

Portland State University, Department of Communication
COMM 399: Sports, Culture and the Media
Faculty-Led Program Syllabus | Education Abroad
Summer 2020

Instructor: George Rede
Class meets: July 13-27, 2020
Location: Berlin, Germany
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Find selected course materials online on D2L. Please check PSU Gmail and D2L regularly for announcements, updates, lecture materials, class schedules and other information. The instructor reserves the right to revise any aspect of this syllabus as needed.

Course description

Sports are a window to society revealing a range of social and political concerns that affect us all. And as another Olympics year beckons, sports, culture and the media are intertwined like never before. Teams and athletes use social media and their own websites to control their brand, sound off, and engage with fans. Meanwhile, the mass media struggle to keep up and stay relevant in the face of 24/7 news and a shrinking journalism industry. Today's sports reporters must not only know how to write, photograph and tweet as multimedia communicators, but they also need to read widely, and keep up with current events while maintaining strong ethical boundaries.

In this course, using Berlin as our classroom, we will examine how sports reflect contemporary society on various issues, including race, gender, economics, marketing, mental illness and sexual abuse, among others. We will also look at the basic skills of writing and reporting, interviewing and storytelling, ethical challenges and employment prospects where sports and mass communications intersect.

Where better to do this than in Germany, home of the 2014 World Cup champions and host country to the 1936 and 1972 Olympic Games? Berlin is a place where you'll not only increase your understanding of the interconnectedness of sports, culture and the media, you'll also increase your awareness and appreciation of history, of cultural differences, and of diversity of values, beliefs and ways of living.

Course structure

We will learn from a well-rounded diet of assigned readings, lectures, class discussions and guest speakers. Most significantly, we will also learn from site visits to sports stadiums, professional sports teams, advertising agencies, news organizations and global sporting goods companies (looking at you, Nike and Adidas). Writing well, speaking up in class, engaging with each other and our hosts, will be essential to your success.

Intercultural interaction

Students will be encouraged to use diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference to think critically and solve problems pertaining to the study of sports, culture and the media. With the added value brought by guest speakers, field trips and unscripted encounters with local residents, the course will spur students to compare and contrast their U.S. experiences and frames of reference with those of citizens of other countries. This kind of self-reflection, along with small-group discussion, will serve as a window to cultural understanding and common issues around the course content.

- Several meals at German restaurants
- Two weeks of living in facilities owned and run by Germans, providing consistent opportunity for interaction with service staff.
- Walking tour of immediate neighborhood and orientation to local culture, services and demographics.
- Site visits to local and national news media organizations.
- Site visits to advertising and public relations agencies.
- Site visits to global sporting goods companies.
- Site visits to Olympic stadiums and professional team facilities.
- Tour of the Bundestag, the national parliament.
- Group meal with German communications students and faculty.
- Daily photostory assignment requiring students to capture at least one photo a day, ensuring time spent in their new milieu.

Required text:

Schultz, Brad and Arke, Ed (2016), Sports Media (3rd edition), Focal Press (New York and London)

Assignments and Exams

Your grade will be based on the following:

Pre-trip paper	10 percent (40 points)
Berlin photostory	20 percent (80 points)
Just One Thing reflections	20 percent (80 points)
Class participation/discussion	15 percent (60 points)
One final exam	15 percent (60 points)
Post-trip paper	20 percent (80 points)
Total	100 percent (400 points)

Pre-trip paper

Students will write a 500- to 750-word paper regarding how they anticipate the Berlin experience will complement their studies and/or their personal and professional aspirations.

Berlin photostory

Students will capture at least one photo a day, describe the course concept the image represents, and post to a private Facebook page. Through this Berlin-as-classroom window, students will learn the principles of producing interesting content for a mass audience and compose a finished product they can use for their future internship and job interviews. Points awarded for content (aesthetics, relevance) and captions (completeness, clarity).

