Sociology 3150: Sociology of Sports
Dr. Mohamed, Fall 2014
This course is 100% online. All course instruction will take place through GAView and Desire2Learn.
## Course Description

### Number and Title:

- Sociology 3150
- CRN 81387
- Sociology of Sports

### Credit Hours:

3.0 semester credit hours

### Catalog Description:

This course explores the deeper meanings and social significance of sports in both domestic and global contexts. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between sports and issues of race, gender, class, history, social mobility, education, and politics.

In more detail, this course is not about the box scores, “world championships,” or statistics that tend to dominate discussions of sports in contemporary society. Instead, this course is about looking at the deeper meanings and social significance of sports in the United States and around the world. In fact, according to many sources, the legitimate sports industry has a financial footprint of approximately $750 billion, an amount that would likely double if we took into consideration the billions of dollars in illicit revenue tied to sports. In fact, current estimates place sports as the 10th largest industry in the United States, more than twice the size of the U.S. auto industry and seven times the size of the movie industry. But beyond the obvious economic implications, it has been argued that sports are a mirror into our society and one of the major agencies of socialization in the U.S. and the world. Accordingly, over this term we will explore what sports tell us about ourselves and the world, and along the way we will pay particular regard to issues of race, gender, class, history, social mobility, education, and politics.
Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites:

SOCI 1101

Computer and Technology Requirements:

Computer Requirement:

Each CSU student is required to have ready computer access throughout the semester. Since this course will be delivered 100% online, it is therefore essential for every student to have consistent access to a computer and the Internet. For further information on CSU’s Official Notebook Computer Policy please visit http://itpchoice.clayton.edu/policy.htm

Computer Skill Prerequisites:

- Able to use the Windows operating system
- Able to use Microsoft Word
- Able to function in WebCT/CSU’s web-based instruction platform
- Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
- Able to effectively use a Web browser and conduct Internet searches

Software Requirement:

To properly access the course content you will need to access files in a variety of common formats including DOC, PDF, AVI, MP4, PowerPoint, and others. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they have the proper software to access all required course files. If you have difficulty accessing course files, you should immediately contact the HUB for technical support.

Course Email Policy

- I am always happy to answer thoughtful email questions regarding clarification of reading materials, concepts, and ideas that you crossed your mind during preparation for class. All course-related email correspondence should be made using our course-specific GAView email portal. Please adhere to the following guidelines when corresponding with me via email:

  - All email communication should begin with an appropriate greeting. Acceptable greetings include, but are not limited to: Dear ________, Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening, and Hello.

  - Please proofread and spell-check all email correspondence. While the occasional typo and grammatical error is inevitable, there is no excuse for flagrant carelessness or disregard for standard norms of communication.

  - Finally, corresponding with faculty is different from texting your peers. Please refrain from using text-like abbreviations, slang, and other forms of shorthand in such correspondence. This is a professional environment and you are expected to communicate in a professional manner.
**Sociology Program Outcomes**

Outcome 1: Graduates of the program will be able to apply the basic theories and concepts of sociology.

Outcome 2: Graduates of the program will be able to apply the accepted practices of sociological research.

Outcome 3: Graduates of the program will be able to examine the impact of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual orientation within social institutions.

Outcome 4: Graduates of the program will be able to apply the critical thinking skills needed to pursue post baccalaureate degrees or careers in sociology-related fields.

Outcome 5: Graduates of the program will be able to connect their sociological training with larger ideas of social justice and foster a respect for community service and engagement.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

- Ability to use and critically analyze the cornerstone classic and contemporary sociological theories as these theories relate to sport in the social context.
- Ability to use and critically analyze scholarly literature presented in class and used in conjunction with the required course research paper.
- The student will demonstrate an advanced-level understanding of the concepts of society, culture, stratification, and socialization.
- As they pertain to sports, the student will learn be able to describe and discuss the core course principles of: race, gender, class, resistance, history, social mobility, and politics.
- The student will be able to demonstrate fundamental competency in functional writing, reading comprehension, and critical thinking skills.

**Required Readings**

**Bill Buford, 1991 – Among the Thugs**

**William Rhoden, 2006 – Forty Million Dollar Slaves: The Rise, Fall, and Redemption of the Black Athlete**

**Warren St. John, 2009 – Outcasts United: A Refugee Soccer Team, an American Town**


**Reserve Readings** – You will also be required to read various articles that will be made available to you in electronic form through our course GAView/D2L page.
Course Evaluation

Here are my thoughts on grades and what they mean. First, the grade you get in this course will be that which you have earned, not that which I have given you. Notice the distinction; the prior indicates that you will receive a grade based on your overall effort, the quality of your written and other work, and your contributions to the intellectual climate in the classroom. The latter suggests some arbitrary system of assigning grades not based on any objective measure of student performance.

