



## SYLLABUS

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism  
Sport, Culture, and Society  
SPMT 304.02  
Spring 2015

DAY – Tuesday / TIME: 4:30 p.m. – 7:10 p.m. LOCATION: Robinson Hall B122

Dr. Earl Smith  
Adjunct Professor  
SPMT  
e-mail: [esmith21@gmu.edu](mailto:esmith21@gmu.edu)

Permanent:  
Rubin Distinguished Professor of  
American Ethnic Studies  
Director, American Ethnic Studies Program  
Professor of Sociology  
(former Chairman, Department of Sociology, 1997-2005)  
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY

### SPMT Department Course Description:

Analyzes sport from educational, political, economic, and cultural perspectives.

SPMT Department Course Objectives: At the completion of this course, students will know:

1. how and why sport, in general, and certain sports in particular, have been created and organized in certain ways;
2. the connection between sports and other spheres of social life, such as family, education, politics, the economy, the media, and religion;
3. how sports and sport participation inform the way people think about their own bodies and about gender, social class,

race and ethnicity, and disability;

### **Précis**

*Sport, Culture & Society* is a Sociology course that integrates the substantive areas of sport from this academic discipline. Combining both lecture and class discussion we seek to engage everyone in the room to be engaged in this class. The course will examine selected sport & society topics of intellectual interest.

Applying a sociological lens to the study of sport focuses our attention on sports as an institution. In contrast to other disciplines such as psychology or history, a sociological perspective on sport considers the ways in which the institution itself operates—who controls sports, how resources and benefits are doled out---as well as how the institution of sport interacts with other social institutions such as the family, the institution of higher education, the economy, the labor market, the system of racial inequality etc.

Some of the topics to be addressed are:

(1) How does a specific nation's **culture** shape the sports that are played there? Which sports draw a paying audience (or are broadcast on national TV), and which sport is chosen as the national identity? (2) What is a sport? (3) What fuels the Athletic Industrial Complex (sports as a business--\$\$)? (4) Gender and sports: are women better athletes than men? After all these years why are we still discussing /arguing over Title IX? (5) Race and sport: are White athletes better than Black athletes? Are the African American athletes still exploited as they were in the 1960's? (6) What is sports leadership? (7) Who qualifies as "sport heroes"? (8) Why is there so much violence in sports (both on and off the playing fields) and why is so much of this violence directed at women? (9) Why do "fine-tuned" athletes use performance-enhancing drugs? And so forth...

### Additional Course Objectives

- First, and foremost: that sports are a reflection of the society in which we live
- SportsWorld is now global, reaching far beyond the continental United States
- Sports are an integral institution in the US and around the world, an institution similar in scope and objectives such as the family, schools, religion and the economy
- Sports and sport participation have become central in American life
- Inherent in SportsWorld is conflict, social stratification, violence and over time social change.

The “A” grade is for excellence; if you want to earn this grade you must do EXCELLENT work in all aspects of the class (e.g., attendance, test taking, clear, grammar perfect writing assignments, come to class very well prepared and delivered oral presentations etc. Just coming to class and completing assignments is NOT excellence)

**Requirements:** The success of the course and subsequent learning experience will rely heavily on **active** student participation. Along with participating in class and reading the required material, the following constitute course requirements:

1. Take all tests/exams (written and / or oral)
2. Complete all essay and book writing assignments
3. Have near perfect attendance
4. Each student is expected to take part in class discussions.

### ***OK – WHAT PARTICIPATION REALLY MEANS***

Students generally like to complain about their grades unless they get an A

A lot of the complaints are about the “participation” grade.

Participation means more than coming to class, it means being *fully present* in class. It means coming to class ready to participate (having done the readings and otherwise prepared). It means participating in class discussion and debates. It means asking questions.

**Class attendance is required:** Attendance will be taken at the start of each class session. Students on excused absences are responsible for all material covered in class as well as assigned readings. If you miss more than four classes your chances for passing the course are greatly diminished.

