

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Sports Management**

SPMT 320-DL2 – Psychology of Sport  
3 Credits, Spring, 2021

**Faculty**

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Office Hours: By Appointment via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra/Zoom/Webex

Office Location: Field House

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:** None

**University Catalog 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**

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 issues such as injury, staleness and burnout, and findings from exercise psychology. Throughout all of this theoretical information, experiential exercises will be woven into each class, to teach and demonstrate the power of using the mental skills to control the body.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (100%) using a **synchronous** and an **asynchronous** format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. The **synchronous** portion of the class will be delivered on Mondays at 7:20- 8:35 pm. During that time, we will review some part of the material for the week. We will also discuss issues and questions you have about the material. We will also practice a few of the exercises that are embedded in the course material. You are required to be present during this time. 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 January 20, 2021.*

**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.**

**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 Mozilla Firefox 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 headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- 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.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>

## Expectations

- Course Week: Our week will start on Tuesday and finish on Monday. Each weekly learning module will be posted by 9AM on Tuesday. Work must be submitted by Monday at 11:59 am unless otherwise specified (e.g. discussion board posts).
- 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 one time per week.
- Participation:  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, 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 semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- 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 weekly 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. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor 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 Objectives**

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

1. Identify and explain major theoretical frameworks used in sport psychology research.
2. Evaluate research in sport psychology (basic understanding).
3. Differentiate between intervention techniques to improve sport performance in order to apply knowledge.
4. Apply techniques to improve performance to self and others through practice and application to increase awareness and attention.
5. Conduct an applied research project utilizing a theoretical framework and a quasi-experimental design, or conduct a research paper on a topic within the course using peer reviewed journal articles.

## **Required Texts**

1. Williams, J.M. & Krane, V. (2015). Applied Sport Psychology: Personal Growth to Peak Performance (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.
2. Online postings on blackboard. There will be a few additional readings as well as videos.

## **Optional Texts**

1. Schumann, M. (2018). Game-Changing Coach: Mindful Strategies for Peak Performance. Bloomington, IN: iUniverse Publishing. **(Optional)**
2. Selk, J. (2009). 10-Minute Toughness. New York: McGraw-Hill. **(Optional)**
3. Williams, J.M. (2020). Stay Woke: A Meditation Guide for the Rest of Us. Boulder, CO: Sounds True **(Optional)**

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard online submission). Only students with emergencies, documented medical excuses, or University sponsored functions (discussed with the professor in advance) will be considered for exception. All written work must be typed and follow APA guidelines. It is recommended that students save copies of all submitted work.

### *Requirements:*

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points.

### *Assignments and/or Examinations*

**Papers:** (total of 20 points)

1. A journal article review paper 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. (worth 10 points)

2. There is also a paper in which you apply a technique to yourself from one of the optional books: ***Game-Changing Coach, 10-Minute Toughness, or Stay Woke.*** (worth 10 points)

**Discussion Board posts** (total of 20 points):

These should be about 250 words as a guideline.

There will be several online discussions about each module on Blackboard discussion forums. In addition, we have a partner project at the end of class that will contribute to this grade. You are expected to actively participate in these discussions. Discussions will run from Tuesday to Monday. Submit your initial post no later than Wednesday before midnight EST. Read your classmates' posts and reply to two of them over the discussion period. These should be between 250 and 400 words as a guideline. Do not wait till the end of the course week to post your replies to others as you stop the development of the discussion conversation. Late post will not count for a grade. Check the Course Documents for the discussion board grading rubric.

**Mindfulness Reflection Journal Posts** (total of 20 points):

This part of the class involves experiential exercises that are part of the weekly modules. Most of them involve listening to and practicing a mindfulness exercise. A few of the exercises may involve trying an experiential exercise with someone in your life. These journals are available under the Journals tab on the left hand bar on the blackboard home page. Click on Journals and you will see the listing of weeks. Click on the appropriate week and create a journal entry. Postings are due by 11:59 am EST Monday mornings after the weekly module. The weekly journal will be unavailable after that time. You cannot go back later and enter these journals.

**Exams** (total of 40 points):

Two exams will be administered, a midterm and a final and will be administered online. The format of the exams will be multiple choice, and/or short answer and essay response. Each exam is worth 20 points.

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor.

*Assignments and Grading Policy*

*Table of Assignments and Relative Grade Value (Points)*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Points</b>
Discussion Board Engagement	20 points
Papers (2 short papers – 10 pts each)	20 points
Mindfulness Reflection Journals	20 points

Mid-term Exam	20 points
Final Exam	20 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>

*Table of Points Converted to Letter Grade*

<b>Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Grade</b>
93-100	93-100%	A
90-92	90-92%	A-
87-89	87-89%	B+
83-86	83-86%	B
80-82	80-82%	B-
77-79	77-79%	C+
73-76	73-76%	C
70-72	70-72%	C-
60-69	60-69%	D
Below 60	0-59	F

