Course Description:

This course will focus on sport as a social institution and cultural phenomenon. Using an intersectional framework, students will learn to critically assess sport in the areas of identity, education, the body; fandom and economy. The goals of the course are to understand sport as an institution, develop critical analytical skills by examining issues relevant to sport and to understand how sport is an area where inequality and power can be examined.

Required Texts:


Assignments:

(20%) Observation and Analysis: (due 10.21) Observe an athletic event on campus as a participant observer or observer. Take field notes at the event of your observations as a basis for an analytical essay that takes into account the theories and concepts discussed in class and the readings. The paper should be approximately 5 pages plus field notes and bibliography of sources consulted.

(30%) Comparative Paper: (due 12.16) Using the themes in Raceball, analyze and discuss another sport. Scholarly sources (journals, monographs, edited texts, verifiable statistics, etc.) must be referenced in the paper. Verifiable popular sources also may be used. The paper should be approximately 7-8 pages plus bibliography.

(25% each) Critical essays: (due 9.26, 11.16) A choice of essay questions will be given from which one will be selected to answer. The answers should reference as much of the reading as
possible to support the answers. A bibliography should be attached. The essay should be approximately 5 pages and double-spaced.

Instructor policies

- Your consistent, on-time attendance and participation are required. Please do not attend to other activities during class (cellphones, knitting, etc.). After two absences, additional absences will generally lower your final grade in the course (1/3 of a grade per two additional absences). In case of illness or personal emergency, your absence will be excused. This policy is governed by the honor code; to report an excused absence, please contact me.
- Assignments are due IN CLASS the day they are due. An extension will be automatically applied to all assignments until 4:00 the day they are due. After this grace period, 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. an A would be reduced to an A-) will be deducted for each day of lateness, unless you have previously made arrangements with the instructor because of illness or emergency. Assignments are to be handed in on paper (double sided is fine)-please retain a copy of this work for yourself. Please use the Times New Roman 12pt font or an equivalent, double spaced (unless specifically instructed to use another format) and NUMBERED pages. Staple your papers before turning them in.
- Office Hours are listed at the top of this syllabus. Upon special request, I will meet with students at times outside of my office hours. Please see me IN PERSON to set up such an appointment.
- I receive up to 30 or more e-mails per day. Please do not expect me to reply immediately to an e-mail question or request. If something is urgent, please CALL ME in my office or signify in the e-mail header that it is urgent.
- P/NP: If you are taking this course P/NP, you must fulfill all course obligations and complete all assignments in order to receive credit for the course.
- Honor Code: This course will follow the policies described in the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System. Please include the statement “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment” in all written work. Please contact me if you have any questions about citation/referencing, or the relationship of the Honor Code to your work in this course. For more information on the Honor Code, see http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html.
- Students with Disabilities: If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this course, please let me know. Support is available through Student Academic Services—please contact Jane Boomer, Coordinator Office of Disability Services, (Room G27/28 Peters Hall, ext. 55588, http://www.oberlin.edu/disability) for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.
- The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus during the semester, if needed.
Course Goals:

1) Develop a “sociological imagination” regarding sport—how one’s own experiences can be understood in a structural context. This course is framed around Mills’ framework of the sociological imagination which emphasizes the connection between biography and history as well as the interaction of individual and society.

2) Gain knowledge of the history and origins of sport in the United States. Integral to understanding contemporary issues in sport is knowledge of the origins of sport in the United States, particularly how this development is linked to changes in other social institutions.

3) Develop an understanding of sport as a social institution: Sport often is examined as an activity, but also can be understood structurally as a social institution. It is valuable to be able to both separate the two, as well as understand how they are related.

(4) Develop an ability to assess sport using a critical analytic lens. Sport is commonly understood as entertainment and leisure and often not critically assessed using social theory and empirical tools which will be emphasized in the course.

