Grant Farr  
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Office Hours:  MWF 2:00 -3:00  

Course Description:  
Sports and athletics is an important part of our society and culture. Many people participate in sporting events as participants or spectators, and many of us are active in exercise and organized athletics programs. Sociologists have studied sports from the individual perspective, the team perspective, and from the perspective of society as a whole. Sports reflect the values of the society and culture and we find in sports all of the issues we have in our society, both good and bad. Not only do we find issues of societal issues of racism, sexism, and violence in sports, but we also find positive issues of teamwork, leadership, and cooperation.

This class will be an objective examination of sports in American culture, using the tools of sociology. The class will combine relevant readings, speakers, student participation, and lectures on topics that will include among other things, the role of racial issues in sports, gender issues and the role of Title XI, the issues of Native American Mascots, homophobia, violence, and the use of supplements and drugs.

Student Expectations:  
The success of this class will depend on the active participation of the students. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings or watched the assigned videos, and, when appropriate, completed their assigned reports. It is expected that students will participate in class discussion.

Since class participation is important, class attendance will play a part in the student’s grade.

Grades:  
- Papers or reports: 60%  
- Class participation: 20%  
- Final 20%  
- Total Grade 100%

Class Policies

D2L: Class reading material and other information will be available on D2L. Students should familiarize themselves with D2L and access the class D2L site.
**Email:** I will expect to communicate with the class via the PSU email. Be sure that you are receiving emails. If you prefer your can arrange to have your PSU email forwarded to another email address. It is your responsibility to check your email daily during the school week and respond in a timely manner.

When sending email to me please use the email on the heading of this syllabus. Also place the title of the course in the subject line and sign your emails using your first and last name.

**Classroom conduct:** This class will deal with material that is controversial and some class member may have strong views regarding some of the material. Nonetheless students must demonstrate the highest level of respect for their peers, and the instructor. All points of view will be welcomed and respected, but statements or behaviors that are disrespectful towards individual or groups will not be tolerated. In addition, behaviors that are distracting to the class, such as coming in late, talking, or using cell phones, will not be tolerated.

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to demonstrate complete academic honesty. Please refer to the Student Conduct Code for more detailed information on PSU academic policies. These include policies regarding plagiarism and cheating.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the PSU Disabilities Resource Center (DRC) and the class instructor at the beginning of the term to arrange accommodations. The DRC is located in 435 Smith Center.

**Laptops/tablets/e-readers:** If you prefer to read electronic versions of articles or books, you can bring these devices to class to reference the reading during in-class assignments and class discussion. You may also use these devices to take notes in class. However, please do not use your devise for non-class purposes such as checking Facebook or email.

**Class Attendance:** Attendance is important and attendance will be taken. If it becomes necessary for you to miss class, you should clear your absence with the Instructor ahead of time.

**Cancelled Classes:** In the case of inclement weather or other campus emergencies, please refer to the PSU web page: [http://www.pdx.edu](http://www.pdx.edu). In the event that the instructor has to cancel class, I will email the class as soon as possible. If the instructor has not arrived in class 10 minutes after the scheduled class time, the class is cancelled for the day.
Course Outline

Week One: March 31 to April 4
Introduction to the Sociology of Sports
Reading: Sage and Eitzen, Chapters 1 and 2

Week Two: April 7 to April 11
Intercollegiate Sports
Reading: Sage and Eitzen, Chapter 6
Additional Readings on D2L
Speaker: Torre Chisholm
First Paper Due April 7th
Guest Speaker From PSU Athletic Department

Week Three and Four: April 14 to April 25
Race, Ethnicity, and mascots
Reading: Sage and Eitzen, Chapter 13
Reading: Race and Sports in America: An Historical Review
Reading: Understanding the American Mascot Issue
Additional Readings and videos on D2L
Two speakers: One on Mascots, and one on race in sports
Second paper due on April 14

Week Five and Six, April 28 to May 9
Gender, Sexuality, Title IX, and Homophobia
Readings: Sage and Eitzen, Chapter 14
Additional Readings on D2L
Speakers: Valerie Cleary Associate AD, Senior Women's Administrator
Paper Three Due: April 28

