

Course Title: Beginning Tennis, Spring, 2004

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Office Hours: MW 11:30-12:00; 3:30-4 TTH 9:30-10; 2:30-3:30

COURSE DESIGN: This is a course for those students who have never received formal instruction in the fundamentals of the game. It is designed to introduce basic tennis skills and knowledge. Those who already play tennis are strongly discouraged from taking this course as their presence is very disconcerting to beginning students. If you choose to take this course even though you are experienced you will be expected to help the beginners. Also, you will be expected to improve your own skills more independently of the instructor.

COURSE GOALS:

1. The student will develop the basic form and mechanics of the beginning forehand and backhand groundstrokes, and the beginning slice serve;
2. The student will demonstrate an understanding of scoring and rules and basic match play in singles; depending on class progress, doubles play may be introduced
3. The student will demonstrate an understanding of tennis conventions and courtesies.
4. The student will demonstrate a consistent understanding of two important principles for effective tennis play: 1) the ball must go over the net and 2) full effort must be given to the return of EVERY ball

Physical activities for this class include mild to vigorous movement in very hot weather. Whenever there is medical condition which would cause you undue risk or prevent your full participation in such activity, it is your responsibility to inform me immediately. If you have a chronic condition which limits your potential for fulfilling the requirements for this class, have your physician FAX (770/784-4677) a letter stating what you cannot do and) recommendations for physical activities you can use to achieve the objectives of this course as listed above.

COURSE TEXT: There is no text for this course. Resource material will be given in class handouts

METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Written Work:

100 points Written test I Thursday, Feb. 5

100 points Written test II Thursday, Feb. 26

Skills—Each of these skills tests may be taken more than one time (weather and other conditions permitting). The score used to calculate your final grade will be the highest score you make on any one of the tests. The rest of your scores will be eliminated.

Forehand and Backhand Groundstroke Test: The test on which your score is higher will be counted twice (after you've taken both groundstroke tests).

Hit four consecutive forehands/backhands, demonstrating good form, from near your baseline to between the baseline and the fence on the other side of the net. Good form on the groundstroke is: **1) racket back before the ball bounces on your side of the net, 2) contact the ball at waist height or lower, 3) transfer weight from back foot to forward foot, 4) racket moves from below the ball to above the ball, 5) full followthrough.** One legal hit = 70 points; two consecutive legal hits = 80; three consecutive hits = 90; four consecutive legal hits = **100**. Taking a groundstroke test with zero legal hits earns 40 points.

Singles Play

You will begin playing singles games and tie-breaks prior to written test two. You must demonstrate that you know how to keep score in singles, and that you know the rules, conventions, and courtesies of the singles game. You can earn **100 points** toward your final grade **prior to written test two**.

After written test two, you will continue playing singles games and tie-breaks. In addition to demonstrating that you know how to keep score in singles, and that you know the rules, conventions, and courtesies of the singles game, you will demonstrate that you understand the basic strategy in singles: return EVERY shot OVER THE NET, keep the opponent BEHIND HIS/HER BASELINE, hit CROSSCOURT most of the time, serve CONSISTENTLY (do NOT double fault). You can earn **200 points** toward your final grade **after written test two**.

Poopy Serve Test

Legally serve three points. If the first serve is faulted, a second serve is awarded. Serve the first point to the deuce court; second point to the ad court, third point to the court of your choice. If all three first serves are good, you score **100** points. If you use any second serve(s) but serve three good serves, you score 90 points. If you serve two good serves, your score is 80; if you serve one good serve, your score is 70. Taking the test, but serving zero good serves earns 40 points.

Big Serve Form Test

While you are playing singles, you will serve your first serve in good form. You may serve a "poopy" second serve, since you must not double fault. You will be graded on the form of your first serve. **Excellent form is: 1) contacting the ball at full extension and within your chimney, 2) moving your weight UP to the ball as you contact the ball and moving toward the net only AFTER ball contact, 3) powerful wrist pronation, 4) full followthrough** You may fault some of your first serves. At least 30% should land in the proper service court. You can earn **100 points** for excellent form and at least 30% consistency.