Grades and What They Imply:

- **A** = you rocked my world; you turned in all assignments on time and every exam, quiz, and other assignment submitted by you was of the highest quality; you were an active participant in the learning environment and offered meaningful contributions to class discussions; and you consistently demonstrated levels of critical analysis more commensurate with 1st or 2nd year graduate students than college undergraduates
- **B** = your work was impressive and usually of high quality; you clearly demonstrated a strong grasp of all course materials and regularly offered solid contributions to the learning and intellectual environment
- **C** = your work met all of my expectations, was submitted in a timely fashion, was generally clear and often demonstrated critical thought and analysis; you routinely contributed to the learning environment with cogent comments and thoughtful questions
- **D** = while sometimes acceptable, your performance in this course did not live up to my expectations and did not clearly demonstrate consistent effort; you rarely provided insights and analysis that contributed to the learning environment and you failed to clearly establish a rudimentary understanding of most course materials
- **F** = your performance was well-below satisfactory levels and did not come close to meeting baseline expectations of acceptable work for a college student of any level; you almost never contributed to the learning environment, and your written work suggested an overall lack of either effort or ability which, in either case, means you should have probably withdrawn from the course at some point earlier in the semester

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADED WORKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Who Am I?” and Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets to the Game (i)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viva Futbol</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion &amp; Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i The point total for quizzes is an approximation; individual quizzes may vary in value and the total point value of all quizzes may be more or less than 200 points.
- **Who Am I? & Syllabus Quiz** (10 points) Each student enrolled in this course must complete the course “Who Am I?” and pretest assignment and course syllabus quiz by **no later than 12:00 PM, August 23**. If you fail to complete this assignment by the aforementioned deadline, you will be dropped from the course as a “No Show” and you will not be reinstated for any reason.

- **Tickets to the Game** (approximately 200 points) “Tickets” will consist of online quizzes, video assignments, and other smaller assessments. Each assignment will give you an opportunity to critically analyze the module’s reading assignments and will focus on the important themes and topics. There will be approximately 20 tickets due over the course of the semester. Tickets will range in value (typically from 10-20 points), so it’s in your best interest to take these seriously as they certainly will influence your final grade. You will not be permitted to make up missed tickets.

- **Midterm Exam** (100 points) At about the course’s midway point, you will be required to complete a midterm examination. This exam will comprehensively cover all materials assigned up to that point.

- **Viva Futbol!** (50 points) I will assign each of you a country and ask that you submit a PowerPoint slideshow explaining sport in that society. In particular, you will be asked to reflect upon (1) what sports are the most popular in that society, (2) the history of the sport in that culture, (3) the role, if any, that sport plays in national and/or ethnic identity, (4) the role that sport plays in reinforcing or breaking down ideas of gender, race, and class in that society, and (5) what role sport plays(ed) in shaped the country’s social and political landscape. You will be placed into virtual discussion groups in which your peers will also have an opportunity to reflect upon your presentation.

- **Discussion & Participation** (100 points). You will receive a letter grade for participation. Everyone will begin with a C (75 points), and your grade in this area will go up or down depending on your **meaningful contributions to the intellectual environment in the virtual classroom**. In order to receive full participation credit, students must, on a consistent basis, demonstrate through critical oral reflection a familiarity with and understanding of assigned readings. Participation points will be deducted for failure to demonstrate familiarity with assigned reading materials.

- **Final Exam**: (100 points) This comprehensive final examination will provide you with an opportunity to critically reflect on sport and the role it plays in U.S. & global societies.
Final Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 - 89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60%</td>
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Other Course Policies

General Policy

Students must abide by policies in the Clayton State University Student Handbook, and the Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities.

University Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students’ ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

Course Attendance Policy

Given that this course is 100%, attendance will be measured by overall course activity. Quizzes, exams, and other assigned works must be submitted by their posted due dates. Please make note of these dates. Students will only be permitted to make up that work if the student provides the professor with a written excuse from a doctor (unrelated to them) or other competent authority. “COMPUTER PROBLEMS” or “INTERNET PROBLEMS,” WORK CONFLICTS, and most other reasons generally will not be considered excused absences. It is the student’s obligation to ensure that their schedules are clear during examination periods and that they have access to a reliable computer and stable internet connection when attempting to complete course assignments.

