

COURSE OUTLINE

EXRS 6400 - Exercise and Sport Psychology Spring 2008

I. Course Information

- A. Location - Room 203 Ramsey
- B. Class Days & Time - Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 1:25 to 2:15

II. Instructor Information

- A. Instructor - Patrick J. O'Connor
- B. Office Location - Room 115-L Ramsey - Department of Exercise Science
- C. Office Hours - Friday 2:15 to 3:15 or by appointment
- D. Office Phone - 542-4382
- E. Email: poconnor@uga.edu

III. Educational Objectives

1. To understand the role of research methods in exercise and sport psychology, and use research findings and/or psychological theories to reach logical conclusions.
2. To demonstrate basic knowledge about key content areas of exercise and sport psychology and be able to apply this knowledge appropriately in practical settings.
3. To understand and apply ethical principles, especially those adopted by the American Psychological Association.
4. To be aware of individual differences among people with regard to the psychological aspects of exercise and sport.
5. To demonstrate an ability to think, speak and write effectively.

IV. Course Content:

History of the field of exercise and sport psychology.
Professional and ethical issues relevant to the practice of sport psychology.
Scientific methods used to understand and evaluate psychological aspects of sport performance.
Psychological interventions for performance enhancement (e.g., hypnosis, goal setting, imagery).
Personality and sport success.
Pre-competitive states and athletic performance.
Cognitive, perceptual and pain processing during athletic performance.
Psychological monitoring of athletes to optimize training and performance.
Effects of exercise on anxiety, depression, self-esteem, sleep and anger.
Cognitive and neurobiological mechanisms underlying psychological consequences of exercise and physical activity.
Eating disorders and athletes.

V. Readings and Lecture Notes

- A. Lecture notes are available from Athens Blueprint located at 269 W. Dougherty (corner of Prince and Pulaski). The phone number is 548-0656.
- B. The book, Exercise Psychology, by Buckworth and Dishman is available at the UGA bookstore or Amazon.com.

VI. Evaluation Procedures for EXRS 4400:

A. Exams (60% of total grade). A total of four 50 minute exams will be given. Each exam will be worth 15% of your overall grade. The questions on the midterm exams will come primarily from information provided in lectures but about 10% will come from the course readings. The type of questions will be primarily multiple choice but may include true-false, fill-in, and short answer. An item analysis of the results of each exam question will be performed and poor questions (e.g., one that >90% of the students miss) will be deleted under the assumption that the question was inappropriate, unclear or too difficult. None of the exams, including the fourth exam (i.e., the final exam given during finals week) will be comprehensive. Exam 1 will be on Friday February 1. Exam 2 will be on Wednesday February 27. Exam 3 will be on Monday March 31. The final exam will be given during the scheduled final exam period – Wednesday April 30 from noon to 3 pm.

B. Extra credit – 1% extra credit will be given for completion of an online course evaluation

C. Participation in seminar and critiques (20% of total grade). Each student will lead two discussions of a peer-reviewed, data-based research paper on a sport psychology topic. The paper must be approved by the instructor. Each student will provide a copy of their papers to the instructor and other students at least one week before it is discussed. Each student will provide a one page critique of all the papers discussed in seminar. The critique should describe the major strengths and major limitations of the paper in order of importance (i.e., from most important strength to least and from most important limitation to weaknesses that are less important).

a. **Tentative seminar schedule:**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Discussion Leader</u>	<u>Paper</u>
January 11 if 7	O'Connor	
January 18 if 6		

D. Term paper (20% of total grade).

Step 1. Identify an exercise or sport psychology related question: (i) that you are interested in knowing the answer to, and (ii) about which research results have been published. If there is little or no published research on the topic that interests you then you will need to find another topic.

Since it is common for people to be interested in a specific exercise and health topic about which little or no research has been conducted, the best first step is to learn if there is any published research on a **GENERAL** topic of interest. You will do this by searching on a general topic in either *Google Scholar* (<http://www.google.com/>) or one of the following major medical or psychological science data bases: Medical = *Medline* or *PubMed Psychological = PsycInfo or PsycArticles*. PubMed is found at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi>. The other data bases are available at the University's Galileo webpage: <http://www.galileo.peachnet.edu/> *PsycINFO and PsycArticles* are found in Galileo under "Social Science" and consists of psychology research articles. *Medline* is found in Galileo under "Medicine and Health" and contains research articles related to medicine.

Go to these data bases and enter a minimum of two terms. One term should be either "exercise" or "physical activity" or "fitness" or "inactivity" or a specific sport or activity such as soccer or volleyball. The other term should be your general topic of interest.

When you see the results of your search you will find that many of the published research articles have a very narrow focus. This fact will be useful to you because it will narrow the scope of your assignment. To get full credit you will need to find a specific question about which there are 4-8 research papers that provided an answer. For instance, a specific question (e.g., "Does visualization improve free throw shooting?") is much

better than a more general question (e.g., “Does visualization improve athletic performance?”) which itself is much better than the following vague question - (“Do psychological factors improve sports performance?”). It is expected that some topics will yield lots of articles from one data base but zero articles from the other data bases. For example, articles on the topic “Does visualization improve free throw shooting?” are expected to be found in the PsycINFO data base (but not in the Medline data base) because the question primarily concerns psychology not medicine.

You may obtain and read review articles in order to put your research topic into proper perspective, however, your focus should be on data-based articles and NOT on review articles. Thus, you need to know what is meant by the term data-based article. Data based articles contain data. That is, it is mentioned in the article that animals or subjects were tested, methods of testing are described, and tables or figures of the data are presented. Review articles summarize a host of data based articles. Review articles can often be identified because they have the word “review” “summary” or “meta-analysis” in the title. If you do come across a review article on a topic of interest, you may benefit by reading it and finding data based articles in the reference list that the authors of the review paper read and used to address your question.

