

# PSYCH 260: SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY

## Spring, 2016

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The contents of this syllabus are subject to change.

### Course Overview:

This course will examine the dynamics of human behavior, internal processes, and group dynamics in the context of athletic competition, recreation, and pursuit of one's personal physical well-being goals. Students will gain a greater understanding of science, theory, and practice as collaborative tools for the domains of sport and exercise.

### Learning Goals:

- 1) To become knowledgeable about the field of Sports Psychology, and the distinctive role it plays in individual well-being, pursuit of one's potential (competitively and intrinsically), as well as community and societal contexts. Students will also gain a working knowledge of concepts, theories and applications developed within this field.
- 2) To appreciate the broad relevance of psychological research inquiry for advancing knowledge in the field of sports psychology and become adept at thinking critically about psychological phenomena in the workplace.
- 3) To develop skills and abilities in: a) scientifically investigating sports psychology phenomena, or b) applying some of the practitioner tools and strategies generated from research into an actual sports or individual development context.
- 4) To be able to appreciate and respect the two separate roles and needed cooperation between theory/scientists and applications/practitioners in the areas related to the psychology of sport and exercise, as well as the importance of philosophy and ethics within these domains.
- 5) To engage with various types of professionals from other disciplines that interface with sports psychology professionals; and gain insight into the collaborative partnerships that do and can happen to promote advancement of the science and practice of sports psychology.

### Required texts:

Weinberg, R.S., & Gould, D. (2015). *Foundations of sport and exercise psychology*. (6<sup>th</sup> edition). Human Kinetics Press, Champaign, IL. [referred to in syllabus as FSEP]

Additional articles may be assigned and distributed via Blackboard

## **Course Requirements:**

### **MIDTERM (15%) and FINAL EXAMS (20%)**

The format for exams may be in three possible parts: 1) essay questions, 2) multiple choice, and 3) in-class short answer. The content and structure will be discussed in greater depth in class.

As an additional part of your final exam, (and why it is weighted more) you will complete as a take home portion - a critical integrative analysis of three overarching framework questions distributed in class and discussed throughout the course.

### **DISCUSSION THREAD REACTIONS, ASSIGNMENTS & PARTICIPATION (30%):**

All students should respond to each discussion threads on the course readings when assigned. Inputs for your reactions should make use of applications of, and connections with the course readings, drawing on your past experiences, and applying your personal philosophical perspective on the multiple viewpoints. The electronic discussion should then feed into, and become extended within the classroom. Students may also periodically be required to complete exercises associated with the readings.

***NOTE: Blackboard Discussion Threads for TUES are due by MIDNIGHT on the Sunday before; while Threads for THURS are due by MIDNIGHT on Wed, the night before.***

Insight and learning come from an active and interactive process. When we arrive to class it is our responsibility to do our share in interacting by sharing our thoughts, ideas, and insights in a mature, constructive manner. PLEASE do not be selfish with your thoughts/insights, and conversely, be highly respectful and supportive of other individual's thoughts and ideas. You are expected to be extremely attentive and engaging when we have guest speakers (see separate grade component below).

### **INDIVIDUAL (or Group) COMPONENT (15%) – and PRESENTATION (8%):**

This segment is to allow you to engage in an activity that should address your personal objectives for the course, as well as the use of your creative self / group dynamic. You may work individually or as either pairs or trios. A one-page proposal of your “project” will be due by ***T Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>***.

Conduct a Research Study

Create an Educational Video

Complete a Film or Book Analyses (individual approach only; unless an extensive innovation is suggested)

Craft an innovative Social Media project

Concoct your own idea

In addition to completing this project you will be asked to present the learning impact / outcomes in a short powerpoint presentation – no more than five slides and five minutes. Presentations will take place in the final two weeks of the semester, and a few will take place during the final exam slot.

### **PARTICIPATION IN, & CONTRIBUTION TO GUEST SPEAKERS / COMMUNITY EVENTS (12%)**

You will be responsible for generating questions for the outside speakers (to be collected and provided to them in advance, and responsible to actively engage with them during their guest lecture / conversation). You are also expected to be HIGHLY ENGAGING with guest speakers to the course.

We will also be planning, developing and implementing (hopefully some time in April) an applied project to promote Sports & Exercise among Youths.

