Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology, M.S., Ph.D.

Degree Offered

• Master of Science
• Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

Graduate studies within the College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences can lead to a Ph.D. in Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology (SEP). Students admitted into the SEP doctoral program may also complete a master’s degree in clinical mental health counseling.

The sport, exercise and performance psychology program has procedures and requirements which are specific to the program. In general, they include the following:

• Selection of an advisor (The program faculty, in consultation with the student, assigns an advisor to assist in planning the student’s program.)

• Selection of a plan of studies committee (The student, in consultation with the advisor, selects a plan of studies committee. This committee assists the students in developing a plan of studies which will include relevant coursework, evaluation of competencies, and an estimated time frame for its completion.)

• Plan of studies approval (The plan of studies committee will meet with the student by March 1st of the first year in the program to ratify the plan. The approved plan of studies functions as the document against which completion of program requirements is assessed.)

• Completion of required coursework (The student completes the coursework required by the plan of studies. The number of credit hours required and the time required to complete the coursework varies, but a minimum of three years [six semesters] of coursework is normally required for students entering with a master’s degree.)

• Research benchmarks (students must complete all research benchmarks within the time frame identified by their plan of studies committee. These include the submission of a data-based article for publication to a peer-reviewed journal; submission of a second article for publication to a peer-reviewed journal or present a data-based study at a national conference)

• Qualifying Project (A qualifying research project, approved by the advisor, that informs the dissertation will be completed and submitted for publication. This project will be presented to a majority of the faculty within the program and approved to count for the comprehensive exam requirements).

• Prospectus defense (Following the successful completion of the qualifying project, the student will write and defend a prospectus for the dissertation. The prospectus will be evaluated by the student’s dissertation committee. The dissertation committee is often identical to the student’s plan of studies committee, though additions or changes may be made to the plan of studies committee in order to constitute the dissertation committee.)

• Admission to candidacy (Once the qualifying project and prospectus defense are successfully completed, the student is admitted to candidacy. Admission to candidacy is permission to proceed with dissertation research as described in the prospectus.)

• Defense of the dissertation (The student will write and orally defend an original research project as described in the prospectus. Successful defense will be determined by the quality of the written document as well as by the quality of the oral defense in a forum open to the academic community. All members of the student’s dissertation committee must be present for the dissertation defense. Successful defense of the dissertation with submission to a professional journal results in the awarding of the degree. The dissertation must be successfully defended within five years of admission to candidacy.)

• During the Ph.D. program, students are required to submit multiple works to peer-reviewed journals and national conferences.

FACULTY

PROFESSORS

• Jack Watson - Ph.D. (Florida State University) 
  Interim Dean

• Samuel Zizzi - Ed.D. (West Virginia University) 
  Associate Dean, Research

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

• Peter Giacobbi - Ph.D. (University of Tennessee)

• Damien Clement - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

• Johannes Raabe - Ph.D. (University of Tennessee)
• Dana Voelker - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)

PROFESSORS EMERITI

• Dana D. Brooks
• Edward Etzel, Jr.
• Andrew Ostrow

TEACHING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

• Scott Barnicle - Ph.D. (University of Idaho)

Program Coordinator

Admissions

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Application procedures for the Ph.D. in Sport Exercise and Performance Psychology must submit their online admission application to the Office of Admissions website to be processed by the December 1 deadline for fall admission.

Students must also submit an official undergraduate transcript(s) and application fee (online). Supplemental required materials (GRE scores, resume, goal statement, and three letters of recommendation) must also be uploaded and submitted online. Once all the materials have been received, the admission application will be ready for the screening committee to review after the deadline date. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Prospective students should not apply to the Master’s Program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at this time. They should wait to apply once they are accepted into the PhD program. International applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their admission application and supplemental materials one month in advance of all deadlines to allow extra time for processing.

CRITERIA

The following preferred criteria are used to evaluate applicants for interview and admission to the doctoral program:

• Grade point average of 3.5 for Bachelor's degree and a 3.5 for Master's degree
• Graduate Record Examination score - Verbal, Quantitative, and Writing percentiles above fifty percent. (Student files will be reviewed with scores lower than fifty percent.)
• Three letters of recommendation (submitted online - NO HARD COPIES), to be submitted electronically through the application process
• Official transcripts should be submitted to the Office of Admissions as instructed in the online application
• Professional goal statement (one-two page paper on professional backgrounds, goals, and reasons for pursuing doctoral degree at WVU) to be submitted electronically through the application process
• Curriculum vitae to be submitted electronically through the application process
• Personal interview, if invited

MS Major Code: 6887
PhD Major Code: 6845

For specific information on the following program please see the link to the right:

• Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology, M.S.