Extra Credit

Practice—Each practice entry is worth 3 points. If you turn in all 14 entries, you will receive 50 points. Homework must be emailed to me via Learnlink (Penny England) prior to 4 p.m each Friday **beginning Friday, Jan. 16.** For full credit, the entry must follow this

format **exactly**:

1. excepting the first entry, copy the previous practice, add your new entry to it
2. each practice entry must include the following information:
 - a. day of practice
 - b. date of practice
 - c. time practice started
 - d. time practice ended
 - e. skills practiced
 - f. name of practice partner
 - g. Honor Pledge (simply type your name at the bottom of the entry to

affirm

that you have reported honestly)

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION You are expected to actively participate and contribute during each class meeting. Learning and playing tennis requires a partner. Be a supportive partner as well as improve your own game. Use class time effectively and help others benefit from this time. Demonstrate that you are making full effort to utilize the techniques and advice of your instructor. Show that you understand the principles of good form and mechanics. Consistently practice appropriate conventions and courtesies of playing tennis. Practice the safety rules of tennis. When I speak to you individually about any of these I am suggesting that you be more attentive to this aspect of your class participation and contribution grade.

Throughout the semester, there may be “unannounced” quizzes and one minute papers. These ungraded quizzes will be practice for the two written tests. Occasionally, you will write one minute (on a note card) at the beginning or end of class. I will ask you to give your thoughts about a matter or question. If you are absent when these are given, your participation grade is negatively affected, in addition to penalty for any overcut.

ABSENCE POLICY

Missing more than two classes will result in reduction in your final grade for each overcut.

three absences = 50 point penalty (possible, but difficult to make A)
four absences = 150 point penalty (possible, but difficult to make B)
five absences = 250 point penalty (possible, but difficult to make C)
more than five absences = student will most likely make an F

It is important that you email me BEFORE any absence occurs. If you email me after an absence occurs, do so before the next class meeting. If LearnLink is down, you may leave a voice message (4-8350) instead. These emails or messages are only informative. They do not excuse any absence. Religious holidays are excused provided

you inform me in writing of your observance of the religious holiday **in advance** of the holiday.

If you believe you have justification for overcuts to be excused you must meet with me. I will want to know how you have used each of your previous absences. At that meeting we will decide whether make up work or penalty reduction is justified. **COME TO CLASS!** If you do not feel well enough to physically participate, there are other ways you can contribute so that your grade will not be penalized. There are **NO MAKE UPS FOR WRITTEN WORK OR SKILLS TESTS** without medical documentation except in very unusual circumstances. I cannot legally adapt grading standards without such documentation.

NOTE: POINTS CAN BE DEDUCTED/ADDED TO YOUR FINAL GRADE, DEPENDING ON YOUR PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

GRADING SCALE: no plus/minus scale

A = 900-1000

B = 800-890

C = 700-790

D = 600-690

F = < 600

DRESS CODE: Athletic shorts, shirts and tennis shoes are required. Shoes must be smooth-soled, must not make marks on the court, and must be approved by the instructor. Running shoes, street clothes, and jeans are not permitted. It is important that you dress so you will be comfortable regardless of weather conditions. Shirts must be worn at all times. Failure to wear required attire will result in an absence.

EQUIPMENT: Each student must provide a tennis racquet and writing implement **EACH CLASS MEETING**. Failure to bring these to class will result in an absence. Sunglasses, sunscreen, and water bottle are also suggested.

ATTENDANCE: **I will call roll at the appointed class hour.** If you are late, I will have marked an X in your box. Indicate your presence by placing **THE DATE** in a "tardy box." Three (3) tardies will be equivalent to one absence. I advise you to check the roll sheet each day to be sure I have recorded your presence in class.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE: All students are required to read and sign the Agreement to Participate Form prior to the first day of activity.

THE OXFORD COLLEGE STUDENT HONOR CODE: Article 2.A. "A student's signature on a paper or test submitted for credit shall indicate he or she has neither given nor received unauthorized information on the work, nor has condoned the giving or receiving of unauthorized information by others."

On the practical tests in this class you are expected to perform independently of those around you. Simply by taking the practical test, you are indicating that you need no prompting from others and are performing independently.

Web Site: www.emory.edu/OXFORD/CLASS/England/beginningtennis.htm You will find material that is pertinent for learning the skills required for this class. Read it carefully and watch the video demonstrations often. You can use the scroll bars under each video to capture the movement in slow motion. Please let me know if you have questions.