## Course Structure & Policies:

- 1) **Make-up exams:** To avoid receiving a zero for missing the midterm you must provide notification and verification. Notify me beforehand, or as soon as possible. Notification more than two (2) days after the exam is not acceptable. Please provide the appropriate documentation (Drs.' note, court order, etc.) without my requesting such documentation. Without this documentation you will be penalized by a reduction of 50% of your score. Mid-term make up exams will be re-scheduled on a weekday at 7:30AM.
- 2) **Cheating and plagiarism** will not be tolerated. ANY EVIDENCE OF CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM WILL RESULT IN A FAILURE IN THE COURSE (FINAL GRADE = F). Plagiarism is the intentional misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own. This includes such instances as quoting directly from a published work without giving the author credit (i.e. proper citation), inserting the author's words as your own, using or "borrowing" another student's work, buying a paper from a professional service, etc. The policy of the department and college is that the student must keep all note cards and rough drafts on a paper until given a grade for that course. The full college policy on this is in the Student Handbook. In the event of a suspected infraction – in fairness to your peers – it is my job to send the materials in question to the Dean's Office at which time you are given the chance to provide your perspective on the matter and challenge my judgment. In this case, you should continue coming to class and completing the work until a definitive judgment is made.
- 3) **Attendance** - Class attendance is expected. Class lectures and demonstrations will supplement the material in the text. In the event that you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the notes from a fellow student and reviewing them before you see me about questions concerning that material. Excessive absences (more than three) will result in deduction of two points per missed class from your final grade. You do NOT need to contact me, nor e-mail me in the event that you must miss a class. I assume you are a mature adult and can handle the responsibility of missing a class as outlined above.
- 4) **Late Assignments** - Assignments and projects may be handed in up to two days late (points deducted from the grade each day late) ONLY IF when handing in an assignment late you indicate the amount of days late on the front cover along with your signature. Assignments may not be handed in after the third day late. Please, do not ask me to deviate from this policy. I strongly encourage you NOT to rely on e-mail to submit assignments as this has led to problems in the past due to technology problems. If you must miss class drop off the assignment earlier, or send it with a classmate. In other words, there should be no valid excuse for a late assignment. I encourage you not to procrastinate such that last minute emergencies (e.g. computer down, ribbon broke, etc.) interfere with getting assignments in on time. Also, be sure to back up your files!
- 5) **Accommodations** Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact the Academic Support Center, located in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.
- 6) **Technology Use**  
All cell phones are to be turned off and put away during any class period. You may NOT surf the web, or use other programs / applications. Since it is a traditional course, any interfacing of social media during class or discussions will directly impact your participation grade.

7) The following **grading scale** will be used in the course. Your final grade will be determined by the Overall Grade posted on Blackboard based on the point allocation above with any extra credit (see policy #7 below) factored in. When transferring your Overall Grade posted on Blackboard to the FINAL GRADE filed with the Registrar, your grade **MAY be adjusted for excessive absences** (see policy #3).

A : 93-100	C : 73 – 76.9
A-: 90-92.9	C-: 70 – 72.9
B+: 87-89.9	D+: 67 – 69.9
B : 83-86.9	D : 63 – 66.9
B-: 80-82.9	D-: 60 – 62.9
C+: 77-79.9	F : Below 60

### 8) **Excuses and Communication**

As articulated in Policy #3, I operate on the assumption that you are mature adults, and therefore, the decision to attend class or not is up to you. You need not e-mail me if you must miss class. Be sure to work with a classmate to get any materials you miss and feel free to make an appointment or come by during office hours to go over material after you get the notes from a classmate. I understand and respect life stressors you may be faced with; but keep in mind that grades reflect essential standards and cannot be adjusted based on extenuating circumstances. Valid obstacles/setbacks may understandably inhibit your performance, but they are not able to influence the course and college standards. I cannot pardon work nor substitute/supplement extra credit other than that which has been built into the course and offered to all. In the spirit of fairness to ALL students I must be consistent with the policies laid out in this syllabus and ask you to be familiar with and respectful of them. If you are thinking of asking for an exception to my policies; first ask yourself – “Am I willing to ask my classmates to support my exception to the rules of the course?”

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**Note:** Course Schedule, Assignments, and Timelines are subject to change. The second half of schedule will almost surely be adjusted.

Week	TOPICS	READINGS / ASSIGNMENTS
Week One <b>TU 1/19</b>	Organization and Course Overview	
<b>THR 1/21</b>	Introduction to Sports Psychology, Children's Psychological Development and Sport Psychology	FSEP: Chpt 1. FSEP: Chpt. 22
Week Two <b>TU 1/26</b>	Children's Psychological Development and Sport Psychology Character Development & Good Sporting Behavior	<i>continued</i> FSEP: Chpt. 24
<b>THU 1/28</b>	Personality & Motivation	FSEP: Chpt. 2 & 3
Week Three <b>TU 2/2</b>	Arousal, Stress, and Anxiety Competition and Cooperation	FSEP: Chpt. 4 FSEP: Chpt. 5
<b>THR 2/4</b>	continued	
Week Four <b>TU 2/9</b>	Feedback, Reinforcement, Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation <b>Evening – PROSSER AUDITORIUM: Time TBD:</b> Please attend " <i>Baseball in the Time of Cholera</i> " with Mario Joseph	FSEP: Chpt. 6
<b>TH 2/11</b>	A Feedback Case Study and Chpt. 6 continued	
Week Five <b>TU 2/16</b>	Group & Team Dynamics; Cohesion	FSEP: Chpt. 7 & 8 <b><i>One-Page PROPOSAL Due!</i></b>
<b>THR 2/18</b>	continued	
Week Six <b>TU 2/23</b> <b>THR 2/25</b>	Leadership & Communication continued	FSEP: Chpt. 9 & 10
Week Seven <b>TU 3/1</b>	Leadership & Communication continued <b>COACHES PANEL: Coach MaryBeth Spirk (Women's Basketball), Coach John Byrne (Softball), &amp; Coach Paul Engelhardt (Baseball)</b>	

