**University of Florida**
**College of Health and Human Performance Syllabus**
**Course:** Coaching Character Literacy in Sports
**Course number:** SPM 6905
**Semester:** Spring 2026
**Delivery Format:** E-Learning (Web Based)

---

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Pete Paciorek, *Ed.D. Leadership & Character Education, University of Missouri, St. Louis*
*M.S. Sport Management, University of Florida*
*M.A. Organizational Communication and Leadership, California State University, Los Angeles*
**Room Number:** Fully Online Course
**Phone Number:** 941-779-5978 cell
**Email Address:** paciorek@ufl.edu
**Office Hours:** Through Zoom or Email (Zoom sessions live with students interested in mentoring or seeking additional support have been effective)
**Preferred Course Communications (e.g. email, cell phone):** Email is the best way to reach me.

---

**Course Website:** *Canvas - https://elearning.ufl.edu*

**Course Communication:** *For any general course inquiries, please post your question in the "General Course Questions" discussion link on Canvas. For all other inquiries, please send your questions to paciorek@ufl.edu and include the course prefix and number in the email.*

**Required Books:** Paciorek, P.S. (2017). *Character Loves Company-Defining the Teachable Moments in Sports: A Guidebook to Character Literacy Development.* Create Space Press. (Immediately purchase the physical book on Amazon.com rather than the Kindle version).

Paciorek, P.S.; Shields, D.L.; Berkowitz, M.W. (2026). *PRIMED to Compete: Coaching for Character.* Routledge, New York, NY. (Immediately purchase the physical book on Amazon.com).

## PURPOSE AND OUTCOME

### Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to provide future sport management professionals (SMP's) and coaches with two evidence-based effective frameworks for character development in youth and adolescent athletes. These two character development frameworks: **Character Literacy development (CLD)** and **PRIMED to Compete (P2C)** are rooted in decades of empirical research in holistic youth development. Together, these two frameworks provide a foundation for the "Doing" and "Being" requisite for coaching for holistic, long-term character development. This course provides a building block approach to empower students to create their own playbook from which to positively impact the long-term character development of youth through coaching and leading.

**The Need** (Module 1): There are close to 2.5 million volunteer coaches of youth and amateur sports throughout the country, and many more paid coaches through travel ball, club, and AAU programs. These coaches may have a strong acumen for the X's and O's of their sport but, alarmingly, the overwhelming majority are not equipped with an understanding and appreciation for their true role as coach/mentor of character.

**The "Doing"** (Module 2): Character Literacy Development (**CLD**) provides a proven gameplan for coaching for character. What is Character Literacy? **CL** is a concept that I coined to demonstrate proof that one has learned the requisite character values in order to understand how to morally and ethically respond to a given situation. More importantly, an advanced-level of **CL** will assure that one's actions are in accordance with these learned character values. **CLD** posits a progressively developmental process for youth character enrichment and unfoldment that needs to be *deliberately* and *intentionally* emphasized. The character values of **CLD** need to be formulaically taught as a vital life skills component to developing our youth with an equal emphasis to "reading literacy" and "health literacy."

**The "Being"** (Module 3)**:** The **PRIMED** framework has been taught and practiced by countless educators and sport coaches around the world. **PRIMED** is not a curriculum, but rather an approach that coaches and youth mentors can utilize pre & post practice or competitions to show up and "be" their best for their players and teams. PRIMED is an easy to recall mnemonic device and tool that is rooted in 40 years of evidence-based research around "What Works in Character Education" in schools with youth. Students will learn to make **PRIMED** their own in applying it not just to their coaching of sport, but also in their leadership in all areas of their lives.

**Student Application** (Module 4): The last few weeks of the course, students will be empowered to apply their learning of these two key character development frameworks **(CLD & P2C)** in collaboration with a local recreation center or school of their choice to take the theory and apply it to the youth sport development landscape.

## Relation to Program Outcomes

Course Objectives and/or Goals
After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Investigate, analyze, and consider how they can contribute to building stronger character in youth through the vehicle of sport.
2. Understand the **Character Literacy Development (CLD)** and key character values/strengths that the research shows to be the most important at the various ages and levels in sport.
3. Gain valuable insights into proven strategies for cultivating the noted specific character values of **CLD** in students during each age range through examples shared in the text and other readings and resources.
4. Investigate and analyze how coaches in youth and amateur sports can better leverage their position as "coach" to positively impact the character of their players and teams.
5. Examine and critique the **PRIMED to Compete (P2C)** framework rooted in 40+ years of evidence-based research in "What Works in Character Education" in youth through the vehicle of sport.
6. Practicing applying **PRIMED** as a lens, students will synthesize prior knowledge of their own youth and amateur athletic experience in order to analyze and draw creative comparisons to youth today.

