Course Number and Prefix: SES 582
Title: Psychology for Sports Coaching (3 Credit Hours)
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Course Description: This course is designed to provide a thorough introduction to the key psychological factors influencing coaching effectiveness. Included will be information and strategies dealing with motivation, communication effectiveness, mental rehearsal, psychological skills training, and stress management. Emphasis will be on understanding and applying psychological principles as they related to sports coaching and athletic performance.

Course Objectives:
- Explain and describe how sport psychology can be used in sports coaching;
- Develop a psychological skills training program to improve the psychological skills of coaches and athletes;
- Demonstrate the ability to use existing scientific knowledge to explain how enhancing motivation, communication skills, and leadership skills help coaches stimulate improved sport performance and satisfaction among their athletes.
- Explain how existing scientific knowledge on stress management, use of mental imagery, coach-athlete relationship can be used to help coaches improve their experiences and the sport performances among their athletes.

National Standards for Sport Coaches
This course meets the following Performance-Based Standards for Sports Coaches (NASPE, 2006):
Domain 2: 11; Domain 4:18; and Domain 5: 24 & 26

Required Reading


Outline of Course Content
The content of this course will cover 3 modules. Each module contains several units and provides students’ with theoretical, empirically-based, and practical components directly related to psychological principles applicable to sports coaching.

Module I - Psychological Perspectives:
- Unit 1 - Philosophy of Coaching
- Unit 2 - Motivation
Module II - **Psychological Skills for Coaches:**
- Unit 4 - Leadership Skills
- Unit 5 - Communication Skills

Module III - **Psychological Skills for Coaching and Athletes:**
- Unit 6 - Introduction to Psychological Skills Training (PST)
- Unit 7 - Imagery
- Unit 8 - Stress/Anxiety Management
- Unit 9 - Attention and Concentration
- Unit 10 - Self-Confidence and Goal-Setting Skills
- Unit 11 - Implementing Psychological Skills Training

Course Requirements:

**Time Commitment**
Although this course is entirely online it is NOT self-paced. You are expected to participate in various ways each week according to the due dates noted in the Course Schedule.

**Critical Thinking**
The major purposes of this course are to provide the rationale, skills and knowledge with which to improve coaching practice through developing and implementing effective coaching behaviors and practices.

The following are some of the **essential factors** that constitute evidence of critical thinking, and indeed will inform an assessment of participants’ performance in all areas of the course.

- Accurate and precise understanding of course topics: Posing questions that address the basic information contained in the readings (e.g., identify key beliefs and values espoused by the author). Demonstrate a sound understanding of the topics in lab based coaching practices will meet the requirements to receive a grade of “C” in this course.

- Engagement with assigned readings, videos, and class discussions. How do the readings/observations/teaching assignments/discussions connect with the topic at hand (e.g., incorporate and model effective coaching tenants in teaching assignments)? In addition, for the associated readings, students must pose questions that are textually implicit, thereby requiring analysis and interpretation of specific parts of the readings and text. For example, “What led the author to conclude that these specific strategies and techniques constitute effective teaching?” In terms of critical thinking, students must focus on understanding the reasons underlying someone’s particular beliefs or values related to coaching, including their own. Both understanding and engagement are required for “B” level work.

- “Deep thinking” concerning the intersections of the material: How do one’s observations and experiences connect with class materials? Do these observations and teaching experiences confirm or contradict what is read and discussed? For instance, are there any emerging theoretical or practical tools for evaluating effective coaching? For the associated readings, another level of questioning is appropriate here; that is, much more open-ended questions that frequently go beyond the readings. Such questions are intended to provoke a discussion of an abstract idea or issue, or perhaps an ethical dilemma. For example, is it even ethical that coaches teach values and that the programs choose which values to teach? The student must now ask whether the evidence or reasons offered in support of beliefs and values is adequate and justified. Further, students must state and defend their own
views, supported by reasons and evidence. Success with “deep thinking” as well as accurate observation and teaching episodes are required for “A” level work.

**Method of Evaluation**

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<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Board/Journal Postings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Workbooks</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>PST Program</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Discussions/Journal Postings**

Students will be expected to participate in the course through the discussion boards and a reflective journal on the topics introduced and associated with the psychology of sports coaching. As graduate students, individuals are expected to show initiative and leadership throughout the course, particularly through involvement in the discussion board and reflective journal addressing topics as they relate to the psychology of sports and coaching. Students will be required to post in 10 discussion board topics related to course content or respond to other students’ discussion topics as well as post 10 reflective journal entries (one per Unit). Each post (discussion board and reflective journal) will be worth 5 points for a total of 100 points weighted as 10% of course grade.

**Unit Workbooks:** For each unit 1-10, students will be required to complete content-related “workbooks” which consist of exercises intended as an opportunity to demonstrate understanding and ability to apply course material. Each unit “workbook” will include self-reflection and application of that unit material to past, current or hypothetical sports coaching situations. A total of ten (10) “workbooks” will be completed – each of which will be worth 2.5% of course grade.

**Midterm and Final Exams:** Students will be tested on their understanding of the course content from the first two modules of the course (Units 1-5) for the midterm. The final exam will test student understanding and application of the course content from the third module (Units 6-11). Each exam will incorporate a variety of question formats to maximize the student ability to effectively demonstrate their understanding of the covered material.

**PST (Psychological Skills Training) Program:** It is imperative that coaches effectively and appropriately apply scientific knowledge when designing psychological skills training programs for themselves, individual athletes, and/or sports teams. Based on the course material provided, students will be asked to develop a psychological skills training program for either a past, current or hypothetical coaching situation. Specific instructions for this assignment will be provided at the beginning of the course. The PST Program will be worth 100 points and weighted as 25% of the final course grade.

**Grading**

- A = 100-90%
- B = 89.99-80%
- C= 79.99-70%
- D= 69.99-60%
- F= below 59.99%

**Student Expectations/Course Policies:**

Although we do our utmost to provide you with valuable knowledge and experiences, little can be gained unless you are making a concerted and noticeable effort to be a self-motivated, responsible, and active learner. In an effort to guide the goal of responsibility, motivation and participation, we offer the following as class operating guidelines:

1. **Participate with effort.** This asks that you are prepared and put forth a solid and consistent effort in class. This includes giving input and feedback during lectures, discussions, and group work as well as producing graduate level work. Do what you have to do to be ready.
2. **Take initiative for yourself.** Most of your learning will be the result of your own initiative, not the prodding of instructors or rewards (or threats) of grades. You alone must be responsible for creating value for yourself in this course. How well you do will in a large part be the result of how well you are able to carry on without direct supervision. Taking initiative means asking questions when material, concepts, or expectations are not clear. (It is OK not to know, but it not OK to continue not knowing.) It also means doing reading and work outside of class. For this class, reading beyond the assignment is necessary to achieve markedly superior work.

3. **Help others.** The ultimate success and reward for each of you depends on your ability to help and support your classmates in their learning and in their attempts to be responsible for their own learning. This also includes creating a safe learning environment; that is, one in which the confidentiality of one another’s sharing is respected, where complaints are directed only to someone (and received only by someone) who can do something about the situation, and where differences of opinion and healthy debate are prized.

**UNC's Policies** - *UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student’s website, Student Handbook link [http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html](http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html)

**Disability Support Services:** Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. (updated per DSS 8-24-09)

**Honor Code.** All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community’s academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

**NOTES**

- You are responsible for all tasks and for being prepared for class activities
- The instructor reserves the right to penalize late work, and refuse to accept late work.
- UNC’s policies and recommendations for students’ rights and responsibilities will be followed.