Just One Thing

Students will write a brief summary of the one most interesting or surprising thing they learned the previous day. Through this daily exercise, they will develop the ability to distill key concepts and extract meaning that serves as a diary of lessons learned.

Final exam

These will be 60 questions (worth 1 point each) in multiple-choice and true-false format. The test will cover issues discussed by guest speakers and on field trips, as well as topics raised in lectures and assigned readings and videos. .

Post-trip paper

Students will complete a 1,500-word paper reflecting on their experience and how they will integrate lessons learned to their life and further studies. Making connections with your academic interests and intercultural interactions is strongly encouraged. Due within one week of your return flight to the U.S.

All writing assignments

- Are graded on how well the content reflects the assignment (organization, originality, clarity, context) and the quality of the writing (grammar, spelling, punctuation, syntax).
- Are due at the beginning of class on their assigned dates. Submit them to the appropriate D2L folder.
- Just One Thing entries will be submitted on D2L only. Strive for clarity, brevity and accuracy. Spelling, grammar and factual errors will count against you.

Course evaluation and grading

Students are graded on the merit of their own work. This class is not graded on a formal curve.

Grade	Percent	Points
A	94-100	375-400
A-	90-93	360-374
B+	87-89	348-359
B	83-86	332-347
B-	80-82	320-331
C+	77-79	308-319
C	73-76	292-307
C-	70-72	280-291
D+	65-69	260-279
D	60-64	240-259
F	0-59	239 or less

Course goals

- Provide a comprehensive foundation in understanding and analyzing the intersection of sports, culture and media.
- Demonstrate knowledge of relevant communication theories, principles and issues.
- Understand the different elements involved in contemporary sports reporting.
- Develop skills in writing and photography for a targeted audience.
- Be able to discuss and critique the creative, technical, ethical and sociological factors that shape contemporary sports coverage and cultural issues.

Classroom policies

Attendance/participation: You are expected to attend class. You are expected to arrive on time. You are expected to participate in class and all scheduled activities. Attendance without participation is not sufficient. We will discuss many controversial issues and topics. We will do so in a respectful and civil manner.

Academic integrity: Neither cheating nor plagiarism will be tolerated. Cheating can take many forms, all of which involve acting dishonestly or unfairly to gain an advantage. Plagiarism involves representing someone else's work as your own. Be sure to give credit to others' material (through explicit citation or attribution of a published source or directly spoken quote).

Technology: Silence or put away your phones during class. Laptops, tablets and phones may be used appropriately – that is, what is on your screen should be directly related to course content. Texting, checking social media, playing games, etc., are inappropriate during class. Be an adult.



Sports Media & Journalism

Portland State University

IES Abroad Berlin | July 06, 2020 – July 20, 2020

Portland State University Faculty: George Rede
Portland State University Contact: Hannah Fischer
IES Abroad Contact: Maureen Brady Coyle

Addendum Date: September 23, 2019

Revised Date: October 24, 2019

Revised Date: October 30, 2019



ON-SITE ORIENTATION

Orientation Details. IES Abroad will provide an orientation for the School's students and accompanying faculty member promptly upon their scheduled arrival in Berlin. The orientation shall include:

- Comprehensive information on health and safety, culture, and living in Berlin. Students will be provided with an information packet during orientation which includes a detailed student handbook, local area information, and a program schedule.
- Berlin Guided Walking Tour
- Welcome Dinner

Faculty & Staff Meeting. Upon arrival at the IES Abroad Center, the accompanying faculty will meet with IES Abroad staff to discuss the details of the program and responsibilities of each party.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Courses. The School's faculty will teach the following courses for the School's students.

- *COMM 399: Sports, Culture and the Media*

Guest Lectures. IES Abroad will provide **four (4)** guest lectures related to the content of the program. Topics may include sports journalism or sports public relations.

IES ABROAD CENTER

Located in Mitte, a central district of Berlin famous for its numerous restaurants and stylish boutiques, the IES Abroad Berlin Center is walking distance from the Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Brandenburg Gate, and the governmental district.

