

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

SPMT 304—Sport, Culture, and Society (3)
Summer 2010—Session X

DAY/TIME:	MTWRF 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.	LOCATION:	249 Robinson Hall A
PROFESSOR:	Dr. R. Pierre Rodgers	EMAIL ADDRESS:	prodgers@gmu.edu
OFFICE LOCATION:	Recreation and Athletic Complex (RAC) 2109 (FFX); Bull Run Hall 201F (PW)	PHONE NUMBER:	703.993.8317
OFFICE HOURS:	Before/after class Other times by arrangement	FAX NUMBER:	703.993.2025
PREREQUISITES	PHED 200 or Permission of Instructor		

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the role of sport in contemporary American society. Through the utilization of scholarly interpretations, students examine the way sport is linked to the structure and dynamics of social life. Particular attention is devoted to an analysis of the interrelationship between sport, society, social organization, and social change.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students will know:

1. how and why sport, in general, and certain sports in particular, have been created and organized in certain ways;
2. the connection between sports and other spheres of social life, such as family, education, politics, the economy, the media, and religion;
3. how sports and sport participation inform the way people think about their own bodies and about gender, social class, race and ethnicity, and disability;
4. the social organization, group behavior, and social interaction patterns that exist within sport settings;
5. the cultural, structural, and situational factors affecting sports and sport experiences; and
6. the social processes that occur in conjunction with sports (e.g., socialization, competition, cooperation, conflict, social stratification, social change).

REQUIRED READING

Coakley, J. (2009). *Sports in society: Issues and controversies* (10th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

RECOMMENDED (OPTIONAL) READING

Hacker, D. (2008). *A pocket style manual* (5th ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

This is a nice little volume to have. It features grammar hints as well as documentation styles like APA and MLA. This will be especially helpful when you begin to work on your APA-formatted papers. Check out Dr. Diana Hacker's website to accompany the *Pocket Style Manual*: <http://dianahacker.com/pocket/model.html>.

GRADING

Grades will be assigned on the basis of four quizzes at 5% (20% total); an in-class presentation based on one of the chapters at 20%; quality class participation makes up another 20%; and a final research paper will be weighted at 40%. Note that this paper will be due well after our final class session of June 2. I will be more than pleased to offer suggestions and advice as

you complete your manuscripts. Final grades and individual assignments will be recorded with “plus/minus” letter grade annotations. You can use the table below to do your own grade calculation. Convert letter grades to numerical equivalents using this scale: A=10, A-=9, B+=8, B=7, B-=6, C+=5, C=4, C-=3, D=2, F=1. Multiply the numerical equivalent by the weight to get the weighted value. Add the weighted values and use the conversion scale to convert the total back to a letter grade. (Note: No credit towards graduation accrues from a failing grade or from a grade that is replaced by a retaken course. For more information, please consult the current edition of the university catalog.)

	Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Weight	Weighted Value
Quiz 1			.05	
Quiz 2			.05	
Quiz 3			.05	
Quiz 4			.05	
Chapter Discussion Presentation			.20	
Class Participation			.20	
Research Paper			.40	
TOTAL				

