Sociology 248 D. Randall Smith
The Sociology of Sport Davison 037 – Douglass Campus
Spring 2016 drasmith@rutgers.edu

Overview: The primary purpose of this course is to investigate the institution of organized sport from a sociological perspective. The course follows a common approach to the Sociology of Sports by not only viewing sport as a microcosm of society but also as a site where society is created, reproduced and changed. That is, sports are social constructions and thus arenas for the study of sociological processes. This leads us to focus upon "the structure, processes and problems of sport as an institutionalized social system." In particular we will look at how common sociological concepts such as stratification, discrimination, norms, mobility, violence, and social structure are evidenced in professional and amateur athletics.

Given the focus of the course, there are a number of topics that we will not cover this semester or only address briefly. These include rules for playing the various games that constitute "Sport" and the strategies for succeeding in various sports. This is not a "How To" course. While we will look at why winning and losing may be important for stratifying the sports society, we won't investigate how to win.

There are many popular myths surrounding sports, for example, that sport provides an avenue of mobility for disadvantaged youth. Some of these are only partially true or not true at all. A good way to determine the validity of such (mis)conceptions is to research the statements: The beliefs behind such myths can be traced to commonly held ideas about society and social processes, beliefs which require careful investigation. Therefore, portions of some lectures will be devoted to an in depth presentation of a research study relevant to the topic at hand.

Texts: Two books are required; one a standard textbook, the other a collection of readings. These are:

Coakley, Jay, Sports in Society: Issues & Controversies, (11th Edition), 2015, NY: McGraw Hill Education. ISBN: 978-0078022524. (TEXT) An electronic version of this text is available.

Eitzen, D. Stanley (Editor), Sport in Contemporary Society: An Anthology, (10th Edition), 2015, New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0190202774. (SCS)

Bureaucracy willing, these books should be available at the Douglass Bookstore. The Coakley text has associated online resources at www.mhhe.com/coakley11e. Feel free to browse them if you wish, as the web site now says these resources are available at no charge.

Requirements: There are four requirements for the course. Two hourly exams will be given during the semester on the dates shown below. As well, there will be a third exam during the finals period. The final is currently scheduled for Tuesday, May 10th at 12:00 noon. Exams will, most likely, be multiple choice and short answer. The exams will be graded on a curve determined by the overall class distribution. ***Please complete the grade posting form on the last page and return it to me within the second week of class.***

Finally, there is a standing assignment that you follow the sports world on a regular basis. This could be by reading the sports pages of some newspaper (e.g., the New York Times, the Newark Star Ledger, or the Home News). For those of you who would rather "surf the net" to keep current with sports news, I'd recommend one of the following

http://espn.go.com/
http://cbssports.com/
http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/
http://msn.foxsports.com/

You do not need to subscribe to any of these web sites.

Office Hours: My office hours this semester will be Mondays mornings from 10:00 to 12:00 at Davison 037 on the Douglass campus. Appointments may also be made for other times. I can always be reached via e-mail at drasmith@rutgers.edu

Website: There is a website for the course at https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal. I will use this site for announcements and documents that show students' exam grades anonymously. Students may also use the chat room to communicate with each other. **I WILL NOT POST LECTURE SLIDES ON THE SAKAI SITE.**

Classroom Etiquette, Diversity and Other Considerations: The Department of Sociology encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive classroom environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Thus, behavior that distracts students and faculty is not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks. To this end, please turn off all mp3 players, cell phones and so forth before the start of class. Courteous and lawful expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted.

The Rutgers Sociology Department also strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances. Remember that a little respect shown to your fellow students goes a long way.

Makeup Exams: My policy is to not allow makeup exams except under extreme circumstances. No makeup exams will be allowed unless a) you notify me prior to the exam that you are going to miss it and; b) proper documentation (for example a doctor's note) is provided. Once these conditions are met I will help you make arrangements for one of the regularly scheduled department makeup sessions.

Attendance: Attendance will be taken at each class, though no formal 'points' will be awarded for good attendance. However when final course grades are computed, if you 'just missed' the next highest grade, good attendance may be a factor in raising your grade. You are responsible for all material missed if you are absent, so make arrangements with another student to get notes from missed classes. I will be happy to answer any questions about that material. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website at https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An e-mail will automatically be sent to me and the absence will not be counted against you for 'good attendance' considerations.

