

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF RECREATION, HEALTH, AND TOURISM**

Sport, Culture, and Society (SPMT 304)
Tuesday/Thursday 5:55-7:10
Fall, 2009

Course Description:

This course provides a sociological analysis of sports in American society. Using sociological constructs, this course will critically examine key components of sports and sport-related behaviors as they occur in social and cultural contexts.

Course Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of how sociological theories and perspectives can be used to examine the role that sport plays within American society.
- To examine sports critically and become familiar with the issues that are currently present within American sporting culture.
- To study the recent research findings and theories from the sociology of sport that provide evidence regarding the benefits and drawbacks of sport participation.

Course Schedule:

Topic	Date □	Assigned Readings
Sociology of Sport and Defining Sport	January 21	Chapter 1; Guttman “Play, Games, Contests, Sports”
Producing Knowledge About Sport	January 26	Chapters 2; Sugden and Tomlinson “Theory and Method for a Critical Sociology of Sport”
History of Sport	January 28-February 9 February 9: 1st Case Study DUE	Chapter 3; Guttman “From Ritual to Record”; Stoddart “Sport, Cultural Imperialism, and Colonial Response in the British Empire.”
Sports and Socialization	February 11-16	Chapter 4; Messner “Masculinities and Athletic Careers”; Wacquant “A Scientifically Savage Practice”
Sports and Children	February 18-23	Chapter 5; Messner “Boyhood and the Promise of

		Sport”; Fine “Sport, Culture, and Preadolescence”
Mid-Term Examination I	February 25	Chapters 1-5 and associated readings
Deviant Behavior and Sports	March 2	Chapter 6; Denham “Sports Illustrated, War on Drugs...”
Violence In Sports	March 4 March 4: 2nd Case Study DUE	Chapter 7; Elias “An Essay on Sport and Violence”
SPRING BREAK March 8-14		
Gender and Sports	March 16-18	Chapter 8; Theberge “Gender and Sport”; Hargreaves “Race, Politics, and Gender...”
Race and Sports	March 23-25	Chapter 9 “Hoop Dreams” video; Cole and King “Representing Black Masculinity...”
Social Class and Sports	March 30- April 1 April 1: 3rd Case Study DUE	Chapter 10 Tomlinson “Pierre Bourdieu and the...”; Lee, MacDonald, Wright “Young Men’s Physical Activity Choices”
Mid-Term Examination II	April 6	Chapters 6-10 and associated readings
Economics and Sports	April 8	Chapter 11; Sage “Political Economy and Sport”
Sports and the Media	April 13	Chapter 12; “Televising Basketball...” Guest Speaker: Mik’ail Petin
Sports and Politics	April 15	Chapter 13; Farred “Nation in White...”
Sport in Global Perspective	April 22-27 April 22: 4th Case Study DUE	McGuire “Sport and Globalization”; Miller, Lawrence, McKay, Rowe “Modifying the Sign”; Cole “The Place of Golf in US Imperialism”
Review/ Test Preparation	April 29	All Chapters
Final Examination	May 6 (4:30-7:15)	Chapters 11-14 and associated readings

Course Requirements:

Complete and demonstrate an understanding of assigned readings
Pass written examinations
Complete Case Study Paper

Evaluation:

Mid-Term #1 (25%)
Mid-Term #2 (25%)
Final Examination (25%)
4 Case Studies (20%)
Class Participation/Attendance (5%)

Textbook:

Jay Coakley. Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies (tenth edition). Boston, Irwin-McGraw-Hill, 2009.

Case Study Paper Description:

In a 2-4 page paper, choose a major sports story or major sports broadcast from the newspaper or TV and explore the sociological context and significance of it through some of the themes covered during the course. Paper should use sources from the course or other scholarly literature that reflect on the social aspects of sport. Topic must be approved in advance by instructor by the class before the assignment is due. Papers will be graded in terms of originality of insight, coherence of argument, and how well the literature has been incorporated into the analysis. The best papers will offer a single major thesis statement (or a couple) which the student author will elaborate and support with careful attention to detail and a demonstrable grasp of relevant literature.

Extra Credit Opportunity:

Earn up to ten extra credit points by watching the documentary film “Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson”, reading the article “Joe Louis and Jack Johnson” by C.L.R. James (on E-Reserves), and writing a 5-7 page reflection paper on how they relate to issues of race and sport today. Must be turned in by April 29 to receive credit.

Instructor:

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