POLICIES

1. **Participation.** Attendance and punctuality are essential for success in this class. Much of your work is based on information from the lectures and participation in class discussions. Your absences and/or tardiness will affect your general progress and that of your classmates. Zero to one cut will result in no penalty unless they occur on a day when you are assigned to present a project or complete an assignment. Students who arrive late or leave early will be counted as absent. Some absences may be excused provided **prior** arrangement is made with me. Examples of excused absences may be for medical reasons or field trips in other courses and will be allowed only at my discretion. Students who stop coming to class without discussing the matter with me will receive a failing grade. Should you miss an assignment due to absence, you will be allowed to make it up provided that you have written documentation regarding the nature of the absence. If you miss an oral presentation, it is up to me as to how and/or if you will make up the assignment.
2. **Written Assignments.** Written assignments will be expected to demonstrate college-quality writing. In-class writing will not be stringently evaluated, but ALL work prepared outside of class (papers) will be assessed for content AND for presentation. While a variety of qualities may pass for “college level,” at a minimum it means writing is appropriately concise and clear; words are properly spelled; punctuation is appropriate; sentences are complete; subject/verb, pronoun/antecedent agree.
3. Papers/abstracts/written assignments not turned in on the specified day will be given a grade lower than the one deserved. For example, an “A” assignment submitted late will be given a grade of “B.” No written work will be accepted later than one week after it is due.
4. **Honor Policy.** George Mason University takes its honor policy quite seriously. Examinations, papers, and other assignments must be your own work (except where you hire a typist or proofreader) with only the exception of group projects.
5. **Plagiarism** is representing another’s work as your own or recycling your work and representing earlier work as new work. Remember to use proper source citations in citing the evidence you use in your research. Failure to do your own work, or not to give credit where necessary, may result in failing the assignment, the course, and/or a report to the honor committee.

CLASS LED REPORTS/DISCUSSION

During the last week of class, you will lead discussions on selected chapters from your text. It is up to you to determine how you wish to proceed. These presentations will be solo and/or group-led. Specific chapter assignments and presenters will be determined no later than day 3 of the first week. It may prove helpful to provide your classmates with a brief handout/outline of the key points you'll present in your "lecture." Our classroom should be equipped with Internet and PowerPoint capability, so feel free to utilize these resources. I expect you to take the lead in talking about the readings, initiating questions amongst the class, and providing essential material for your colleagues to know and be responsible for when it comes to your in-class quizzes. Be imaginative, creative, and fun! As long as you cover the requisite core information, we're good to go.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

DATE		ASSIGNMENT	READING
May	17	Introduction	
	18	NO CLASS	
	19	The sociology of sport	Coakley, Chapter 1
	20	History of sport	Coakley, Chapter 3
	21	Sport and socialization	Coakley, Chapter 4
	24	NO CLASS	
	25	Video: <i>Go, Tigers!</i> ; Sports in high school and college	Coakley, Chapter 14
	26	CLASS PRESENTATIONS: Sports and children; Deviance in sports	Coakley, Chapters 5 and 6
	27	CLASS PRESENTATIONS: Aggression in society	Coakley, Chapter 7
	28	CLASS PRESENTATIONS: Gender	Coakley, Chapter 8
	31	MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE—NO CLASS	
June	1	CLASS PRESENTATIONS: Race and ethnicity	Coakley, Chapter 9
	2	CLASS PRESENTATIONS: Social class	Coakley, Chapter 10
	29	PAPER DEADLINE. You may submit your paper before Wednesday, June 30, 2010 if you so choose. If this is the case, contact me by email or by phone to arrange a submission time and location.	



School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

- ❖ All students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code.
- ❖ University policy states that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the professor.
- ❖ STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students having documentation on file with the Disability Resources Center should bring this to the attention of the professor.
- ❖ <http://rht.gmu.edu>

RESEARCH PAPER REQUIREMENTS

You will write an original, solo-authored research paper for *Sport, Culture, and Society*. While the topic for the scholarly essay is open, it must address an issue related to “sport in American culture.” Since you have a little less than two full weeks in class, I strongly encourage you to discuss your proposed topics with me as soon as is pragmatic. A perusal of the Coakley text and the specific chapters addressed in class should serve as a stimulus to your thinking. In any case, this paper allows you to explore, in-depth, almost any subject addressed in class. The purpose of the assignment is to explore a research area associated with the course topic and gain experience in conducting academic research.

As much as I expect you to do high-quality research and writing, I am aware that not all students in this course are majoring in concentrations offered in Mason’s School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism. For those students, I welcome the application of methods and perspectives provided in your individual areas of study. For all of you, regardless of your major, I want you to find an area you are interested in and apply it to your chosen academic field.