Learning Goals: While not officially part of the School of Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum, the learning goals for this course fall into all or part of the following categories for that curriculum:

- Apply concepts of human and social behavior to the institution of sport (SCL)
- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world of sport (21C)

To these we can add:

- Appreciate the beliefs and ideologies that support the institution of sport
- Learn how theory and research can advance our understanding of sport
- Gain insights into any experiences (e.g., athlete, fan) you may have in sport

Course Outline: Below is a tentative schedule of the topics to be covered this semester. Note that the assigned readings fall in "bunches," so plan your workload accordingly. We reserve the right to alter this syllabus if deemed necessary.

Jan. 20 -- Introduction (NO READING)

Jan. 25 -- A History of the Sociology of Sport Subfield
READ: Chapter One: The Sociology of Sport, pgs 2-22 (TEXT)

Jan. 27 -- What is Sport?
READ: Chapter Two: Producing Knowledge About Sports in Society, pgs 24-49 (TEXT)
G.H. Sage and D.S Eitzen, "Sociological Theories and Sport," pgs 3-11 in SCS

Feb. 1 -- Sport and Culture: A Bit of Anthropology
READ: D.S. Eitzen, "Sport as a Microcosm of Society," pgs 12-14 in SCS
D.S. Eitzen, "The Super Bowl as a Microcosm of Society," pgs 15-18 in SAC

Feb. 3 -- Sport and Socialization
READ: Chapter Three: Sports and Socialization, pgs 50-79 (TEXT)
J. Coakley, "Play Group Versus Organized Competitive Team: A Comparison," pgs 23-32 in SCS

Feb. 8 -- A Double Header!!!
Sports Organizations: Where do Managers Come From?
Social Support in Sport – The Home Field Advantage (NO READING)

Feb. 10 -- Slippage
READ Chapter Four: Sports for Children, pgs 80-104 (TEXT)
B. Kelley and C. Carchia, "The Hidden Demographics of Youth Sports," pgs 33-44 in SCS

Feb. 15 -- Sport and Education: Intercollegiate Sport
READ: D.S. Eitzen and M.B. Zinn, "Language and Gender Inequality: Change and Continuity in the Naming of Collegiate Sports Teams," pgs 94-106 in SCS
T. Frank, "Athletics – Why and at What Cost?" pgs 157-162 in SCS
C.T. Clotfeltor, "Is Sports in Your Mission Statement?" pgs 163-165 in SCS
T. Branch, "The Shame of College Sports," pgs 166-173 in SCS
D.S. Eitzen, "The Big-Time College Sports Plantation and the Slaves Who Drive It," pgs 177-187 in SCS

Feb. 17 -- Sport and Education: Interscholastic Sports
READ: Chapter Fourteen: Sports in High School and College, pgs 462-505 (TEXT)
D.S. Eitzen, "High School Sports: An American Obsession," pgs 45-51 in SCS

Feb. 22 -- *** FIRST HOURLY EXAM ***

Feb. 24 -- The Criminology of Sport: Deviance and Criminal Behavior
READ: Chapter Five: Deviance in Sports, pgs 106-144 (TEXT)
J. Ryan, "Female Gymnasts and Ice Skaters: The Dark Side," pgs 111-118 in SCS
M. Hyman, "Harm to Children in Youth Sports," pgs 119-122 in SCS

Feb. 29 -- Violence, Sport and the Law
READ: G. Easterbrook, "Painkiller Abuse by Athletes and Teams," pgs 123-128
B Allenby, "Is Human Enhancement Cheating?: The Answer Will Affect Sports, Schools, and the Battlefield of the Future," pgs 133-136
D.S. Eitzen, "Ethical Dilemmas in American Sport: The Dark Side of Competition," pgs 137-146 in SCS
D. Zirin, "Joe Paterno: Death, Rememberance, and the Wages of Sin," pgs 147-153 in SCS

Mar. 2 -- Sport and Aggression
READ: Chapter Six: Violence in Sports, pgs 146-177 (TEXT)

Mar. 7 -- Fan Riots (NO READING)

Mar. 9 -- Sport, $$$$$, and Labor Movements
READ: Chapter Eleven: Sports and the Economy, pgs 350-387 (TEXT)