7. Evaluate and demonstrate knowledge of the six design principles of **PRIMED** and how students/sport management professionals can utilize the framework to build executive functioning and help them prepare to mentor and support the flourishing of youth, as well as maintain life balance and perspective.
8. Analyze, formulate, reflect, and justify various perspectives that measure real issues in coaching and parenting in sports related to character development.
9. Demonstrate effective written and verbal communication such as critical thinking, deductive reasoning, and decision-making pertaining to the ever-evolving field of athletic coaching and leadership.
10. Design, construct, and facilitate an impactful character development **(CLD)** program with a youth recreation center or school applying course theories in a creative and collaborative way with the center's coaches/mentors.

## Instructional Methods
*What is expected of you?*

## Course Format
This course is being taught completely online through the Canvas learning management system. Students are also expected to view all of the course lectures, participate in weekly class discussion boards (YellowDig), and complete all assignments through the course website. Students should adhere to the university policies regarding academic misconduct (i.e., plagiarism, cheating, or other dishonest representations of academic work). Students in violation of these policies will be subject to the university's academic misconduct procedures.

Your active participation fosters a rich course experience for you and your peers that facilitates overall mastery of the course objectives.

## Course Materials and Technology
For technical support for this class, please contact the UF Help Desk at:
- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2

https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

## Assignments/Grading

| Requirement | Due date | Points or % of final grade (% must sum to 100%) |
|---|---|---|
| Yellow Dig Engage Community Forum | Refer to Course Syllabus & Canvas Overview | 100 Points for the Entire Term |
| Syllabus Quiz | | 10 Points |
| 2 Character Surveys | | 2 X 20 Points = 40 Points Total |
| 2 Formal Assessments | | 2 X 100 Points = 200 Points Total |

| 2 Comprehensive Quizzes (50 pts each) + 1 Final Quiz (100 pts) | | 2 X 50 Points + 1 X 100 = 200 Points Total |
|---|---|---|
| **Final Project:** Community Mini-CLD Program, Community Presentation/Talk | | 200 Points |
| **Total:** | | **750 Points** |

**Final Project Practicum**: Valued at over 25% of final grade, all students must complete the 4-week final project practicum demonstrating their understanding and applications of the relevant theories and frameworks from the course. The students in the course have a choice of two options for the final project:

1. Conduct a 4-week mini-**character literacy development (CLD)** program at a local youth recreation center (i.e. Boys & Girls Club, School, Special Olympics, YMCA, etc.). Each student will need to pick a minimum of 4 character values that progressively build off of each other as the focal point of emphasis for each week. Due Week 4, students choosing this option will need to have submitted the name of the youth recreation center at which they will be volunteering. Follow the final project schedule closely on Canvas to meet all deadlines for this Final Project. Be sure to intentionally plan what character values from the CLC textbook, and what interactive drills and activities you will be using to help drive home your message each week. At the culmination of your 3 weeks, a formal letter or email from the director of the center confirming that you spent a total of 5 or more hours on site during the 3 weeks must be submitted. Lastly, each student will need to provide a two-page summary of your experience that is submitted to Canvas as a pdf. (More thorough details are provided in Canvas under Final Assignment).

2. Deliver a <u>live, in-person, recorded</u> 30 minute live in-person community presentation on the topic of character in sports at a local youth recreation center (i.e. School, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, local Rotary Club, etc.). This can be a presentation for parents, officials, coaches, young student-athletes, or all of the above. For this option, the student will need to deliver a 30 minute PowerPoint (or Prezi) presentation that includes the 5 progressive stages of **CLD** and the need for coaches nation-wide to be more deliberate and intentional about emphasizing and modeling character development with their teams. At the end of week 4, all students will need to have submitted the name of the youth recreation center at which they will be presenting and an acknowledgement from the director of the recreation center via email. Follow the final project schedule closely on Canvas to meet all deadlines for this Final Project. Your presentation must be recorded (video & audio) and turned in upon culmination of your presentation (for all of your classmates to view and learn from), along with a two-page summary submitted as a pdf of your experience presenting at the center or school. A formal letter or email from the director of the center confirming that you organized, prepared, and delivered an effective community presentation. (More thorough details are provided in Canvas under Final Assignment).