Week Seven and Eight, May 12 to May 23
Violence in sports, on and off the field
Reading: Sage and Eitzen, Chapter 7 (Pages 134-149)
Reading: Crosset, Athletic Affiliation and Violence Against Women
Additional Reading on D2L
Speaker: Domanic Thomas, Assistant Dean of Student Life
Paper four Due May 12

Week Nine and Ten, May 26 to June 6
Nutrition, Supplements, and Drugs
Readings: Sage and Eitzen, Chapter 7 (Page 152-164)
Additional Reading on D2L
Speaker: Jim Wallis Assistant Athletic Director, Sports Medicine
Paper Five Due May 28th
Papers

The papers are an important part of the class work and account for 60% of your grade. Each paper should reflect both your research and your opinion on the paper’s topic. In addition, you should come to class on the day each paper is due prepared to discuss the ideas and findings in your paper with the class.

Each paper should be at least five pages long, but the number of pages is not the major determinant of your grade. Papers should reflect original research, and/or original findings and observations, and where appropriate, cite relevant literature and be properly referenced.

While you should be prepared to discuss your paper in class on the due date, the actual submission of the paper should be done as an attachment to my email address.

**Paper One: Personal Statement**
Due March 7 at class time.
What has sports and athletics meant to you? Have you participated in organized athletics on a sports team in the past or presently? Do you exercise regularly or otherwise participated in exercise or athletic activities? Have you had good or bad experiences with athletics? How has your relationship with athletics affected your life positively or negatively? Give examples. Be ready to share your observations with the class.

**Paper Two: Sporting Event.**
Due March 14 at class time/
Attend some kind of organized athletic or sporting event. Approach the event like an anthropologist studying a newly discovered society. Describe what happens at the athletic event. Who were the teams, what ages, genders, ethnicity, or class composition of the participants and the audience? How was the competition, who won? Who was in the audience and how did they act? What were the mascots for the teams? Was the competition friendly or aggressive? What happened after the game was over? What else unusual or interesting did you notice? Be prepared to share your observations with the class.

**Paper Three: Race or Mascots (Pick one)**
Due March April 28 at class time
**Race:** Interview a coach of color at Portland State. What has his or her experience been a minority athlete and as a coach? Can they give examples of racial acts or things that were said? Why are there not more head coaches who are minorities? Do they feel that over time things have
gotten better or worse for minority coaches? What can be done to improve the opportunities for minority coaches? Use the material you have read from the text in forming your questions and refer to it in your paper. Be prepared to share your experiences with the class.

Mascots: Interview a Native American about the use of Native American mascots. What do they think about this issue? Do they think it is OK to use Native American mascots if the local Native American's agree? When is it OK? Are there State regulations regarding the use of mascots in public schools? What is your opinion on this? Be prepared to share your experiences with the class.

Paper Four: Gender, Sexuality, and Sports
Due: May 12 at class time
Interview a female coach at Portland State University or at another local university or college. Using the information we have discussed in class and information that you have read in the class readings to formulate your questions. What has been her experience as a female coach? How are women athletes different than male athletes? Do they feel men coaches have better opportunities or receive better treatment than women coaches? How has Title IX helped women’s athletics? Give examples? Be prepared to share your experiences with the class.

Paper Five: Violence
Due May 28 (Wednesday) at class time
Discuss the issue of violence in sports on and off of the field. Find examples of fan violence, athlete violence, and athlete-fan violence. Describe what happened in each situation. Do you think athletes are more violent than other people, on and off of the field? Reference the material we had read in class. Be prepared to share your information with the class.

Paper Six: Drugs and Supplements
Due Monday June 8 (at the time of the final)
Interview a member of the PSU athletic training staff. What are the NCAA rules regarding which drugs and/or supplements are banned and which are allowed? What kind of drug testing is required and how is it done at PSU. What are the long term physical consequences of taking supplements like HGH or testosterone for a long period of time? If supplements are banned, why and how are athletes getting stronger and faster? Are the use of supplements and/or drugs in sports a major problem or not? Be prepared to share your experiences with the class.