

MASTER OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY WITH SPECIALIZATION IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

NCU's Sport Psychology specialization helps you develop the skills and personal and professional growth needed for sport psychology by critically analyzing a broad range of theories and practical knowledge. An integrated learning experience, you will have the opportunity to engage in field work and supervision.

This psychology specialization may appeal to individuals who would like to work with athletes and other high-performance people on the psychological aspects of their performance. This program may also appeal to those who are already working in a Mental Health/Counseling environment and are looking to broaden their clientele and engage in non-clinical work. Other current professionals working in the athletic field, including Coaches, Physical Therapists, Strength and Conditioning Coaches, and Athletic Administrators may be able to enhance their marketability and advance their careers by having this secondary degree and expertise in sport psychology. Additionally, individuals working in other high-performance fields such as Law Enforcement, Military, and Executive Coaching, may benefit from this type of educational training.

A unique aspect of the Northcentral program is the fieldwork opportunity. Students have the option to participate in one or two fieldwork experiences. This is a critical component of our program as the students will have the opportunity to work with athletes, coaches, and teams on the mental component of their respective sports. Students will be under the supervision of an NCU faculty member throughout the fieldwork experience as they start applying the concepts learned through their coursework to real-world situations.

The Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) is the leading organization for sport psychology practitioners and offers a Certified Mental Performance Coach (CMPC) certification to qualified individuals who meet both educational and applied practice requirements. Our program at Northcentral complies with the educational knowledge areas as outlined by the Certification Council of AASP and will help prepare students for the certification exam. Additionally, the fieldwork and mentorship hours will count towards the student's preparation for AASP CMPC certification.

Note on Licensure: NCU's psychology programs are not licensure programs and do not prepare an individual to become a licensed psychology or counseling professional, however, this specialization complies with the eight knowledge areas as required for the Certification Council for the Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC). In addition, during the optional field work experiences you will have the opportunity to complete hours that can count towards the mentored experienced required for the CMPC certification.

MA PSYCHOLOGY WITH SPECIALIZATION IN SPORT PSYCHOLOGY COURSES

PSY-5101SP - Foundations of Sport Psychology

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course, you will study theoretical foundations and empirical research of psychological factors related to performance and participation in athletic settings. You will learn about the physical, affective, and cognitive behaviors associated with sport participation and will also examine the psychological theories and research related to sport performance. You will be introduced to performance enhancement techniques and strategies. You will also learn about injury in sports, team dynamics, youth sport and athletic coaching. The topics covered in this course are designed to increase your understanding of the psychological makeup of athletes and how psychological factors influence involvement and performance in sport.

PSY-5103SP - Professional Ethics in Sport Psychology

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course you will be introduced to different ethical principles, decision-making models and ethical guidelines, and professional issues for the field of sport psychology. You will review the guidelines presented by AASP and other professional organizations. You will explore common ethical challenges and situations that arise when working in the field and critically analyze research articles that are pertinent to ethical issues in sport psychology. You will explore sport psychology as a professional identity.

PSY-5104 - Theories of Human Development and Functioning

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course, the student will study human development from conception through late adulthood. Students will engage in a variety of activities and applications through which they will explore, understand, and reflect upon key theories and concepts related to physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development across the lifespan. Students will develop an appreciation of the impact of the cross-disciplinary importance of the study of human development.

PSY-5107SP - Research Methods in Sport Psychology

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course you will gain an overview of various qualitative and quantitative research methods, learn about basic concepts in descriptive and inferential statistics, parametric and non-parametric statistical tests, and be exposed to different types of experimental research methodologies. You will learn about tests and measurements. You will develop critical-thinking skills and an understanding of the methodological tools necessary for functioning as an applied sport psychology consultant.

PSY-6907 – Kinesiology

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

This course will introduce you to each of the major biophysical sub-disciplines of kinesiology— anatomy, biomechanics, exercise physiology, and motor control. You will gain insight into the integrated study of human movement and learn how to apply this knowledge to human performance and physical activity across the lifespan.

PSY-6908 - Psychopathology in Sport

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course, you will be familiarized with the major classifications of psychopathology and their impact upon individual performance. You will be introduced to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5). Emphasis will be placed on assessing for mental health conditions that require referrals to appropriate treating professionals. The course will focus on recognizing the classification of mood and anxiety disorders, impulse control disorders, eating disorders, sleep disorders, organic brain disorders, thought disorders, personality disorders, and substance abuse disorders. You will become familiar with counseling strategies in psychology.

