

GST 421 – Peak Performance: Pumping the mind, body and spirit
Summer 2006

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Course description:

This seminar is designed to integrate basic theoretical and applied principles from various disciplines in the pursuit of achieving peak performance. The emphasis of this class will be on learning about peak performance and its various meanings from multiple disciplines (business, education, exercise science, nutrition, and psychology), as well as discussing and developing individualized programs and training techniques to help achieve peak performance.

Course goals:

Following completion of this course, the students will be able:

1. To determine what is peak performance.
2. To identify characteristics associated with peak performers.
3. To learn skills to help achieve peak performance.
4. To develop individualized program to achieve peak performance.
5. To understand how to create an environment to help self and others achieve peak performance.

Course content

1. Introduction to peak performance
 - a. Maslow's Self-Actualization
 - b. Csikszentmihalyi's Flow
 - c. Transcendent experience/Zen philosophy
2. Characteristics of peak performers
 - a. Garfield's peak performers
 - b. Covey's 7 habits (8 habits)
 - c. Discuss StrengthsQuest
 - d. Mission statements
3. Techniques to improve peak performance (body)
 - a. Nutrition
 - b. Exercise
 - c. Sleep
4. Techniques to improve peak performance (mind)
 - a. Relaxation
 - b. Visualization
 - c. Goal setting
 - d. Positive thinking

Evaluation

Assignments	15%
Discussion Groups	15%
Finding Flow Assignment – Module 1	15%
Exercise and Nutrition Assignment(s) – Module 3	10%
Online debate – End of Class	10%
Book Review and Presentation – End of Class	15%
Exams/Quizzes (4)	20%

These assignments will be discussed in more detail as the semester goes along. However, I just want to give you a feel for what may be asked in the discussion section.

Discussion: The discussion board on Blackboard will serve as our medium for class discussion. Throughout the course, I will be posting questions related to the readings and exercises that I ask you to complete. You will be expected to post one “primary” response for each question that I post. The “primary” response is your own thoughts about the question. You will also be asked to post a “secondary” response for some questions. A secondary response is a response to a classmate’s “primary” response. Your responses should be well thought out. Try to avoid being reactionary and I will expect that you will respect all persons involved in the course with your comments.

Required texts:

Clifton, Donald O., & Anderson, Edward (2002). *StrengthsQuest: Discover and develop your strengths in academics, career and beyond*. Washington, DC: The Gallup Organization.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. (1997). *Finding flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life*. New York: Basic Books.

Supplementary materials:

Other readings as deemed necessary.

Academic Honor Code:

Just a reminder, the Elon Academic Honor Code applies to all activities and assignments in this course. Students will refrain from cheating, lying, plagiarizing, facilitating the dishonesty of others, and stealing or vandalism. Violations of the honor code will be reported to the appropriate administrative office for action. If you would like more detail about the Academic Honor Code, you can review the policy at the following Web address: <http://www.elon.edu/students/handbook/acahoncode.asp>. Any student who is uncertain about how his/her behavior might relate to the academic honor code should contact me.