Mar. 21 -- Sport, $$$$$, and Labor Movements (continued)
READ: D. Zirin, "When Domes Attack," pgs 199-213 in SCS

Mar. 23 -- "Spanning the Globe"-"We've Got Highlights": Sports and the Media
READ: Chapter Twelve: Sports and the Media, pgs 388-427 (TEXT)
M. Messner, "Reflections on Communication and Sport: On Men and Masculinities," pgs 55-67 in SCS
D. Nyad, M. Messner, and C. Cooky, "Gender in Televised Sports," pgs 68-71 in SCS
D.S. Eitzen, "ESPN: The Force in Sports," pgs 72-79 in SCS
G.H. Sage, "New Media and Global Sports," pgs 322-329 in SCS

Mar. 28 -- Slippage

Mar. 30 -- The Church of Monday Night Football: Sport and Religions
READ: Chapter Fifteen: Sports and Religions, pgs 506-537 (TEXT)

Apr. 4 -- *** SECOND HOURLY EXAM ***

Apr. 6 -- Ratings, Rankings, and Mobility: Sport and Stratification
READ: Chapter Nine: Social Class pgs 264-300 (TEXT)
G.H. Sage and D.S. Eitzen, "Is Sport a Mobility Escalator?" pgs 188-198 in SCS

Apr. 11 -- Discrimination and Racism
READ: Chapter Eight: Race and Ethnicity, pgs 224-263 (TEXT)

Apr. 13 -- Discrimination and Racism (continued)
READ: J. Loewen, "New Opposition to Old Sports Mascots," pgs 83-93 in SCS
K. Simpson, "Sporting Dreams Die on the 'Rez'," pgs 217-224 in SCS
K. Tana, "Realities Behind America's Favorite Pastime: The Dominican Republic's Cheap Labor Bazaar for the Major Leagues," pgs 225-232 in SCS
R. Lapchick, "The 2013 Racial and Gender Report Card: National Football League," pgs 233-237 in SCS

Apr. 18 -- Ageism and Sexism in Sport
READ: Chapter Ten: Age and Ability, pgs 302-349 (TEXT)
M.J. Kane, "Title IX at 40: Examining Mysteries, Myths, and Misinformation Surrounding the Historic Federal Law," pgs 241-255 in SCS
H.L. Friedman, "Tiger Girls on the Soccer Field," pgs 256-262 in SCS
D. Hartmann, "The Sanctity of Sunday Football: Why Men Love Sports," pgs 263-270 in SCS

Apr. 20 -- Gender and Sexuality in Sport (continued)
READ: Chapter Seven: Gender and Sports, pgs 178-223 (TEXT)
D. Zirin, "The Caster Semenya Saga," pgs 275-279 in SCS
P. Griffin, "Changing the Games: Homophobia, Sexism, and Lesbians in Sport," pgs 280-297 in SCS
P. Griffin and H.J. Carroll, "On the Team: Equal Opportunity For Transgender Student Athletes," pgs 298-308 in SCS

Apr. 25 -- Sport Subcultures and Social Worlds (NO READING)

Apr. 27 -- Sport and Politics
READ Chapter Thirteen: Sports and Politics, pgs 428-461 (TEXT)
D.S. Eitzen, "The Globalization of Sport," pgs 311-319 in SCS
D. Macaray, "Nike's Crimes," pgs 320-321 in SCS

May 2 -- Course Summary
READ Chapter Sixteen: Sports in the Future, pgs 538-560 (TEXT)

POSTING GRADES

In order for you to fully understand your grade (and relative position) on each exam, it is important to see the grade distribution for the entire class. For various legal and administrative reasons though, it is better if you choose an identification number for posting grades rather than me selecting one for you.

So, what I need from you is a six-digit number to use for the purpose of maintaining anonymity when grades are posted. This number can be a portion of your RU ID number. It could be part of your cell number. It could be your high school locker combination. Your birthday would probably also work. The number itself doesn't matter as long as it meets two criteria. First, it should be SIX digits. Second, it should be something that you'll remember.

Try not to select a number that others would use. This means that numbers with patterns like 999999, 123456, and 654321 aren't such a good idea.

Please turn in this page within the second week of class. I WILL NOT POST OR RELEASE YOUR GRADE IN ANY WAY UNTIL I RECEIVE THIS FORM FROM YOU.

Name: _____

Number for posting: _____