For specific information on the following program please see the link to the right:

• Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology, Ph.D.

COURSES

SEP 615. Research Methodology in Physical Education. 3 Hours.
PR: Graduate standing or consent. Application of historical, descriptive, and experimental research strategies and designs to physical education. (Also listed as PET 615.).

SEP 620. Individual Interaction in Sport and Physical Activity. 3 Hours.
PR: SEP 615. Designed to acquaint the student with the reciprocal relationships between sport and physical activity and the societies and culture from which sport emerges.
SEP 640. Sport and Performance Psychology. 3 Hours.
Sport psychological theory, research, and practice related to specific populations in sport and other performance settings. Emphasis on examining and critiquing selected areas of research in sport psychology and applying this knowledge in a given discipline.

SEP 647. Supervision Sport Psychology. 1-6 Hours.
Supervision of graduate-level applied sport psychology consultation.

SEP 686. Internship in Sport and Exercise Psychology. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Graduate student status in SEP PhD Program. Sport behavior supervised experiencing various aspects of sport psychology teaching, research, and/or practice at on-campus or off-campus sites.

SEP 690. Teaching Practicum. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Supervised practice in college teaching of sport studies. Note: This course is intended to insure that graduate assistants are adequately prepared and supervised when they are given college teaching responsibility. It also provides a mechanism for students not on assistantships to gain teaching experience. (Grading will be P/F.).

SEP 691. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

SEP 692. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed study, reading, and/or research.

SEP 693. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

SEP 694. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

SEP 695. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

SEP 696. Graduate Seminar. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Each graduate student will present at least one seminar to the assembled faculty and graduate student body of his or her program.

SEP 697. Research. 1-9 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading may be S/U.).

SEP 698. Thesis or Dissertation. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. This is an optional course for programs that wish to provide formal supervision during the writing of student reports (698), or dissertations (798). Grading is normal.

SEP 699. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use the University's facilities, and participate in its academic and cultural programs. Note: Graduate students who are not actively involved in coursework or research are entitled, through enrollment in their department's 699/799 Graduate Colloquium to consult with graduate faculty, participate in both formal and informal academic activities sponsored by their program, and retain all of the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is P/F; colloquium credit may not be counted against credit requirements for masters programs. Registration for one credit of 699/799 graduate colloquium satisfies the University requirement of registration in the semester in which graduation occurs.

SEP 719. Social and Psychological Foundations of Performance. 3 Hours.
PR: SEP 640. An examination of how and why behavior and performance are affected by psychological factors and interactions with others in performance settings. An emphasis is placed upon individual and group performance within sport and other evaluative settings.

SEP 720. Psychological Sport Performance Enhancement. 3 Hours.
An in-depth examination of commonly used interventions designed to maximize the performance of individual athletes and teams.

SEP 721. Counseling College Student-Athletes. 3 Hours.
An exploration of psycho-social aspects of college student-athletes' life experiences and common counseling concerns to include individual and systems intervention used to assist this at-risk group.

SEP 722. Exercise and Health Psychology. 3 Hours.
Major theories and techniques of health behavior change and health behavior assessment especially with respect to exercise.

SEP 723. Psychological Aspects of Sport Injury. 3 Hours.
Explores the psychosocial antecedents to athletic injury and factors related to the psychological experience and treatment of the injured athlete.

SEP 726. Advanced Measurement and Research in Physical Education. 3 Hours.
PR: SS 615. Extension and application of basic concepts of measurement and statistical evaluation to physical education.

SEP 727. Ethical/Legal Issues in Sport Psychology. 3 Hours.
Graduate-level seminar on ethical and legal aspects of research, teaching and practice in sport and exercise psychology.
SEP 765. Dissertation and Thesis Seminar. 3 Hours.
PR: Graduate standing and PET 745 or consent. Critical analysis of the graduate student's dissertation or research proposal. (Required for all doctoral students.).

SEP 790. Teaching Practicum. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Supervised practice in college teaching of sport studies. Note: This course is intended to insure that graduate assistants are adequately prepared and supervised when they are given college teaching responsibility. It will also present a mechanism for students not on assistantships to gain teaching experience. (Grading will be S/U.).

SEP 791. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

SEP 792. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed study, reading, and/or research.

SEP 793. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

SEP 795. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

SEP 796. Graduate Seminar. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Each graduate student will present at least one seminar to the assembled faculty and graduate student body of his or her program.

SEP 797. Research. 1-9 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading may be S/U.).