### **Class Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Week 1</b>	History of Sport Psychology	W & K Ch. 1 videos	Meet during the synchronous time (7:20 pm Monday) to review syllabus and introduce yourself to the class Post your intro!	Intro to mindfulness
<b>Week 2</b>	Motor Skill Learning	W & K Ch 2 Videos	Experiential learning: Choose one and post responses on Discussion Board.	5-minute mindful breathing exercise
	Positive Approach to Coaching	W & K Ch 3 Videos		

<b>Week 3</b>	Motivation	W & K Ch 4 videos	Personal Motivation reflection	Body Scan exercise
	Self-fulfilling Prophecy	W & K Ch. 5	<b>Paper 1 Due</b>	Expectancy
<b>Week 4</b>	Leadership	W & K Ch 6 videos	Inspiring Leader reflection	Reflection on energy
	Group Cohesion	W & K Ch7 Videos		
<b>Week 5</b>	Communication	W & K Ch 8 Videos/reading	Discussion assignment - communication	Energy exercise
	Mindset, Attribution & Perception	Readings on Blackboard		
<b>Week 6</b>	Self-efficacy and Peak Performance  <b>Midterm Exam</b>	W&K Ch 9 Videos Posted reading	Watch TED talk on self-confidence	Writing prompt on self-efficacy; post in Mindfulness journals
<b>Week 7</b>	Goal Setting & Arousal Management	W & K Ch 11 & 12 Videos	Discussion assignment-Goal Setting Worksheet	Arousal & HR exercise
<b>Week 8</b>	Imagery & Visualization Cognitive Techniques	W & K CH 13 & Ch 14	<b>Paper 2 Due</b>	Imagery exercise
<b>Week 9</b>	Concentration  Choking	W & K Ch 15 & 16	Concentration grid exercise	Brief centering exercise
<b>Week 10</b>	Athletic Injury & Burnout	W & K Ch 22 & 23	Post responses to case on Discussion Board	Mindfulness for pain
<b>Week 11</b>	When to Refer and Athlete Gender, Diversity & Cultural Competence	W & K Ch 19 & 20	TED talk write up; post on Discussion Board	Mindfulness: Self care for Activists
<b>Week 12</b>	Exercise Psychology	W & K Ch 25  Partner Project set-up	Discussion assignment TED talk on Exercise	Mindfulness: Breathing

<b>Week 13</b>	Partner Project I		Discussion assignment	Mindfulness: Gratitude
<b>Week 14</b>	Collaborate meeting for exam review		See announcement for details	
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>EXAM # 2</b>	ONLINE	Complete course evaluation (online)	Mindfulness exercise Pre exam

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

#### *Academic Integrity*

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. This brief statement of the Honor Code is included here as a reminder of your commitment to abide by code this in your work in this course.

*To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.*

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/full-honor-code-document/>)
- 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.
- Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.
- Religious holidays: A list of religious holidays is available on the [University Life Calendar page](#). Any student whose religious observance conflicts with a scheduled course activity must contact the Instructor **at least 2 weeks in advance** of the conflict date in order to make alternative arrangements.
- Privacy: Instructors respect and protect the privacy of information related to individual students. Instructors will take every possible measure to protect the privacy of each student's submissions, scores and grades.
- 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)

#### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

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



## APPENDIX: Details About Assignments:

**Paper 1: Journal Article Review Paper:** 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>

### **Paper 2: Choose a technique and apply it to yourself**

Choose a **technique chapter** that you find particularly interesting or helpful in the Game-Changing Coach, Stay Woke or the 10 Minute Toughness book. I would like you to apply the techniques in the chapter to yourself in some area of performance over a period of a week or two (does not have to be sport, but can be). Write a 2-3 page summary of what you learned in terms of its usefulness, how it relates to class material from the textbook, and whether you would use the technique in the future.

### **Discussion post on TED talk:**

#### **TED talks:**

Choose one of the following TED talks related to sport:

1. Diana Nyad [Extreme swimming with the world's most dangerous jellyfish](#)
2. David Epstein [Are athletes really getting faster, better, stronger?](#)
3. Billie Jean King [This tennis icon paved the way for women in sports](#)
4. Gonzalo Vilariño [How Argentina's blind soccer team became champions](#)
5. John Wooden [The difference between winning and succeeding](#)
6. Aimee Mullins [Changing my legs - and my mindset](#)
7. Matthew Williams [Special Olympics let me be myself — a champion](#)

Watch the TED talk, and do a short write up discussing what you thought. Reflect on the talk. Did it change how you think about sport? How? What concepts did it make you think of from our readings? Did it challenge you or inspire you?

### **PARTNER PROJECTS DETAILS: - Ungraded**

#### *Mental Skills Training Plan*

The overall purpose of of this partner project is to collaboratively discuss and develop a plan for mental skills teaching/consulting with your partner. This is a “coaching “ session with each partner raising a question about team/sport/motivation, etc. The discussion for that week (between just the two of you) will center around techniques and suggestions for addressing the issue raised. The following week, you will switch roles. While this is not a graded project - it is an important skill to learn how to listen and coach mental skills. Each week you will journal about what you learned from the process.

\*\*\*A special thanks to Dr. Mary Schuman for providing much of the video content for this class.\*\*\*