

Sociology of Sport (SOC 245)

MWF – 12:10 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

CUE, Room 119

Spring 2017

Instructor: Pierce Greenberg, pierce.greenberg@wsu.edu

Office: Wilson-Short Hall 249

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., or by appointment.

I. Course Description

Sports are an integral part of social life in the U.S. Millions of people grow up playing sports and/or spend countless hours watching them. In many ways, the world of sports is a microcosm of society—and an arena through which we can understand more about our society's dynamics, values, and problems. This course will review a broad range of historical and contemporary sports issues through a sociological lens. We'll learn about the intersections between sports and topics such as gender, race, inequality, health, politics, economics, and more. The overarching theme of the course is to understand the complex, interconnected relationship between sports and society.

II. Required Text

Sociology of North American Sport. George H. Sage and D. Stanley Eitzen. Oxford University Press. 10th Edition.

III. Course Learning Objectives

The course learning objectives are as follows:

1) Develop creative and critical thinking skills

Oftentimes, our perceptions of sports are crafted through individual experiences or media representations. But in this class, you will be introduced to *critical* perspectives about the role of sports in society. In some cases, these perspectives may challenge your previous views about sports. The material covered in this course should improve your ability to think about, understand, and critically analyze sport.

2) Achieve a better understanding of one's self in society

The sociological perspective goes beyond a focus on individual attributes and challenges people to think about the social processes, institutions, and forces that shape their lives. Therefore, one of the goals of this course is to help you better understand your place in society—whether you are an athlete, spectator, or are preparing to work in sports at the collegiate or professional levels.

3) *Build communication and literacy skills*

You will have an opportunity to participate in class discussions and complete assignments that reinforce principles of communication and literacy. Given the pervasiveness of sports in our culture, I expect students to have preconceived notions and opinions about many of the topics in class. The class material will help foster discussions on these topics, while the assignments will provide an opportunity to engage more in-depth with the course content.

IV. Graded Coursework

In-Class Activities (20%): There will be 10 in-class activities throughout the semester that are worth two percentage points each. Please come to *all* classes prepared with a pen/pencil and paper in order to complete the assignments.

Writing Assignments (40%): There are five writing assignments, each worth eight points. These assignments will be submitted through Blackboard. The prompts will ask you to respond to material in textbook, outside readings, or online videos. All papers should be two pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins. In some cases, you will be asked to find and cite outside sources using a standard academic format. A failure to cite sources will result in a failing grade.

Exams (40%): Two exams will be worth 20 percentage points each. The tests will consist of a mix of multiple choice and short answer questions that stem from both the textbook and in-class discussions. The second exam will *not* be cumulative—but is currently scheduled during our final exam time on May 2.

V. Evaluation Criteria

Motivation, effort, and attentiveness are important elements for evaluating your performance. A-level students will:

- Exceed requirements of assignments.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and unique perspectives.
- Contribute positively to the learning environment of the course.
- Be prepared, professional, and responsible.
-

VI. Calendar* and Assigned Readings

Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments
1/9	Class Introduction and Syllabus Overview	Chapter 1
1/11	The Sociological Perspective and Sports: Why does it matter?	

1/13	Sociological Theories and Sports	
1/16	MLK Jr. Holiday – NO CLASS	Chapter 2
1/18	The History of Sports in U.S. Society	
1/20	Sport and U.S. Culture and Values, Part 1	Chapter 3
1/23	Sport and U.S. Culture and Values, Part 2	
1/25	Youth and Sport	Chapter 8
1/27	Youth and Sport	
1/30	Sports and Violence	Chapter 4
2/1	Substance Abuse, Gambling, and Sports	Assignment 1 due on 2/6
2/3	Intro to Inequality	
2/6	Sport and Inequality	Chapter 5
2/7	Social Mobility and Sports	
2/10	Gender	Chapter 7
2/13	Gender	Assignment 2, due on 2/20
2/15	Gender	
2/17	Race	
2/20	University Holiday – NO CLASS	
2/22	Race	Chapter 8 and Blackboard
2/24	Race	
2/27	Exam Review	
3/1	Mid-Term Exams	
3/3	High School Sports	Chapter 9
3/6	College Sports	Chapter 10
3/8	College Sports	
3/10	College Sports	Assignment 3, due on 3/10
3/13-17	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	

3/20	The Business of Sports	Chapter 11
3/22	The Business of Sports: The Stadium Debate	
3/24	Sports and Mass Media	Chapter 12
3/27	Sports and Mass Media	
3/29	<i>Film</i>	
3/31	<i>Film</i>	Assignment 4, due on 4/3
4/3	<i>Film</i> and Discussion	
4/5	Sports and Politics	Chapter 13
4/7	Sports and Politics	
4/10	Religion and Sports	Chapter 14
4/12	Religion and Sports	
4/14	Sport and Social Change	Chapter 15
4/17	Sport and Social Change	
4/19	Special Topics, TBD	Readings TBD
4/21	Special Topics, TBD	Assignment 5, due 4/24
4/24	Instructor absence - NO CLASS	
4/26	Special Topics, TBD	
4/28	Exam Review	
5/2	FINAL EXAM at 1 p.m.	

** This calendar is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Changes will be sent out to the class via email and posted on Blackboard.*

VII. Grading Scale

A: 94-100

A-: 90-93

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79

C: 73-76

C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69

D: 60-66

F: 0-59.

VIII. POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance in class is your responsibility. If students are absent for any reason (even an excused absence), they are responsible for obtaining notes from classmates. If claiming an excused absence, students must submit a written explanation to me via email or provide required forms for university-related activities (like athletics).

Classroom Conduct: This class is intended to encourage students to actively participate in classroom discussions, and the class uses many perspectives in understanding and discussing the course material. Some of the material may be sensitive or controversial, and students should respect different opinions and experiences of their classmates. No disruptive or disrespectful behavior will be tolerated.

Late Work Policy: Late work will be heavily penalized. If you miss the deadline for a writing assignment, you may turn it in late (up to three days) for half of the credit. However, I understand that “stuff happens”—so each student will be given one free pass for a late assignment. In that case, you must email me *before* the assignment is due and state that you want to use your free pass. You can then turn the assignment in up to three days late without penalty. If you are anticipating a university-approved absence, you must contact me at least one week prior to arrange for the assignment to be done ahead of time.

Make-up exams are given through an exam proctor at 8 a.m. on Thursdays in Wilson-Short Hall Room 201, for students with an excused absence.

Communication: Students are responsible for making sure they receive all class-related communications. I will use Blackboard to communicate, when necessary. Students should ensure that they check their email account that is linked with Blackboard. If you have any questions or concerns about class—please feel free to stop by my office in Wilson-Short Hall Room 249 during office hours or make an appointment.

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the Access Center.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity will be strongly enforced in this course. Any student caught cheating on any assignment will be given an F grade for the course and will be reported to the Office Student Standards and Accountability. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3). It is strongly suggested that you read and understand these definitions.

(<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=504-26-010>)

WSU Safety Statement: Washington State University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for its faculty, staff, and students. Safety is the responsibility of every member of the campus community and individuals should know the appropriate actions to take when an emergency arises. In support of our commitment to the safety of the campus community the University has developed a Campus Safety Plan, <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>. It is highly recommended that you visit this web site as well as the University emergency management web site at <http://oem.wsu.edu> to become familiar with the information provided.