**Warning:** You may find some of the issues discussed in this course to be shocking, disturbing or offensive to you as an individual. By definition, the subject matter of this course includes things that many people find objectionable on moral and aesthetic grounds. This course requires that you have a certain amount of tolerance for the unusual and disreputable side of human social interaction. This does not mean that you have to approve of them, but you will have to keep your personal feelings in check in order to study these topics. If you cannot handle this subject matter it may be best for you to take another course.

## IMPORTANT PROCEDURES FOR EACH CLASS: READ CAREFULLY

### General Instructions

#### THIS IS A NO COMPUTER/LAPTOP CLASS

No talking in class

No reading of newspapers, etc in class

No cell phones or iPhones or TEXTING in class!

No assignment you have for this class can make use of WIKEPEDIA

Appropriate dress only

No hats worn in class

Cheating will not be tolerated – do your own work

Check your GMU e-mail each day

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#### NB:

**Cellular Phone & Gadgets Rule (for the entire semester). The first 4-5 minutes of class you can call, text, clear your phone / other gadgets. In the 3-hour class we break ½ way into the class session. At the break (4-5 min) you can again access your phones and / or other gadgets. THESE ARE THE ONLY TIMES YOU CAN ACCESS THESE ITEMS. There will be a stiff penalty for using phones, texting, etc., at any other time!**

### Student Expectations

AT ALL TIMES COME TO CLASS DRESSED APPROPRIATELY!!

#### *Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the

semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### *Campus Resources*

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu/>].

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR: Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

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- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu/>].

**OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:**

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200;  
<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES “Ask a Librarian”  
<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380;  
<http://caps.gmu.edu>

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

George Mason University is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else’s work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

**GRADE SCALE****GRADE SCALE**

95-100% A

90-94% A-

86-89% B+

83-85% B

80-82% B-

76-79% C+

73-75% C

70-72% C-

66-69% D+

63-65% D

60-62% D-

Below 60% F

## IMPORTANT DATES

Pre-Assignment	Jan 20	05
Test 1	Feb 10	10
Test 2 (Mid Term Exam)	March 3	20
Test 3	April 14	10
Participation	Across Semester	10
Biography Report Due	March 31	25
Final Examination	Tu May 12h	20
	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>

### Required Books:

Earl Smith, **Race, Sport and the American Dream**,  
 Carolina Academic Press  
**3<sup>rd</sup> edition ISBN-13:** 978-1611634877

Jay Coakley, **Sports In Society**,  
 McGraw Hill Pub  
**11<sup>th</sup> edition ISBN-13:** 978-0078022524

**Class Decorum:** RESPECT for everyone in the room! Talking is permitted, but as a part of class discussion only. Proper clothing attire required. Hats can only be worn if for religious purposes. No reading of newspapers, magazines etc in class. No TEXTING. No surfing the web. No eating food in class. NONE. You can bring water, coffee or a soft drink.

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### JANUARY

T – 20

Topic: Introductions; Course Syllabus; Questions -- Also What Is A Sport  
 Reading Assignment for Today: Coakley – All front matter and Chapter 1 (“What is the Sociology of Sport? - Why Study Sport in Society?”); Coakley, Chapter 2 – “Producing Knowledge about Sports in Society”  
 E. Smith, Chapter 1 (“A New Sociology of Sports”)

Tu - 27

Topic: Sports, Politics & Culture

Reading Assignment for Today: Jay Coakley, Chapter 13: "Sports and Politics"

DVD: *Not Just a Game* 62 min

## ***FEBRUARY***

Tu – 3

Topic: Race & The Negro Leagues (Social Construction of race)

Reading Assignment for Today: E. Smith, Chapter 2, "African Americans and Sports: Explanations"

DVD: <http://bit.ly/1BeYniU>

**Only the Ball Was White**

Tu-10 Test # 1 (15 points) (1<sup>st</sup> 15min of class)

DVD: *Miracle on Ice*

Tu-17

Topic: Deviance in Sports : Child Sex Abuse

Reading Assignment for Today: Jay Coakley, Chapter 5, "Deviance in Sport" and Brian Denham, "Masculinities and the Sociology of Sport."