Missed Work

Without a valid excuse, a grade of zero points will be assigned for any missed work. If a valid excuse (as documented by a medical doctor’s note or evidence from another competent authority) is provided.
Academic Dishonesty

Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are cheating on quizzes/exams and plagiarism/collusion. In an online environment, collective quiz and exam taking is also a common form of academic dishonesty. This is not permitted in this course.

To avoid plagiarism: Do not use someone’s words without referencing the source or including the information in quotation marks or a block quote; and do not use someone’s ideas without referencing the source. See: http://www.wadsworth.com/english_d/special_features/plagiarism/definition.html

To avoid collusion: Do not enlist another person to write, re-write, or edit your work or otherwise engage in unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit without the prior consent of your professor.

If I have reasonable suspicion regarding academic dishonesty – enough information to make a reasonable person suspicious that a student has committed academic dishonesty or has information about an act of dishonesty that has been committed – the involved student will receive an F (zero points) for that assignment and be suspended from the course pending judicial procedures conducted by the Office of Student Life/Judicial Affairs. If the student is found responsible for violating Clayton State University’s policies on academic dishonesty, they may choose to remain in the course but will receive an additional 15% deduction from their total course grade. By remaining in this course, you are assenting to this policy.

Judicial procedures are described at http://adminservices.clayton.edu/judicial/

Why I'm Serious about Cheating

Frankly, I'm tired of people cheating and I'm tired of colleagues asking how they should address academic integrity issues in their classrooms. I haven't tolerated cheating in the past, but am convinced that an even harder stance has to be taken as it's become an epidemic. I'm further fed up with the ends justify the means excuses like "we need good grades to get into graduate school," or some of my other personal favorites including "students today are very busy and don't always have time to do all the work you assign us" and "there's so much pressure on us to do well in school." Here are few truisms. Doing the work is the best way to get good grades and the most effective way to prepare for graduate studies of any kind. If you think that you're going to succeed in graduate school with a lazy work ethic and poor skill set, you're in for a rude awakening. Further, you are no busier than anyone who graduated from college 20 years ago, nor do you have any more work piled upon you than they. I will grant you that you're more distracted because there's a bunch of junk around that makes you feel busy, but most of this junk has nothing to do with your education (e.g. surfing the Net, consistently checking email, texting, and the inundation by other forms of "nervous stimulation." ) And a preoccupation with any of these distractions does not constitute being "busy." Sure you may have to work to support yourself and your education; you may have to take care of your children; you may have to go home to babysit your little brother; you may be a student athlete who has got to get in workouts and compete. So what? People have done it for years while successfully managing their academic responsibilities. I can assure you that there are students who have a lot more on their plates than you, yet they still manage to get the job done. There are also millions of people who would kill to have the luxury of being precisely where you are right now. In short, there's no justification for cheating. If you're not prepared and didn't get around to doing your work, suck it up.
Writing Assistance

The Writers’ Studio 224 is located in the A&S building, room 224. There you can talk with trained writing tutors about your writing projects. They are available to work with you at any stage of your paper, from generating ideas to organizing your paper to understanding how to format it correctly. The service is free; you may drop in and wait for a tutor or sign up for a regular appointment. But remember, you, not your tutor, are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the papers you submit. The Writers’ Studio staff is also NOT responsible for academic integrity – that responsibility is 100% yours (the student’s).

http://www.clayton.edu/writersstudio

Other Policies

Unless explicitly noted by me, all examinations are closed book.

Review Sheets & Study Guides: Insofar as exam review sheets are concerned, there will likely be none, so please don’t ask. I frankly don’t care what your other professors do or don’t do to assist you with exam preparation. In my mind, every day is your opportunity to review so use your time wisely. Meaningfully engage in course discussions, read all assigned materials, carefully view all films and other assigned media, and working with peers to understand materials is the best way to prepare for exams and do well in any course.

Grade Disputes: If you feel that a grade you received on a particular assignment was issued in error, your first avenue of recourse is me, the professor. Mistakes do happen, and I am, therefore, happy to change a grade resulting from a mistake on my part or on the part of a machine. However, short of actual errors on my part, I will not be granting any grade changes. I don’t care if the grade you earn results in the loss of financial aid, academic probation, the inability to rush a fraternity or sorority, or any other consequences. It is ultimately your responsibility to be prepared and grades are generally a reflection of this preparation.

Given that this course is not required, if you find any policy in this syllabus to be objectionable, offensive, or one with which you feel you will not be able to comply, you have the prerogative to remove yourself from the course in a manner consistent with Clayton State University’s add/drop and course withdrawal policies.