

George Mason University
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

SPMT 321, Section A01 – America Through Baseball
Three (3) Credits



Instructor: Richard Hardesty
Location: Online
Day/Time: Online
Email: rhargest@masonlive.gmu.edu
Office Hours: **While I do not have a physical office, I have Skype and FaceTime. I will be happy to meet with you over Skype or FaceTime to answer any questions or alleviate any concerns you may have. Please email me to set up a Skype or FaceTime appointment.**

Course Description:

Baseball has often been considered America's national pastime, a game that has helped define the history of the country. As Jacques Barzun, a French-born American scholar and critic once said, "Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball, the rules and realities of the game...." Barzun's quote highlights the centrality of baseball in America.

This course is an examination of the role of baseball in American culture. The course studies baseball as a cultural and social institution in the United States over the past 150 years. This class will **not** engage in baseball trivia, or enter into debates over the greatest player or team. Instead, this class will focus on how baseball highlighted many of the promises, perils, and paradoxes inherent in American history. Baseball tells the story of American democracy and progress. Yet, it also tells the story of the conflicts that arose, specifically rural against urban, labor against capital, and civil rights against racial segregation and the struggle for racial equality. Studying the history of baseball can help us better understand the history of the United States.

Course Objectives:

The student will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of baseball in American culture
- Present an understanding of baseball as a cultural institution
- Demonstrate an understanding of the social, political, and legal issues that have affected baseball
- Analyze using a variety of primary sources
- Analyze baseball through film and literature
- Reflect on his or her relationship with baseball

Course Delivery:

Online

Structure:

This will be an intensive reading, viewing, and writing course. After all, we are compressing a fifteen-week class into five weeks. The class will be broken into five (5) modules. Each module will cover baseball during a specific period, containing readings from the required texts, selected primary and secondary sources, and films for you to view. Furthermore, each module contains PowerPoints that will help you identify important people, events, and themes from that period. All the primary and secondary sources will be made available on Blackboard unless specified otherwise.

Adding and Dropping the Class:

The last day you may add or drop the class without a tuition penalty is May 18, 2016. The final drop deadline, with a 50% tuition liability is May 23, 2016.

Email:

I encourage you to use email as a means of sharing any questions or concerns you may have. To ensure that I receive your message, **please send it from your George Mason address.** Your messages should be grammatically correct with proper spelling. Do not use text messaging abbreviations. Please allow me at least twenty-four (24) hours to reply. **Emails containing additional module information may occur during the course, so it is important for you to regularly check your email.**

Required Texts:

- Benjamin G. Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game*, 3rd Edition. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008.
- Rob Ruck, *Raceball: How the Major Leagues Colonized the Black and Latin Game*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2011.

Required Films:

- *Baseball* by Ken Burns
- *Eight Men Out*
- *The Natural*
- *A League of Their Own*
- *42*
- *Bull Durham*
- *Moneyball*
- *Field of Dreams*

A Note on Films: Most of the films can be streamed online from the course Blackboard website. **To do so, you will need to view this on the latest version of Chrome to view this film on a PC or laptop. To play content on your mobile device, download the video player by searching for "Swank Media Player" in Apple iTunes or Google Play Store.** An Android app is required on Android, and an iOS app is required on iOS. If you are unable to stream the videos, the films are also available through Netflix, Redbox, Amazon, and on reserve at the George Mason library.

Course Requirements:

Syllabus Quiz: The syllabus quiz is designed to help you understand the course policies outlined. On the first official day of class, the syllabus quiz will be emailed to you. The quiz will be due by **11:59 p.m. (EST) on May 17**. Your responses should be emailed to me in Microsoft Word or RTF formats only. **You are responsible for notifying me in the event you do not receive the email. Please do so as soon as possible.**

Argument Essays: You will be required to write three (3) argument essays during the course of the summer session. Within the course schedule, you will find three (3) open ended questions designed to get you to critically analyze the required readings and films. This is **not** an assignment that asks you to simply paraphrase the materials. Rather, in **three-to-four double-spaced pages**, you must formulate an argument on the question being asked, and then use the assigned readings and videos to support your position. **Please make sure you cite the sources you use.**

I have prepared some Tips and Tricks to Good Writing and an Argument Essay Guide that will help you craft your papers. Equally important, the Argument Essay Guide will outline the things that I will be looking for as I grade your work. The Tips and Tricks to Good Writing and Argument Essay Guide can be found on Blackboard. **Please take the time to use the guides. They are there to help you improve and succeed!**

Your argument essays must be submitted to me via email attachment in Microsoft Word or RTF formats only. **The deadlines for your argument essays are outlined in the course schedule.**

The Year in Baseball Research Paper: You will select **only one (1) year** from 1901 to 2001 and conduct some brief primary source research about baseball during that year. Through your research, you will write a **three-to-four (3-4)** page paper that answers the question: what can baseball tell us about America in your selected year? This assignment will allow you to connect baseball to an aspect of American life and/or culture, **as well as to important themes we learn during the course.** The George Mason libraries provide students with free online access to valuable primary source materials, specifically the ProQuest Historical Newspaper archive. *Sports Illustrated* also has an archive of every issue dating back to August 1954 and can be online. Other sources that can help you with this project include *Sport*, *Time*, and *The Sporting News* (known by some as "The Bible of Baseball").