**THR 3/3                      Midterm Exam**

**Week of March 7 – 13 \*\*\*\*\*SPRING BREAK\*\*\*\*\***

Week Eight    ---    LOOK TO ATTEND EVENTS THIS WEEK ON THE THEME “*WOMEN IN ATHLETICS*” INCLUDING PRESENTATION BY JOETTA CLARK-DIGGS  
**WED. 3/16<sup>th</sup> at 8 – 9PM in Johnston Hall** (<http://www.joettasportsandbeyond.com/>)

**TU 3/15**                      Exercise and Psychological Well-Being                      FSEP: Chpt. 17  
Exercise Behavior & Adherence                      FSEP: Chpt. 18

**THR 3/17**                      Athletic Injuries and Psychology                      FSEP: Chpt. 19  
Tentative topic: Predictors of Athletic Injury Recovery  
Work on Individual/Group Project

Week Nine

**TU 3/22**                      Psychological Skills Training (PST) //  
Arousal Regulation & Concentration                      FSEP: Chpt. 11 through 16  
Imagery, Self Confidence, & Goal Setting  
**GUEST: Alan Heverly, Moravian College Tennis Coach & Moravian College Hall of Fame Tennis Athlete**

**THR 3/24**                      PST's Continued

Week Ten

**TU 3/29**                      Burnout and Overtraining                      FSEP: Chpt. 21

**THR 3/31**                      continued  
**GUEST: Nick Smull, Moravian College Athletic Trainer**

Week Eleven

**TU 4/5**                      Addictive and other Unhealthy Behaviors                      FSEP: Chpt. 20

**THR 4/7**                      **GUEST: Dr. Julie Amato, Sports Psychologist, Mind of the Athlete**

Week Twelve

**TU 4/12**                      Aggression in Sport                      FSEP: Chpt. 23

**THR 4/14**                      continued

Week Thirteen & Fourteen

**TU 4/19 - 26**                      Powerpoint Presentations & Community Events

**THR 4/28**                      Presentations, Discussion of Take Home Questions; Wrap up and Closure

**Final Exam, including the Take Home Questions and Final Powerpoint Presentations:  
FRI May 6th at 8am in our classroom**

## FINAL EXAM TAKE HOME QUESTIONS

Please submit your answers some time after the final class by email or hard copy no later than at the FINAL EXAM ON FRI., MAY 6<sup>th</sup>; although it can be submitted sooner by email.

Try to keep each question to two pages in length – double spaced, one inch margins, in New Times Roman 12 point font. Both answers should be submitted together in ONE file (.doc, .docx, or .pdf)

1) Briefly discuss why BOTH scientists and practitioners in the Sports Psychology discipline need to be educated and mindful of the dynamic relationship between NATURE and NURTURE when engaged in the study and practice (respectively) of the discipline. Use at least two specific examples to illustrate your understanding of the relationship.

2) Briefly discuss, what you feel is the optimal role (*for promoting the best balance between health, performance and well-being*) of Sports / Athletics within our American society compared to its status today? In other words, what major changes (no more than two specific changes) do you feel need to be promoted in order to elevate Sports / Athletics to being a catalyst for a healthier more optimal nation?

Taylor and Wilson (2005) explain that a coach-athlete relationship can be two interrelated dimensions known as 2x2 taxonomy. These two included prizewinning (with two sub dimensions of success and unsuccessful) and helpful and caring relationships (with two sub dimensions of effective and ineffective). Successful effective provides the best athletic relationship by providing performance success and personal growth. Ineffective and unsuccessful are psychologically negative because they provide conflict, disrespect, disappointment and frustration. Coaches need to understand that their behaviors have positive and negative outcomes for the athletes they coach.

Taylor, J. & Wilson, G., S. (2005). *Applying sport psychology: Four perspectives* (pp. 152-170). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Thomas, P., Murphy, S., & Hardy, L., (1999, March). Test of performance strategies: Development and preliminary validation of comprehensive measure of athletes' psychological skills. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 17, 697-711.

### **TSP Volume 19, Issue 1, March**

#### **Applied Research A Pragmatic Research Philosophy for Sport and Exercise Psychology**

A pragmatic research philosophy is introduced that embraces mixed-method approaches to applied research questions. With its origins in the work of Peirce (1984), James (1907), Dewey (1931), and contemporary support from Rorty (1982, 1990, 1991), pragmatism emphasizes the practical problems experienced by people, the research questions posited, and the consequences of inquiry. As a way to highlight applications of pragmatism in sport psychology, pragmatism is compared to constructivism and positivism in terms of philosophical underpinnings and methodological applications. The pragmatic researcher is sensitive to the social, historical, and political context from which inquiry begins and considers morality, ethics, and issues of social justice to be important throughout the research process. Pragmatists often use pluralistic methods during multiphase research projects. Exemplar design types are discussed that logically cohere to a pragmatic research philosophy.

Authors: [Peter R. Giacobbi Jr.](#), [Artur Poczwardowski](#), [Peter Hager](#)