standing or permission of instructor

**University Catalog Course Description**

SPMT 480: Selected topics reflecting interest in specialized areas of sport management announced in advance. Offered by School of Sport, Recreation, & Tourism Management. May be repeated within the degree for a maximum 6 credits.

SRST 598: Focuses on projects related to sport and/or recreation studies. Offered by Sport and Recreation Studies. May be repeated within the degree for a maximum 6 credits.

**Course Overview**

Topics related to sport management/sport and recreation studies. In particular, seven (7) topics will be covered in class:

1. *Principles of Sports Leadership*

Leadership is a critical element to success in any field, and sports are no different. We will discuss in class the basic elements of good leadership that are exhibited by Coaches and General Managers of sports teams. We will also discuss how to develop leaders.

2. *Developing Teamwork*

In sports, it is critical for all members of the team to understand their role on the team and the importance of their ability to work together towards a common goal of winning the game. In the class, we will show how a sports team can achieve this. Also, how this can be applied to any organization.

3. *Motivation*

It is easy to say that a company will only hire “self-motivated” individuals, but that is not always the case. Furthermore, those who are “self-motivated” are human and will still need motivation at times. In sports, you likewise try to recruit only “self-motivated” individuals, but you do not always end up with an entire team of them. We will discuss how to motivate both individuals and the organization.

4. *Media Relations*

A big part of sports is media relations. Everything done in professional sports – and to some extent, college and high school sports – is covered extensively by TV, radio, Internet, and print media. It is critical in sports to be able to deal with the media on a daily basis. We will discuss in class the principles of media relations that will help the students have guidelines to deal with the media.

5. *Crisis Management*

In sports, when a crisis occurs with a team or player, it rarely escapes the news. In class, we will discuss how to deal with a crisis internally, as well as externally (with the media).

6. *Hiring and Evaluations*

We will discuss the characteristics to look for in hiring the coach/leader of an organization and how they can be evaluated.

7. *Dealing with Different Situations*

I have picked six common situations that happen in sports and will discuss how to handle each situation. These six situations are: Newly-named coach; Extended losing streak; Extended winning streak; Sustaining a winning streak; Sustaining success after a big season; and Rebounding from a poor season.

8. *Interviewing*

We will discuss how to interview for a job.

## **Course Delivery Method**

***Under no circumstances, may 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.

This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on June 1, 2020. Students must have access to a computer with word processing, Excel, PowerPoint/Google Slides, and a webcam with microphone.

## Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Google Chrome is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a webcam and microphone.
- Students will need access to word processing, Excel, PowerPoint/Google Slides.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

## Expectations

- **Log-in Frequency:** Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least five times per week.
- **Participation:** Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the summer term, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:** Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:** Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the summer term and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues and will receive a 10% late penalty.
- **Workload:** Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet specific deadlines and due dates listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:** Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. The instructor may conduct these meetings via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:** The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words. Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- **Accommodations:** Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

## Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. learn about different aspects of operating a sports team;
2. apply principles of leadership exhibited by coaches and general managers;
3. gain knowledge about practical leadership and teamwork development;
4. study aspects of motivation, media relations, and crisis management;

5. identify evaluative criteria for assessing coaches and managers to be hired;
6. acquire competence in dealing with a variety of coaching/team scenarios; and
7. prepare for the professional sport interviewing process.

## **Professional Standards**

Upon completion of this course, students will have met/addressed the following Commission on Sport Management Accreditation's (COSMA) Common Professional Components:

Foundations of Sport Management  
Functions of Sport Management  
Sport Management Environment

For more information, please see: Commission of Sport Management Accreditation. (2016, May). COSMA accreditation principles and self-study preparation. Retrieved from <https://www.cosmaweb.org/accreditation-manuals.html>

## **Required Texts**

Readings to be provided by the instructor and posted on Blackboard.

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Topic Papers (n=8). Topic papers: should be 1-2 pages (2-4 pages for graduate students) (double-spaced) in length and cover each of the below listed topics:

*Tentative Due Dates:*

Leadership - June 8  
Motivation - June 8  
Developing Teamwork - June 15  
Media Relations - June 15  
Crisis Management - June 22  
Newly Hired Coach - June 22  
Interviewing - June 29  
Situations - June 29

*Undergraduates* will write 1-2 page papers relating each of the following topics to the programs they are working in: Leadership, Developing Teamwork, Motivation, Media Relations, Crisis Management, Taking Over a New Position, Interviewing and Situations. *Graduate students* papers will be in the 2-4 page range. Each paper is worth 10 % of the grade.

- A. Your writing should be organized. The main point of your argument should be evident, and there is logic in going from A to B.
- B. You have justified your arguments using class material. Remember, you are trying to convince your audience as to the “correctness” of your position. They will be skeptical, and the burden is on you to show proof.
- C. You have synthesized the discussions to create your own ideas.
- D. You offer some implications of your analysis. Try to go beyond the obvious here; but remember, solutions must be critically sound, and there are often tradeoffs involved for any prescription.

- **Policy on Class Participation**

Students will be given outlines of the class lectures before the topics will be discussed online. They are to study these outlines and be prepared to discuss, in their *papers or worksheet assignments*, any of the points in the outlines, and how they relate to the sports world.

Clearly, much learning is derived from fellow students’ contributions to class discussions and a failure to fully prepare for worksheets, the papers or any online discussion opportunity should be construed as breaking a contract with them. The instructor will offer Blackboard Collaborate opportunities for the class from time to time during the summer term; these sessions will be voluntary and every effort will be made to use a time convenient to everyone.

- **Grading**

- Worksheets – 20%
- Topic Papers – 80% [8 Papers @ 10% each]

**Grading Scale  
(Undergraduate)**

A+ = 98 – 100	B+ = 86 – 89	C+ = 76 – 78	D = 60 – 69
A = 94 – 97	B = 82 – 85	C = 72 – 75	F = 0 – 59
A- = 90 – 93	B- = 79 – 81	C- = 70 – 71	

**Grading Scale  
(Graduate)**

A = 94 – 100	B+ = 88 – 89	C = 60 – 79
A- = 90 – 93	B = 84 – 87	F = 0 – 59
	B- = 80 – 83	

**Class Schedule**

Module One - Class Organization; Principles of Sports Leadership/Profiles on Leaders/Developing Leaders

Module Two – Motivation

Module Three - Developing Teamwork

Module Four - Media Relations

Module Five - Crisis Management

Module Six - Taking over a new Position

Module Seven - Situations

- Dealing with the following situations: Extended Losing Streak, Extended Winning Streak, Coming off a Successful Season, Coming off a Poor Season

Module Eight – Interviewing for a Job

Module Nine - Hiring and Evaluating Staff

Final Module (10) – Organizational Meeting, Developing Leaders, Recap

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.*

### **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*

Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursestupport.gmu.edu/>.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

**Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

**PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR:** Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.