DVD: **Happy Valley**

Tu-24

Topic: Athletes Violence Against Women

Reading Assignment for Today: E. Smith, Chapter 6 · Athletes' Violence Against Women  
Coakley, Chapter 6, "Violence in Sports"

**DVD: Bro Code** 60 min

## ***MARCH***

Tu-3 Mid Term Exam (20)

SPRING BREAK: Mon Mar 9 – Sun Mar 15

Tu-17

Topic: Paying Student Athletes

Reading Assignment for Today: Rachel Cohen and Ralph Russo, "Paying College Athletes: Not If, But How."

YouTube: "Pony Express"

<http://youtu.be/fvAgOSSNi74>

Tu - 24

Topic: Gender & Title IX

Reading Assignment for Today: Angela J. Hattery, 2012, "They Play Like Girls: Gender and Race (In) Equity in NCAA Sports." *Wake Forest Journal of Law & Policy*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Pp. 247- 265.

Jay Coakley, "Gender & Sports" – Chapter 7

DVD: DAISY

Tu - 31

Topic: *Friday Night Lights*

### ***APRIL***

Tu - 7

Topic: Athletic Industrial Complex

Reading Assignment for Today: E. Smith, Chapter 8 · The Athletic Industrial Complex

Jay Coakley, "Sports & Economy" – Chapter 11

DVD: Schooled - The Price of College Sports

Tu - 14 Test 3 (10) (1<sup>st</sup> 15 min of class)

Topic: The African American Athlete

Reading Assignment for Today: E. Smith, Chapter 3, "Race and Sports: the Genetic Argument" and E. Smith, Chapter 5 · The Promise of an Education: Truth or a Lie?

Jay Coakley, Chapter 8. "Race & Ethnicity"

Tu - 21 -- no class

Tu - 28

Topic: The African American Athlete

Reading Assignment for Today: E. Smith, Chapter 9, "The Future of Sports in the United States"

DVD: "Marcus Dupree: The Best that Never Was"

FINAL EXAM - SPORT Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> 4:30-7:10

## Writing Assignment: The Sport Biography (25 points)

### Instructions for Writing the Sport Biography

The report is due Tuesday March 31<sup>st</sup> no later than 4pm. **No late reports will be accepted.**

Reports must be typed and submitted to Dr. Smith via the George Mason e-mail system only.

{Make sure you run the virus program before submitting the assignment to Professor Smith}

1. You should use the athletes' autobiography and / or a biography as one important resource for this report.
2. You need to access at least one feature article about your athlete. Also make use of major newspaper articles and magazine articles about your athlete.
3. Your report is to be a minimum of ten (10) pages in length.
4. Your focus is in three parts: (1) Your athlete's early life, (2) the sport career of your athlete, (3) and their life as an adult outside of sport (after sport).
5. Finally, you will need to create an APPENDIX to your report that must detail the accomplishments of your athlete (as a collegian, as a pro etc). {see example below}

Start this assignment on the first day of class!

Please note that a great biography is driven by great questions.

Boring questions produce boring answers.

Boring answers put readers to sleep.

Simple lists of facts are a bit like dry cereal.

#### Step One

Learn enough about the person to write an exciting sport biography. You will be spending a good deal of time on this person so really get to know him or her.

#### Step Two

Open a word processing file and type your person's name at the top of the page. Then save the file with an appropriate file name in your private folder.

#### Step Three

Browse through the following questions of importance to see which ones seem worth pursuing for your project.

Identify at least 4 or 5 questions you wish to research for your biography.

Copy and paste your questions into your word processing file.

List 4-5 questions of import to accompany each of your major questions.

Which related subsidiary questions will you need to explore to answer the questions of import?

It is important to note here that no athlete lives outside of the society they participate in. A careful biography will pick up on the “life” of the athlete, situated in their time.

For example: Pistol Pete Maravich. White male. Son of a college basketball coach. Programmed to become a basketball player at an early age. His father orchestrated his life situation, similar to Todd Marinovich and his father.

The point being that all-great athletes have real lives away from the games they play and you need to capture this in your work.

### Biography Questions of Importance

In what ways was the life remarkable?