**Yellow Dig Engage:** Important Part of Overall Grade : 100 points

Yellow Dig Engage is a community forum that will begin the first week of class and continue until the end of the semester. I want this class to be a course where we are all learning from each other in an organic way. When the course readings, videos, and other content connect to something you have seen or heard in the media or in your daily life and it sparks your interest, share it in Yellow Dig Engage. You can post videos, quotes, links, etc. This is a big part of this course, so make it a priority. The "Do's & Do Not's" for Yellow Dig Engage are spelled out further in the assignment on Canvas. Keep in mind that your posts should be contributing to a healthy learning community for everyone. While Yellow Dig Engage is primarily to

connect the dots of the content of class to relevance in society today, it could be a place to gain clarity on a certain assignment from either the instructor or your fellow classmates. From a point value standpoint, each week you are engaging with the class community and working upward to 100% contribution for that week (max of 10 points per week). If you forget to engage in YellowDig one week, there are a few buffer weeks to get to your maximum accumulation of 100 points for the term. There is specific time allotted on certain weeks during the term for Yellow Dig Engage. However, this is a forum that students should engage in on a regular basis to learn from each other. See the assignment on Canvas for more specific details.

Point system used (i.e., how course points translate into letter grades).

| Points earned | 694+ | 693-671 | 670-656 | 655-619 | 618-596 | 595-581 | 580-544 | 543-521 | 520-506 | 505-469 | 468-446 | 445- |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Letter Grade | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F |

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. A grade of C counts toward a graduate degree only if an equal number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with an A. In addition, the Bachelor of Health Science Program does not use C-grades.

You must include the letter grade to grade point conversion table below. Letter grade to grade point conversions are fixed by UF and cannot be changed.

| Letter Grade | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F | WF | I | NG | S-U |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade Points | 4.0 | 3.67 | 3.33 | 3.0 | 2.67 | 2.33 | 2.0 | 1.67 | 1.33 | 1.0 | 0.67 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

For greater detail on the meaning of letter grades and university policies related to them, see the Registrar's Grade Policy regulations at:
http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

## Exam Policy--Policy Related to Make up Exams or Other Work
Please note: Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

## Policy Related to Required Class Attendance
All faculty are bound by the UF policy for excused absences. For information regarding the UF Attendance Policy see the Registrar website for additional details: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS, ROLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

## Communication Guidelines

## Academic Integrity

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University of Florida policy on academic integrity.  As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge:

"**We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity**."

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

 **"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."**

It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code.  Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated.  Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action.  For additional information regarding Academic Integrity, please see Student Conduct and Honor Code or the Graduate Student Website for additional details:
https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/
http://gradschool.ufl.edu/students/introduction.html
Please remember cheating, lying, misrepresentation, or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and inexcusable behavior.

## Online Faculty Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by  completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at  https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you require classroom accommodation because of a disability, you must register with the Dean of Students Office http://www.dso.ufl.edu within the first week of class. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation of accommodations to you, which you then give to me as the instructor of the course to receive accommodations. Please make sure you provide this letter to me by the end of the second week of the course. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to assist students in their coursework.

## Counseling and Student Health

Students sometimes experience stress from academic expectations and/or personal and interpersonal issues that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing issues that have the potential to or are already negatively affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and/or seek help through University resources available to you.
- The Counseling and Wellness Center 352-392-1575 offers a variety of support services such as psychological assessment and intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit their web site for more information: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu. On line and in person assistance is available.

- You Matter We Care website: http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/. If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, you can reach out for help through the You Matter We Care website, which is staffed by Dean of Students and Counseling Center personnel.
- The Student Health Care Center at Shands is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site at: https://shcc.ufl.edu/
- Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:
  Alachua County Crisis Center (352) 264-6789
  http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to come in and talk with us. We have helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance. You are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

## Inclusive Learning Environment
Public health and health professions are based on the belief in human dignity and on respect for the individual. As we share our personal beliefs inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace The University of Florida's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads, "The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act." If you have questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities for inclusive learning environment, please see your instructor or refer to the Office of Multicultural & Diversity Affairs website: www.multicultural.ufl.edu

