

Practical application of psychological strategies

1. Main objective of the teaching unit

The module contributes to the fulfillment of the educational goals of the Euromental project, by providing the knowledge and the competences in applying psychological strategies and mental skills training in relation to both performance and well-being. Traditional mental skills techniques such as goal setting, imagery, self-talk, and relaxation will be presented. In addition, awareness (mindfulness) and acceptance approaches from the third wave of cognitive behavioural therapies will be presented and practised.

At the end of the class, the student will have to demonstrate the acquisition of:

- 1) Knowledge about and ability to explain concepts in the fields of performance psychology and sports psychology,
- 2) Knowledge and understanding of different methods for training mental skills,
- 3) Knowledge and understanding about how sports psychological theories and methods can be used hands-on in sports and health promotion activities,
- 4) Ability to explain mental phenomena and processes that affect the individual's sports or exercise performance,
- 5) Ability to critically analyse theories in the area of performance psychology,
- 6) Ability to describe and analyse evidence-based mental techniques, methods, and theories linked mental skills training.

2. Contents

The course deals with how different behaviours and cognitive factors relate to the development of the individual athlete and how different cognitive processes (e.g. performance anxiety, nervousness, stress) affect the performance as well as the motivation to engage in sports and health promotion activities. The course is based on theories especially performance psychology and theories on motivation, personality, and stress. Different mental techniques and forms of mental training are discussed and presented in forms of preparation and stress reducers along with ways to make individuals develop suitable activity/exercise habits and routines to maintain or improve their psychological health.

3. Recommended bibliography

Weinberg, R. S., & Gould, D. (2019). Foundations of sport and exercise psychology, 7E. Human kinetics.

Burton, D., & Raedeke, T. D. (2008). Sport psychology for coaches. Human Kinetics.

Scientific articles and books to be defined.

4. Teaching methods

Instruction is in the form of lectures, group work, literature seminars, and demonstrations of methods in mental training. Attendance is not compulsory but strongly recommended.

5. Evaluation methods

The exam is composed of two pieces:

- 1) Written exam in form of a mental plan for performance preparation.
- 2) Oral presentation of the mental plan and discussion with peers how it can be implemented.

The weight of each piece will be as following:

70% written exam; 30% oral presentation