Mechanics. (1) Papers will be 12-20 pages in length. This does NOT include your title page or References section. **However, you should write to completely answer your question or address your argument rather than attempting to satisfy a particular length requirement.** (2) Everything you turn in MUST be typed and double spaced. (3) Do LOTS of research. A minimum of FIVE scholarly references is required for your paper. You can go beyond 5 scholarly references if you like; find supporting materials in relevant journals and texts that best help you to make your case. Use end notes (if needed) and a References list following the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (4) Remember the penalty for plagiarism! (5) The most important ingredient in making this a successful project is the amount of time you devote to it. GET BUSY!

Sections of the Paper:

Students often get obsessed with matters of style, structure, and required elements in a graded paper. Generally speaking, manuscripts have a beginning, middle, and end—otherwise known as an *introduction, body, and conclusion*. What I have listed below really follows the same sort of rubric. Sometimes, it is helpful to see, spelled out, the sorts of things that ought to be included in a paper. While you can have some leeway in how you wish to present your work, it must be organized. Hacker (2004, p. 144) notes that the “American Psychological Association encourages the use of headings to help readers follow the organization of a paper.” If you have any questions about format, structure, or anything related to your paper, please ask me.

- **Introduction/Justification/Thesis.** Tell me what you are studying and why it is worthy of attention. You may want to provide some historical, cultural, and/or sociological background on the subject. The final part of the introduction should contain your *thesis statement*: an argumentative claim or assertion that you make and are expected to justify.
- **Mini-Literature Review.** Your literature review should do three things: (a) identify the major published sources pertinent to your topic; (b) describe them in terms of the perspective they provide on your topic; and (c) evaluate the literature in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Search widely. Look at professional, scholarly journals in Sport Management, Physical Education, Recreation, Leisure Studies, Sociology, History, Popular Culture, or anything else that is relevant. This section need not be exhaustive, but you should touch on some of the key lines of research issues that are related to your specific paper topic. Use this portion of the essay to lead into your body—the analysis.

I am cognizant that not all of you are Sport Management students. For students in one of the concentrations in Recreation, Health, and Tourism (e.g., Exercise Science, Sport Management), perhaps you have taken PRLS 450—the research methods course. For those of you in other majors, maybe you have taken your discipline’s research-based course. So you may be familiar with the term *literature review*. Maybe some of you have written such reviews of the literature in other classes. And for some, you may have *no* idea of what the term means. Here goes....

Keep in mind that the literature review will comprise a fairly small portion of your total page length requirement. According to Rubin, Rubin, and Piele (2000, p. 234): “a literature review has two main purposes: to summarize research and to evaluate it.” A literature review helps you to understand the current trends in thinking about your topic. Further, it gives you an idea of what types of research exist on your topic and lets you critically assess it.

What I want you to incorporate in your papers is called an “exemplary” literature review. In an *exemplary* or *representative* literature review, you (as writers) assume that your reader (yours truly) knows about the subject; you

then present key references to reacquaint the reader with representative works that relate to the proposed paper. “Key references” are those that have directly influenced the paper being written. Such references will be cited and described as they relate to the topic, and will provide the reader with a starting point for further information.

Again, you’re writing stuff somewhere in the 12-20 page range, so adjust your discussion of “key” references judiciously. The goal isn't to find and cite everything that's been written; it's to highlight significant research that has a bearing on what you're currently writing.

- Analysis. Here is where you go about the business of advancing your argument. This is the major focus of your paper. It should NOT be an afterthought. Draw conclusions. Explain them. Justify them. Be careful in your thinking and be insightful. The idea here is to arrive at non-obvious conclusions. (Actually, THIS is where I expect to find the heart of the paper; consequently, the greatest amount of pages should be here.)
- Conclusion. Reiterate your paper’s central concern (overall thesis). Demonstrate what you intended to argue and show how you believe you made a credible and convincing case. You can offer any other fitting summary and final implications as well