| Module | Week | Assignment | Due Date | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Module 1**<br>**What Does the Research say?**<br>In this module, students will take a deep look at the research in youth and amateur sport pertaining to participation, coaching dynamics and character development. The focus of this module will be to further examine what we see reflected in today's society: the effect that pressure and excessive training at too young of an age is having on our youth and the communities in which they belong.<br>*Yellow Dig has a cumulative running max total to 100 points throughout the term. Each week, you should seek to earn the max total of 10 points for that week through your posts and responses.<br>Be sure to purchase both books on Amazon asap. With the PRIMED book, you may be able to get it at a discount at the book publishers website at Routledge.com and enter the book title. | 1 | Syllabus/Intro Quiz/Assigned Readings | January 18 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10 |
| | 2 | Top character values: UF – IRB Survey #1 | January 22 by 11:59pm (EST) | 20 |
| | 2 | Assigned Readings/YellowDig Engage: Prompt on What Interests You About Course | Post early each week to spark topics<br>January 25 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100*<br>100 total through out term |
| | 3 | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | February 1 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |
| | 3 | Bill Shumard - Formal Assessment Assignment #1 | February 1 by 11:59pm (EST) | 100 |
| Module | Week | Assignment | Due Date | Points |
| **Module 2–The "Doing" of Character Development**<br><br>Module 2 will cover all 5 Levels of Character Literacy Development (CLD): Foundational Level, Post-Foundational Level, Mid-Level, Advancing Level, and Advanced Mastery Level. This module will also analyze the overtime extra topics that provide additional concepts pertaining to character literacy development. | 4 | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage: Apply Readings to News in Sports | February 8 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |
| | 5 | Email confirmation of Final Project from Youth Facility Director/School Director | February 15 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/200 |
| | 5 | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | February 15 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |
| | 6 | Ranking character values (UF - IRB Study Survey #2) | February 19 by 11:59pm (EST) | 20 |

| Module | | Week | Assignment | Due Date | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | February 22 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |
| | | 7 | Comprehensive Quiz #1 | March 1 by 11:59pm (EST) | 50 |
| | | | Mini Development Program/Presentation/Chalk Talk Tentative Early Outline | March 1 by 11:59pm (EST) | 40/200 |
| **Module** | | **Week** | **Assignment** | **Due Date** | **Points** |
| **Module 3–The "Being" of Character Development**<br><br>In Module 3 (PRIMED 2 Compete: Coaching for Character) students will learn about, examine, critique, and apply the PRIMED framework, rooted in 40+ years of evidence-based research in What Works in Character Education (WWCE) of youth and begin to utilize PRIMED as a daily framework to help center and guide their approach (pre and post practice and competitions) to coaching for holistic long-term character. | | 8 | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | March 8 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |
| | | 9 | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | March 13 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |

| Module | | Week | Assignment | Due | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Comprehensive Quiz #2 | March 13 by 11:59pm (EST) | 50 |
| | | 10 | Spring Break | | |
| **Module** | | **Week** | **Assignment** | **Due** | **Points** |
| **Module 4**<br><br>Application Phase of Course:<br><br>In this module, students will apply their knowledge and understanding of Character Literacy Development (CLD) and | | 11 | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | March 29 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |
| | | | Mini-CLD Program/Presentation Progress Check #1 | March 29 by 11:59pm (EST) | 30/200 |

application of the PRIMED in explaining and teaching the character values discussed in the course with students, coaches, and parents during their weekly visits to local recreation centers/schools. With either option, they should be working on which of the 25 character values they are most passionate about, as well as the activities that they are considering discussing. Students should keep in mind that in a 30 minute recorded presentation (option #2 only), they will not have time to focus on more than 4-5 CVs in total. The presentation option will need to be recorded and shared with their classmates to learn from. The PRIMED for Coaching for Character framework will also provide a systematic approach that students can use pre and post of their mini-CLD workshops (Option #1) with youth, as well as for their presentation preparation, if they choose final project option #2.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **12** | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | April 5 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 |
| | Mini-CLD Program/Presentation Progress Check #2 | April 5 by 11:59pm (EST) | 30/200 |
| **13** | Assigned readings/YellowDig Engage Community Forum | April 12 by 11:59pm (EST) | 10/100 100 points max |
| | Mini-CLD Program/Presentation Progress Check #3 | April 12 by 11:59pm (EST) | 30/200 |
| | Delivery of Mini CLD program or Presentation + Video | Day(s) of choice | Final Project worth 200 pts |
| **14** | Formal Assessment #2: Combining the "Doing" of CLD with the "Being" of PRIMED 2 Compete | April 19 by 11:59pm (EST) | 100 |
| | Final Project at Youth Facility/School Director Sign-off Confirmation of Completion of either option 1 or 2 | April 19 by 11:59pm (EST) | 20 |
| | Delivery of Mini CLD program or Presentation + Video Submission for Option #2 | April 19 by 11:59pm (EST) | Final Project worth 200 pts |
| **15** | Final Comprehensive Quiz | April 26 by 11:59pm (EST) | 100 |
| | Final Project Reflection Paper | April 26 by 11:59pm (EST) | 40/200 |
| | **TOTAL COURSE POINTS** | | **750** |