In what ways was the life despicable?

In what ways was the life admirable?

What human qualities were most influential in shaping the way this person lived and influenced his or her times?

Which quality or trait proved most troubling?

Which quality or trait proved most difficult?

Which quality or trait was most beneficial?

Did this person make any major mistakes or bad decisions? If so, what were they and how would you have chosen and acted differently if you were in their shoes? How did they recover (or not) from these bad decisions?

What are the two or three most important lessons you or any other young person might learn from the way this person lived?

An older person or mentor is often very important in shaping the lives of gifted people by providing guidance and encouragement. To what extent was this true of your person? Explain.

What do you think it means to be a hero? Was your person a "hero?" Why? Why not?

How is a hero different from a celebrity?

# **SAMPLE APPENDIX**

## **Sport Biography Appendix: “Pistol” Pete Maravich**

**(Example only)**

### **Awards and Records**

#### **[Collegiate]**

- The Sporting News College Player of the Year (1970)
- Naismith Award Winner (1970)
- The Sporting News All-America First Team (1968, 1969, 1970)
- Three-time AP and UPI First-Team All-America (1968, 1969, 1970)
- Holds NCAA career record for most points (3,667, 44.2 ppg, three-year career) in 83 games
- Holds NCAA career record for highest points per game average (44.2 ppg)
- Holds NCAA record for most field goals made (1,387) and attempted (3,166)
- Holds NCAA record for most free throws made (893) and attempted (1,152)
- Holds NCAA record for most games scoring at least 50 points (28)
- Holds NCAA single-season record for most points (1,381) and highest per game average (44.5 ppg) in 1970
- Holds NCAA single-season record for most field goals made (522) and attempted (1,168) in 1970
- Holds NCAA single-season record for most games scoring at least 50 points (10) in 1970
- Holds NCAA single-game record for most free throws made (30 of 31) against Oregon State on Dec. 22, 1969
- Led the NCAA Division I in scoring with 43.8 ppg (1968); 44.2 (1969) and 44.5 ppg (1970)
- Averaged 43.6 ppg on the LSU freshman team (1967)
- Scored a career-high 69 points vs. Alabama (Feb. 7, 1970); 66 vs. Tulane (Feb. 10, 1969); 64 vs. Kentucky (Feb. 21, 1970); 61 vs. Vanderbilt (Dec. 11, 1969);
- Holds LSU records for most field goals in a game (26) against Vanderbilt on Jan. 29, 1969 and attempted (57) against Vanderbilt
- All-Southeastern Conference (1968, 1969, 1970)
- In 1988, Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer signed legislation changing the official name of LSU's home court to the Maravich Assembly Center
- #23 Jersey retired by LSU
- In 1970, Maravich led LSU to a 20-8 record and a third place finish in the NIT

<b>Team</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Games</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>PPG</b>
LSU	1966-67	17	741	43.6
LSU	1967-68	26	1138	43.8
LSU	1968-69	26	1148	44.2
LSU	1969-70	31	1381	44.5
<b>TOTALS</b>	1967-70	83	3667	44.2

## Awards and Records

### [Professional]

- NBA All-Rookie Team
- All-NBA First Team (1976, 1977)
- All-NBA Second Team (1973, 1978)
- Five-time NBA All-Star (1973, 1974, 1977, 1978, 1979)
- Scored 15,948 points (24.2 ppg) in 658 games
- Top 15 scoring average NBA History (24.2)
- Led the NBA in scoring (31.1 ppg) in 1977, his career best
- Scored a career-high 68 points against the New York Knicks on Feb. 25, 1977
- Shares NBA single-game record for most free throws made in one quarter (14) on Nov. 28, 1973 against Buffalo
- Shares NBA single-game record for most free throws attempted in one quarter (16) on Jan. 2, 1973 against Chicago
- #7 Jersey retired by the Utah Jazz (1985)
- #7 Jersey retired by the Superdome (1988)
- NBA 50th Anniversary All-Time Team (1996)
- #7 Jersey retired by the New Orleans Hornets (2003)
- #23 Jersey retired by the LSU Tigers (2007)