HTS 3073 Sociology of Sports 9:25-10:55 AM TTH Room 52 College of Computing. Instructor: Dr. W. Pearson, Jr. Office: OCE, Room 119 Phone: 385-2265 E-mail: willie.pearsonjr@hts.gatech.edu Office Hours: 11-11:50 AM TTH and by appointment. During my regularly scheduled office hours, if you are unable to meet or if I am unavailable (due to meetings or speaking engagements), please leave a voice-mail message or speak with me after class and we can set up an appointment for an alternative time.

Required Readings: See Course Calendar


READINGS: Additional required readings will be distributed in class or posted on T-Square. The instructor reserves the right to make revisions to the syllabus and course calendar. Any revised version will be posted on T-Square. In case of revisions, you are responsible for work according to any and all changes.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Sport is viewed by some scholars as socially constructed and therefore a product of society. This has prompted considerable international attention from researchers from a wide array of disciplines and subdisciplines. The sociology of sport is perhaps the largest, and best established of the subdisciplines studying sport. Sociology of sport was the first subdiscipline to be so named, to have a professional organization (The International Committee for Sport Sociology-now the International Sociology of Sport Association) and publish a refereed journal (*The International Review of Sport Sociology*). Additionally, it was the first to be studied and have dedicated courses taught in institutions of higher education. Sociology of sport draws on a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives to study critical social processes (Coakley and Dunning, 2010).

To put the discussion in perspective, the course will:

- Discuss what constitutes a “sport”.
- Examine the literature concerning debates on the role of social inequality in sports.
- Discuss how scientists describe and interpret perceived human differences (e.g., race, sex) as related to sport performance.
- Examine the literature regarding safety, violence, and the role of media and politics in sports.
- Discuss the role of architects and the built environment in sport.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

After studying the materials discussed in class, students should be able to:

• describe the historical contexts which created and shaped the growth of sport
• understand the political and economic forces shape sporting experiences
• understand the social and cultural dimensions of sport
• understand the relationship between sports and related social institutions (e.g., economy, religion, science, etc.)
• demonstrate a working knowledge of core concepts, theories and methodologies
• understand the relationship between social institutions and ideology in sports
• effectively use written and oral forms of communication to construct compelling arguments
• effectively synthesize research findings
• gain a deeper understanding of the course materials through collaborative learning with peers
• gain sociological knowledge and perspectives on contemporary sporting practices
• improve one’s ability to articulate complex arguments

COURSE FORMAT

The course format will consist of lectures, discussions and presentations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

NOTE: The course requirements will be adjusted to serve the needs and capabilities of students with disabilities that may negatively impact academic performance. The Georgia Tech Honor Code applies to all student work. Each student is responsible for signing the daily attendance sheet and managing his/her personal folder of class participation and returned assignments. Also, each student is responsible for returning each graded assignment to the coursework folder within one class week.
The final grade will be determined from the average score derived from the following course requirements:

1. **Individual and group class participation.** At the beginning of the semester, I will randomly assign each student to serve as a co-discussion leader who will present a 10-15 minute synthesis or overview of the assigned reading(s), after which the discussion will be opened to the entire class. You are strongly encouraged to supplement the assigned readings with other relevant readings and/or video clips. Given the criticality of class participation, it is imperative that you keep up with your reading assignments and be well-prepared (this means having thought critically about the readings) to constructively engage in a spirited but respectful discourse. During your reading, it is highly recommended that you take notes and formulate questions. You are expected to be an active participant. Always bring your text, readings, notes and questions to each class. Participation is not evaluated in terms of how many times you comment, but by the clear demonstration that you have read and comprehended the assignments, and the quality of your overall engagement in the discussion. Class participation includes the end-of-term presentations. A weekly participation performance evaluation form is provided in class for your review.

2. **Single-authored critiques.** Four page, double-space typed critiques are due in class each Thursday (unless otherwise noted). *Critiques are not summaries of the readings.* Rather, they are focused arguments documented by evidence from the texts, lectures and other assigned readings. Informed opinions are encouraged. The critique must examine the strengths and weaknesses of the authors' argument. In all cases, one or more of the theoretical perspectives covered in the text and lecture should be applied in the assessment.

3. **Group research paper.** The paper—20-25 pages, typed, double-space, including an abstract and annotated bibliography—must be co-authored (up to 6 classmates). Approval of the topic is based on the acceptance of an abstract (see Course Calendar). The paper should not rely solely on Internet websites. You are encouraged to seek assistance from the professionals at the GT library. The library staff is very knowledgeable about databases and other informational sources. For an additional resource on preparing a high-quality research paper, see Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. C. and Williams, J. M. (most recent edition). *The Craft of Research.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. At various points during the course, you are provided class release time to work on your research paper and group field project.

**NOTE:** Your name and page number must appear on each page of all written assignments. Failure to do so results in an ungraded paper.
4. **Group presentation.** You will present the results of your research paper during the class period at the end of the semester (a scoring guide will be provided at least two weeks prior to the scheduled presentation). The presentation must be clearly and professionally delivered. If your presentation involves the use of AV equipment, you are strongly advised to come to class early in order to test the equipment. If you plan to distribute handouts, you are responsible for providing a sufficient number of copies for the class. Note that any missed presentation cannot be rescheduled because of designated time slots. Time slots are assigned based on priority of accepted research paper abstracts.