Readings (NOTE: Readings not from required texts are located on the Blackboard site for this class):

9.7 First meeting, syllabus

Introduction, Theory and History

9.9

Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 1-The Sociological Analysis of Sport in Society
Chapter 3-Sport and Societal Values
Chapter 8- Sport and Religion

9.12

In Smith (Sociology of Sport):
Chapter 1: Beamish-Toward a Sport Ethic: Science, Politics and Weber’s Sociology
Chapter 5: Schimmel-Political Economy: Sport and Urban Development

9.14

In Smith (Race, Sport and the American Dream):
Chapter 1: A new sociology of sports

In Quinn:
Chapter 1: Fans and Dollars
9.16
In Smith (Sociology of Sport):
   Chapter 8: Hattery-Feminist theory and the study of sport: An illustration from Title IX

In Caudwell:
   Sykes: Queering theories of sexuality in sport studies

In Haywood and Dworkin:
   Chapter 2: Sport as stealth feminism of the third wave

9.19
Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 2-Social and Cultural Sources for the Rise of Sport in North America

In Quinn:
   Chapter 2: Politics, Robber Barons, and Fans
   Chapter 3: We are Sporticus

9.21
In Quinn:
   Chapter 4: Spectator Sports Become Big Business
   Chapter 5: Entertainment for a New Century
   Chapter 6: Depression, War, and Diaspora

**Identities and Socialization**

9.23
In Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 4- Youth and Sport

In Messner (Out at Play):
   Chapter 1: Barbie girls versus sea monsters: Children constructing gender
   Chapter 2: Sports and male domination: The female athlete as contested ideological terrain

9.26

In Haywood and Dworkin:
   Chapter 3: A new look at female athletes and masculinity
   Chapter 6: She will beat you up, and your papa, too
9.28
In Caudwell:
   Symons and Hemphill: Transgendering sex and sport in the Gay Games
   Lock: Heterosexual femininity: the painful process of subjectification

9.30
In Sage (Sociology of Sport):
   Chapter 11: Denham-Masculinities and the Sociology of Sport: Issues and Ironies in the 21st Century
In Messner (Out at Play):
   Chapter 5: Studying Up on Sex

10.3


Education, Stratification and Politics

10.5
Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 5- Interscholastic Sport
In Smith (Sociology of Sport):
   Chapter 9: Social and Cultural Capital: Race, School Attachment, and the Role of High School Sports

10.7


Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 6- Intercollegiate Sport

In Smith (Race, Sport and the American Dream):
Chapter 5: The Promise of an Education: Truth or Lie

In Clotfelter:
Chapter 2: Priorities
Chapter 3: The Bigness of “Big Time”
Chapter 7: Beacon for Campus Culture

Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 9-Sport and Politics

Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 12- Sport, Social Stratification and Social Mobility
Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 13- Racial-Ethnic Minorities and Sport
Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 14-Gender in North American Sport: Continuity and Change

McDonagh and Pappano, Playing With the Boys: Why Separate is Not Equal in Sports (entire text)

Economy, Media and Globalization

In Smith (Race, Sport and the American Dream):
Chapter 6: The Athletic Industrial Complex
11.11

In Clotfelter:
   Chapter 5: Commercial Enterprise

In Sage (Globalizing Sport):
   Chapter 3: Global Migration of Sports Labor
   Chapter 4: The Global Sport Industry: Production and Promotion

11.14

In Carter:
   Chapter 3: Athlete Branding
   Chapter 9: Corporate Marketing

11.16

Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 11- Sport and Mass Media

Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 7- Social Problems and North American Sport: Violence, Substance Abuse, Eating Disorders and Gambling

In Sage (Globalizing Sport):
   Chapter 5: Global Sport and Global Mass Media

11.18


11.21

In Carter:
   Chapter 6: Gambling

In Messner (Out at Play):
   Chapter 9: The televised sports manhood formula

In Messner (Taking the Field):
   Chapter 2: Playing Center: The Triad of Violence in Men’s Sports
11.23-11.30

Markovits and Rensmann *Gaming the World: How Sports are Reshaping Global Politics and Culture*, entire text

**Putting it All Together**

12.2-12.7

Ruck: *Raceball* Entire text

12.9

Eitzen and Sage: Chapter 15- Contemporary Trends and the Future of Sport in North America

In Messner (Taking the Field):

Chapter 5: Contesting the Center: Just What Do We Do?


12.12

Wrap-up, Course Evaluations