Center Facilities. The School's students and faculty members will have access to the study space and computers at the local IES Abroad Center on a shared basis with other students at the Center. Wireless internet is available. It is strongly recommended to bring laptop computers.

Classroom Space. IES Abroad will provide **ten (10) hours** of classroom space for all courses in or near the local IES Abroad Center.

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Local Excursions. IES Abroad will provide the following for the School's students and accompanying faculty member.

Site Visits.

- Reichstag/Bundestag. Includes guided tour.
- Olympic Stadium. Includes guided tour.

Business Visits. IES Abroad will use reasonable efforts to accommodate the School's requests for specific employer site visits by arranging **four (4)** business visits in the School's field of choice, provided IES Abroad has the requisite contacts. IES Abroad does not have any control over the employers and any business visit will be subject to the requested employer's agreement. Possible business visits could include: Berlin representation of the German Football Federation (DFB); German Public TV Station (e.g. ARD Hauptstadtstudio); Editorial Office "11 Freunde" (alternative sports magazine); a Berlin-based sports club (PR department), e.g. Hertha BSC (football), Alba Berlin (basketball); sports event location such as Max-Schmeling-Halle; sports marketing agency e.g. TOP Sportmarketing.



ACCOMMODATIONS

Student Housing. IES Abroad will arrange housing for the School's students in a student hostel. Up to three students will share a room. Breakfast and Internet are included.

Faculty Housing. IES Abroad will arrange housing for the School's faculty member in a single room in a hostel. Breakfast and Internet are included. Faculty housing will be available starting July 04, 2020 through July 20, 2020.

MISCELLANEOUS

Transportation Passes. IES Abroad will provide transportation passes for the School's students and faculty member for the period of the program.

Cultural Events. IES Abroad will arrange **two (2)** cultural events for the School's students and faculty member during the program. One of the cultural events will be the Sportmuseum Berlin. For the second cultural event, IES Abroad will make reasonable effort to secure tickets to a live sporting event.

Farewell Dinner. IES Abroad will arrange a farewell dinner for the School's students and faculty member at the end of the program.

STUDENT SERVICES SUPPORT

Fully-Trained Local Staff. The IES Abroad Center is a fully-staffed local office ready to respond quickly and professionally to student and faculty needs. An on-site Customized Programs coordinator will be designated specifically as the point of contact for students and faculty on the program. This on-site coordinator, in partnership with other IES Abroad Center staff, helps to oversee the academic quality for IES Abroad taught courses and to manage logistics including accommodations, field trips, cultural activities, and day-to-day administration. This coordinator will also handle on-site emergencies and manage student academic, health, and discipline issues in conjunction with the IES Abroad Dean of Students Office in Chicago. IES Abroad will provide information to the School's students concerning cultural activities and available local resources, such as libraries and athletic centers, in the program location.

24/7 Emergency Support. IES Abroad will provide 24/7 emergency support, including emergency protocols & evacuation plans, for students and accompanying faculty member pursuant to its customary policies and procedures.

Crisis Management Preparedness. IES Abroad has a Crisis Management Team (CMT). In the event of a crisis that may affect the health and safety of many, or even all, students in a specific location, the IES CMT is convened to assess and respond to the situation at hand. The CMT will respond in accordance with established IES Abroad practices and protocols and also may seek the guidance as needed of appropriate experts, including, as examples, U.S. consular officials, local law enforcement representatives, and local health care providers.

Health Insurance. IES Abroad offers a carefully considered plan for international student insurance, to be provided for the School's students participating in the Program, as well as the official faculty member designated to operate the Program by the School. The plan is comprised of three parts:

- A)** 24-hour Medical/Travel/Technical Assistance, Emergency Medical Evacuation and Repatriation coverage provided by Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) in conjunction with AXA;
- B)** Accident and Sickness Insurance provided by CISI; and
- C)** Security and Political Evacuation Services provided by CISI in conjunction with AXA and iJET Intelligent Risk Systems (iJET).