Given the wide array of events that take place in a year, and given the page limitations of this assignment, you will be asked to **narrow the scope of your paper**. For example, if you select 1967, you could explore baseball's reaction to the urban riots that took place across the United States that year. Or, you could examine baseball's response to the escalating war in Vietnam. If you select 1933, for instance, you could explore baseball's reluctant embrace with technology, or the game's response to the Great Depression.

Because the summer session is five weeks long, **this is not an assignment to put off until the last minute**. Consequently, this assignment has been broken down into several parts: 1) The Year in Baseball Brainstorming Worksheet; 2) annotated bibliography; and 3) final paper. The George Mason libraries have provided documents to assist you in your research. I have also prepared **The Year in Baseball Research Paper Assignment Guide** to assist you in brainstorming for your project, developing your paper, and preparing your annotated bibliographies. **These documents can be found on Blackboard.**

Improvement Credit:

While there will be no extra credit, I believe you should be rewarded if your argument essays improve during the semester. You can therefore earn improvement credit. Here is how improvement credit works: I will take the lower of your first two argument essays, and, if you score higher on the third argument essay, I will divide the difference by two (2). For example, if you scored an 80 on your first argument essay, an 87 on your second argument essay, and a 96 on your third essay, I would add eight (8) points to your first argument essay ($96 - 80 = 16$; $16 \text{ divided by } 2 = 8$).

Late Assignments:

Because this is an online course, you are expected to regularly have access to the internet, especially concerning the timely submission of required assignments. Please make sure you have contingency plans in place in the event that your computer crashes or your internet goes out at an inopportune time. Equally important, please make sure you back up your assignments in the event that your files become compromised. **Computer and internet-related issues will not be considered a reason for late submissions.** I will deduct five (5) points for each day any assignment is submitted late, **unless documentation of illness or family emergency is provided.**

Grade Breakdown:

Assignment	Percentage
Syllabus Quiz	5%
Argument Essay One	20%
Argument Essay Two	20%
Argument Essay Three	20%
Year in Baseball Brainstorming Worksheet	5%
Year in Baseball Annotated Bibliography	5%
Year in Baseball Final Paper	25%

Grading Scale:

A: 93-100	B: 83-87	C: 73-77	F: 0-59
A -: 90-92	B-: 80-82	C-: 70-72	
B+: 88-89	C+: 78-79	D: 60-69	



Course Schedule:

<p>Module One May 16 to May 21</p>	<p>“It’s our game – the American game”: The Origins and Development of Baseball</p> <p>PowerPoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “The game is an immigrant”: The Origins, Growth, and Myths of America’s Game• When Baseball Went White: The Segregation of Baseball• Lipstick and Line Drives: Baseball and the New Woman
--	---

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, 1-59 • Ruck, 1-25 <p>Additional Required Readings (on Blackboard):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nine Surviving Descriptions of Baseball-like Games Written and Published Before 1845,” in David Block’s <i>Baseball Before We Knew It</i> • Abner Graves Identifies Abner Doubleday as the “Father of Baseball” (1908) • “Why Discriminate?” <i>Sporting Life</i>, March 14, 1888 • “Nowhere So Sharply Drawn as in Baseball,” <i>Sporting Life</i>, April 11, 1891 • “Baseball Among the Fairer Sex Coming into Prominence,” <i>Indianapolis Freeman</i>, December 26, 1908 • Dr. Dudley A. Sargent, “Are Athletics Making Girls Masculine?” <i>Ladies’ Home Journal</i> (1912) <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Base Ball Discovered,” Link on Blackboard • “Inning 1”: Burns’ <i>Baseball</i>
--	---

Argument Essay - Module One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walt Whitman gushed about baseball, saying “I see great things in baseball. It’s our game - the American game.” Considering baseball’s origins, what makes baseball an American game?
------------------------------------	---

Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Quiz due on May 17 at 11:59 p.m. (EST) • “Year in Baseball” Brainstorming Worksheet due on May 21 at 11:59 p.m. (EST) • Argument Essay One due on May 21 at 11:59 p.m. (EST)
------------------	--

Module Two May 23 to May 28	<p>“Say it ain’t so”: The Formation and Near Death of the Major Leagues</p> <p>PowerPoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseball Wars: Strife in the Pursuit of Pennants and Profits • “Take Me Out to the Ball Game”: Baseball in the American Mind • “Work or Fight”: Baseball in the World War I Era • “Say it ain’t so”: The Black Sox Scandal Shocks Baseball
--	---

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, 60-122 • Ruck, 26-48 <p>Additional Required Readings (on Blackboard):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ernest Lawrence Thayer, "Casey at the Bat" (1888) • Grantland Rice, "Casey's Revenge" (1907) • "The Reserve Rule is the Corner-Stone of Organized Ball," <i>Sporting Life</i>, February 24, 1912 • "The Baseball Players Fraternity and What It Stands For," <i>Baseball Magazine</i>, November 1912 • "Baseball Players Must Work or Fight," <i>The Washington Post</i>, July 20, 1918. • Arnold Gandil, "This Is My Story of the Black Sox Series," <i>Sports Illustrated</i>, September 17, 1956 <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Inning 2" and "Inning 3": Burns' <i>Baseball</i> • <i>Eight Men Out</i>
--	---

Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotated Bibliography due on May 28 at 11:59 p.m. (EST)
------------------	---

Module Three May 30 to June 4	"The national tonic": Baseball in Prosperity and Depression
	<p>PowerPoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • America's Diamond Mind: Baseball in the Age of Ruth • Breaking the Slump: Baseball During the Depression-Era • Only the Ball was White: The Negro Leagues

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, 123-154 • Ruck, 49-71 <p>Additional Required Readings (on Blackboard):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “‘Freak Deliveries’ Regulated,” <i>Baseball Magazine</i>, February 1920. • “Admiring Mob in Riot Over Babe Ruth,” <i>The Washington Post</i>, April 8, 1929 • “All-Star Game Just What Doctor Ordered for Baseball,” <i>Chicago Daily Tribune</i>, June 20, 1933. • “Night Baseball Makes Major League Debut,” <i>Chicago Daily Tribune</i>, May 23, 1935. • “No-Hitter in Negro World Series,” <i>Chicago Defender</i>, October 15, 1927. • “First Negro League All-Star Game,” <i>Chicago Defender</i>, September 16, 1933. <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Inning 4” and “Inning 5”: Burns’ <i>Baseball</i> • <i>The Natural</i>
--	--

Argument Essay – Modules Two and Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseball’s growing popularity, and the events that threatened it, raised questions regarding the game’s democratic heritage. Do you believe baseball represents a democratic game? Please use information from the PowerPoints, readings, and films to support your answer.
---	---

Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument Essay Two due on June 6 at 11:59 p.m. (EST)
------------------	---

Module Four June 6 to June 11	<p>Sports as a Social Force?: An Age of Great Experiments</p> <p>PowerPoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Double V: World War II and the Coming Civil Rights Movement • Belles of the Ballpark: The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League • Baseball’s Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and the Civil Rights Movement • “Happy Series, You-all”: Frank Robinson and the Limits of Baseball as a Social Force
--	--

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, 155-203 • Ruck, 72-142 <p>Additional Required Readings (on Blackboard):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “All-American Girls Professional Baseball League Rules of Conduct” (1944) • “Review of AAGPBL Season,” from <i>Kenosha Comets 1946 Year Book</i> (1946) • “An Open Letter to Jackie Robinson,” in <i>Jackie Robinson and Race in America</i> • “Jackie Robinson’s Life Threatened in Two Letters,” <i>The Washington Post</i>, May 21, 1951 • “Sports as Social Force,” <i>Baltimore Evening Sun</i>, October 10, 1966. • “Happy Series, You-all,” <i>Afro-American</i>, October 15, 1966. <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Inning 6,” “Inning 7,” and “Inning 8”: Burns’ <i>Baseball</i> • <i>A League of Their Own</i> • <i>42</i>
--	--

<p>Module Five June 13 to June 18</p>	<p>“Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio”: Nostalgia in an Age of Relocation, Labor Unrest, and Performance Enhancing Drugs</p>
	<p>PowerPoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Past’s Presence in the Present: Nostalgia in an Age of Malaise • Baseball on the Move: The Shifting Geography of Baseball Teams • The Players Are Empowered: The Rise of Free Agency and Labor Disputes • “Juiced”: Performance Enhancing Drugs and Baseball

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, 204-282 • Ruck, 143-235 <p>Additional Required Readings (on Blackboard):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Giants Accept San Francisco Offer, Move in 1958 After 74 Years Here,” <i>New York Tribune</i>, August 20, 1957 • “Cronin, Freaney: Curt Flood Suit a Sports Threat,” <i>Chicago Daily Defender</i>, January 19, 1970. • “Flood Versus Kuhn: Not the Court’s Finest Hour,” <i>Washington Star</i>, June 22, 1972 • “The Silent Superstar,” <i>The New York Times</i>, March 9, 1999 • “Former Pitcher Tom House Describes Past Steroid Use,” <i>USA Today</i>, May 3, 2005 • “The Mitchell Report,” Excerpt, December 13, 2007 <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Inning 9” and “Inning 10”: Burns’ <i>Baseball</i> • <i>Moneyball</i> • <i>Bull Durham</i> • <i>Field of Dreams</i>
--	--

Argument Essay – Modules Four and Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a game that has featured segregation, gambling, and drug use, Americans wax nostalgic and look back fondly on baseball’s past, attributing traditional values on the game. What traditional values does baseball represent? Has baseball maintained those traditional values?
---	--

Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument Essay Three due on June 18 at 11:59 p.m. (EST) • Year in Baseball Final Paper due on June 18 at 11:59 (EST)
------------------	---

Student Expectations

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services and inform their instructor, in writing, as soon as possible. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor [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/>].
- The Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community (<http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>) and the staff will follow up with the student.
- 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.