PSY-6909 - Applied Sport Psychology

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course, you will be exposed to a variety of performance enhancement techniques used in sport psychology to help athletes. You will gain competence in performance enhancement skills and techniques for use in working with athletes in a variety of diverse settings while also developing the foundation for your own personal consulting style. You will explore the process of becoming an applied practitioner in the field and begin creating a binder of performance enhancement activities to be used in your fieldwork experience and in professional practice.

PSY-6910 - Counseling Skills for Sport Psychology

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course, you will be provided with a fundamental overview of the helping relationship provided within the context of applied sport psychology. You will gain a broad understanding of the philosophic bases of helping processes: counseling theories and their application, basic and advanced helping skills, consultation theories and their application, client and helper self-understanding and self-development, and facilitation of client change.

PSY-6911 - Psychological Foundations of Human Behavior

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course you will be exposed to an overview of cognitive, social and affective bases of behavior in psychology. You will be familiarized with theories of personality, individual differences, problem solving and decision-making skills, and human lifespan development. You will then be required to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical strategies and interventions found in positive psychology that enhance meaning and well-being in individuals.

PSY-6912 - Diversity, Culture and Society

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course, you will be given an overview of historical and current topics relevant to the understanding of diversity and culture in sport. You will be exposed to various sociological theories and how diversity issues have impacted the development of sport. You will gain an understanding of the complex nature of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, race, age, and disability as it relates to current sport practices. You will also be exposed to culturally-competent counseling and consulting strategies for facilitating acceptance of diversity within individual and team sports. You will learn to challenge the idea of sport as an innocent leisure pursuit, to consider its social, cultural, political and economic significance, and its rise to significance, in contemporary society.

Select 1 course from the following three:

PSY-6913 - Team Building and Group Dynamics

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course you will learn how to facilitate team building, through interactive experiences, in an effective way. You will learn ways of working with a team in order to build necessary skills including cohesion, communication, trust, and respect. Emphasis will be placed on activities, skills and strategies that will enable students to effectively work with teams and groups of many kinds. You will gain an understanding of group behavior and dynamics and will be able to use this knowledge with diverse populations. You will learn to recognize ethical issues in relation to working with groups and will examine their interpersonal and professional style through hands-on application of ideas.

PSY-6914 - Psychology of Athletic Injury

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

In this course you will learn how to work with an injured athlete as part of an integrated approach to sport rehabilitation. Using mental training strategies for rehabilitation, this course will address the principles of Sport Psychology, which will assist injured athletes, as well as those working with injured athletes, in identifying variables responsible for hindering and enhancing performance. The complex physical and psychological nature of injuries will be discussed, including theoretical foundations of behaviors, psychological intervention of performance problems, and psychosocial strategies/ mental health issues related to injury.

PSY-6915 - Field Work I

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 12)

In this internship placement you will gain applied experience in sport psychology consulting. The internship-placement aspect will require you to intern at a site working with athletes and applying knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. Under the supervision of a faculty member, you will be provided with weekly one-on-one meetings to discuss your experiences, challenges, and ethical issues. The supervision will provide you with a supportive environment for discussions exploring issues which pertain to the fieldwork experience.

Select 1 course from the following two:

PSY-6916 - Field Work II

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 12)

In this internship placement you will gain applied experience in sport psychology consulting. The internship-placement aspect will require you to intern at a site working with athletes and applying knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. Under the supervision of a faculty member, you will be provided with weekly one-on-one meetings to discuss your experiences, challenges, and ethical issues. The supervision will provide you with a supportive environment for discussions exploring issues which pertain to the fieldwork experience.

PSY-6917 - Capstone in Sport Psychology

(Semester Credits: 3 Weeks: 8)

The Capstone course in Sport Psychology is an opportunity to incorporate your knowledge and understanding of educational concepts and processes that have been learned throughout the program. You will demonstrate a range of competencies, reflecting the knowledge, critical thinking, sensitivity to ethics and diversity, and appreciation of research that has been acquired during the program. The final product for the course will include a written document summarizing this work.