The above four assignments are all required and will be weighed equally (25% each) in determining your final grade. Students do have the option of also taking 2 exams in addition to the four requirements above. For those students taking this option—all assignments and the two tests will be weighted equally. More information about the weighting of the optional exams will be distributed at a later time to those students choosing this option.

5. **Optional Exams.** Two essay exams—a midterm and a final—are administered during the conference hours. Students are allotted one hour and 15 minutes to complete each exam. **Students selecting this optional must request it in writing not later than February 1, 2013.**

All requirements (including optional exams) are weighted equally and will be based on the following scale:

- A = 100-93
- B = 92-85
- C = 84-75
- D = 74-65
- F = below 65

Assignments are scheduled for each week. Because all written assignments are given far in advance; **no tardy assignment will be accepted.**

**Attendance Policy.** Each student is responsible for signing the daily attendance sheet. Approved absences typically include: illness, religious holidays, family and personal emergencies, and official representation of GT at extracurricular events. To the extent possible, email and leave a voice message regarding anticipated absences. **In the case of a borderline final grade (1-2 points from the next higher grade), those with fewer than two unexcused absences will automatically receive the higher grade.**

**Classroom Protocol.** Please adjust your cell phone to the “off” position during class. Do not use your computer for purposes other than taking notes for HTS 3803, arrive late, or read unrelated course materials.
HTS 3073 Sociology of Sport Spring 2013 COURSE CALENDAR

January

T  8  PART I. Introductory Lecture: Concepts, Theories and Methodologies
Chapter 1 The Sociology of Sport: What Is It and Why Study It?

TH 10  PART I. CONT’D
Chapter 2 Producing Knowledge About Sports in Society: What is the Role of Research and Theory?


T  15  PART I. CONT’D
Chapter 3 Studying the Past: Does It help Us Understand Sports Today?


TH 17  RESEARCH DAY: ABSTRACT DUE NLT 5 PM
(SEE: www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/guides/write/abstracts.htm#2)

T  22  PART II. Introductory Lecture: Sports and Other Social Institutions

TH 24  FAMILY
Chapter 4 Sports and Socialization: Who Plays and What Happens to Them?

Chapter 5 Sports and Children: Are Organized Programs Worth the Effort?
(DISCUSSANTS)
(CRITIQUE 1 DUE Chapters 4&5)
Chapter 14 Sports in High School and College: Do Competitive Sports Contribute to Education?


Chapter 11 Sports and the Economy: What Are the Characteristics of Commercial Sports?


February

Chapter 13 Sports and Politics: How Do Governments and Global Political Processes Influence Sports? (DISCUSSANTS)

Chapter 15 Sports and Religions: Is It a Promising Combination (DISCUSSANTS) (CRITIQUE 3 DUE Chapters 11&13 and Reading 5)

Chapter 12 Sports and the Media: Could They Survive Without Each Other? (DISCUSSANTS)
TH 14 TBA
(CRITIQUE 4 DUE Chapters 15&12)

T 19 PART III. Introductory Lecture: Demographic Groups

TH 21 GENDER
Chapter 8 Gender and Sports: Does Equity Require Ideological Changes?

(DISCUSSANTS)
(CRITIQUE 5 DUE Chapter 8 and Reading 6)

T 26 RACE and ETHNICITY
Chapter 9 Race and Ethnicity: Are They Important in Sports?

(DISCUSSANTS)

TH 28 SOCIAL CLASS
Chapter 10 Social Class: Do Money and Power Matter in Sports?
(DISCUSSANTS.)
(CRITIQUE 6 DUE Chapter 9 and Reading 7)

March

T 5 RESEARCH DAY
(FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE NLT 5 PM)

TH 7 PART IV. Introductory Lecture: Social Problems
(CRITIQUE 7 DUE Chapter 10)

FRI 8 (DRAFT RESEARCH PAPER RETURNED NLT 5 PM)

T 12 Chapter 6 Deviance in Sports: Is it Out of Control?

TH 14   RESEARCH DAY: RESEARCH PAPER DUE NLT 5 PM

T-TH 19, 21 Spring Break (Travel Safely)

T 26   Chapter 7 Violence in Sports: How Does It Affect Our Lives?  
(DISCUSSANTS)

TH 28   TBA  
(CRITIQUE 9 DUE Chapter 7)

April

T 2   PART V. Introductory Lecture: A Futuristic Perspective  
(RESEARCH PAPER RETURNED)

TH 4   TBA

T 9   Chapter 16 Sports in the Future: Are We Agents of Change?  

Oscar Pistorius and the boundaries of what it means to be human.”  
(DISCUSSANTS.)  
(CRITIQUE 10 DUE Chapter 16 and Reading 9)

TH 11   TBA  
(Power Point Presentation and Related Material Due)

T 16   RESEARCH DAY

TH 18   FORMAL PRESENTATION

T 23   FORMAL PRESENTATION

TH 25   FORMAL PRESENTATION/WRAP UP
SUGGESTED READINGS


CNN.com (2011). “Real test still to come on gays in sports.”


Page 10, HTS 3073 Sociology of Sports


St. John, A. “How Baseball Stadium Can Rig the Game: Giants vs. Rangers.” Popularmechanics.com