After you have searched the data bases and found the titles and abstracts of articles that seem generally interesting, you next need narrow your topic. Specifically, you are to find 4-8 articles that answer a specific question. For this assignment you will need to provide copies of each article you lead in the seminar to the other seminar participants one week prior to your presentation. This is done either by making a copy of journal articles that are physically housed in the library or by downloading the article from the web. Many science and medical journals make copies of articles available over the web for a fee. Since UGA pays this fee you may be able to obtain the articles you need via campus computers without physically going into the library. A great source for obtaining journal articles electronically at UGA is at the following web site: <http://www.libs.uga.edu/ejournals/> Many articles cannot be obtained electronically and if you are interested in any of these articles you will need to go to the library to make a copy.

Even if you find only one article on your topic of interest via computer searching, there is a good chance that ultimately you will be able to find two more articles because each paper has a reference list. Look in the reference list at the end of the article in order to attempt to identify additional related articles. Related articles are often listed in the reference list. It is estimated that you will be able to find only ~50% of all the published articles on a topic using an electronic data base because of the limitations in the electronic data bases (e.g., people use different words in the titles of the articles).

Step 2. Once you think that you have identified an appropriate topic, inform the instructor as to the question that you want to pursue. Get feedback from the instructor as to whether the question is adequate. The instructor will either OK the question, tell you to change it and make it more specific, or he will tell you to find a new question. Continue the process until your topic is approved. The topic needs to be approved by January 23rd.

Step 3. Submit a typed summary on the last day of class that includes: (1) your question in a question format, (2) a succinct summary and evaluation of the papers you reviewed to answer your question (10 pages maximum), (3) a conclusion (i.e., answer to the question) and (4) a reference list of the articles you used (the references can be listed in any format). Grading is based on substance and style, and your critical evaluation of the articles is emphasized.

Student-Faculty Communication Sheet

Please read the six statements below. After each statement write your initials on the line to indicate that you have read the statement.

At the bottom, sign and date the form. You will not be permitted to take the first exam until you have turned this page into your instructor.

1. Daily attendance is not required and does not factor directly into my grade. However, I recognize that failing to attend may negatively impact on my course grade because I will miss the material that is discussed during lectures. _____

2. I am required to take the midterms (i.e., Friday February 1, Wednesday February 27, Monday March 31) and the final (Wednesday April 30) on the scheduled dates at the scheduled times. Midterm exams will not be administered early and will be administered late only for personal emergencies such as a major illness or a death in the family. Students will receive zero credit on midterm exams missed for other reasons such as working at a part time job or travel associated with personal (e.g., job interviews) or other university associated responsibilities (e.g., athletics) unless approved with the instructor during the first two weeks of classes. _____

3. I have reviewed my schedule for the semester and found no current or pending conflicts that would prevent me from taking the exams on the scheduled dates at the scheduled times. _____

4. I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others. I recognize that I must complete all work for this course (i.e., exams and extra credit) without unauthorized assistance from others. Examples of unauthorized assistance include copying from another student or allowing another person to copy from me. Another example is completing work for another or allowing another to complete work for me. As a member of the academic community I recognize that I have a responsibility for knowing the policy and procedures on academic honesty. These procedures can be obtained from the Vice President for Academic Affairs or viewed at the following web site:
http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm_____

5. I am aware that Dr. O'Connor has office hours from 2:15 to 3:15 on Fridays, and that I can get assistance from him regarding the course during these hours or at other times by making an appointment with him or contacting him via email at poconnor@uga.edu _____

6. I understand that the exams are the property of Dr. O'Connor. I understand that if I take an exam out of the class room I will be given an F on that exam. I can review my exam in Dr. O'Connor's office during his office hours. _____

I have read and agree to the above policies:

Signature

Date

Student-Faculty Communication Sheet

Please read the six statements below. After each statement write your initials on the line to indicate that you have read the statement.

Student copy – do not hand in

1. Daily attendance is not required and does not factor directly into my grade. However, I recognize that failing to attend may negatively impact on my course grade because I will miss the material that is discussed during lectures. _____

2. I am required to take the midterms (i.e., Friday February 1, Wednesday February 27, Monday March 31) and the final (Wednesday April 30) on the scheduled dates at the scheduled times. Midterm exams will not be administered early and will be administered late only for personal emergencies such as a major illness or a death in the family. Students will receive zero credit on midterm exams missed for other reasons such as working at a part time job or travel associated with personal (e.g., job interviews) or other university associated responsibilities (e.g., athletics) unless approved with the instructor during the first two weeks of classes. _____

3. I have reviewed my schedule for the semester and found no current or pending conflicts that would prevent me from taking the exams on the scheduled dates at the scheduled times. _____

4. I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others. I recognize that I must complete all work for this course (i.e., exams and extra credit) without unauthorized assistance from others. Examples of unauthorized assistance include copying from another student or allowing another person to copy from me. Another example is completing work for another or allowing another to complete work for me. As a member of the academic community I recognize that I have a responsibility for knowing the policy and procedures on academic honesty. These procedures can be obtained from the Vice President for Academic Affairs or viewed at the following web site:
http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm_____

5. I am aware that Dr. O'Connor has office hours from 2:15 to 3:15 on Fridays, and that I can get assistance from him regarding the course during these hours or at other times by making an appointment with him or contacting him via email at poconnor@uga.edu _____

6. I understand that the exams are the property of Dr. O'Connor. I understand that if I take an exam out of the class room I will be given an F on that exam. I can review my exam in Dr. O'Connor's office during his office hours. _____

I have read and agree to the above policies:

Signature

Date