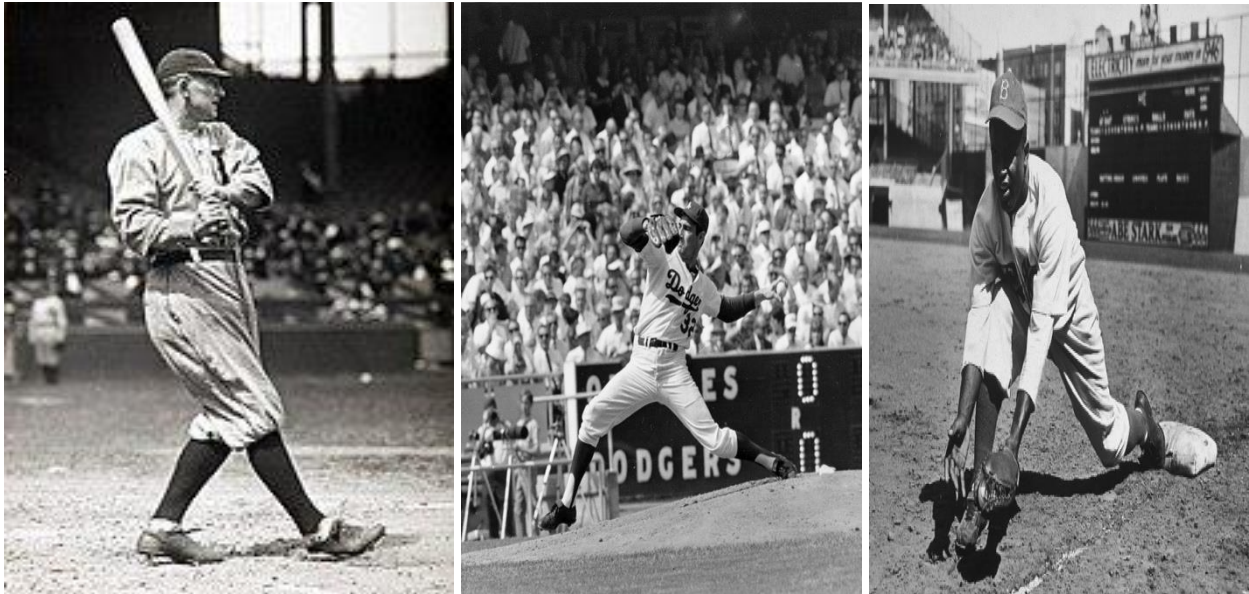


George Mason University
School of Sport, Recreation and Tourism Management

SPMT 321, Section C01 – America Through Baseball
Three (3) Credits



Instructor: Richard Hardesty
Phone Number: 443-336-0755
Email: rhargest@gmu.edu
Location: Online
Day/Time: Online
Office Hours: **While I do not have a physical office, I will be happy to meet with you over FaceTime to answer any questions or alleviate any concerns you may have. Please email me to set up a FaceTime appointment.**

Prerequisites:
None

Catalog Description:

This course is designed for the student to gain an understanding of the past and present role of baseball in American culture. The course focuses on the development of professional baseball over the past 160 years and the ways in which the history of America as a nation and culture can be "read" through baseball.

General Course Overview:

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 160 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 and secondary 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.

Email:

I am glad you are in this class, and I want you to do well. One of the best ways of doing so is to ask questions or just chat with me, **either by email, by phone, or through FaceTime or Skype.** I genuinely enjoy meeting students and learning from and about them.

Likewise, as college students of the 21st Century, 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 GMU 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 changes to the syllabus and additional course information may occur during the semester, so it is important for you to regularly to check your email.**

Required Texts:

- Benjamin Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game*, Fourth Edition. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2018.
- Bill White, *Uppity: My Untold Story of the Games People Play*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2011.

Required Films:

- *Baseball* by Ken Burns
- *Base Ball Discovered*
- *A League of Their Own*
- *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:

Argument Essays: There will be two (2) argument essays during the semester. For each argument essay, you will be allowed to **only** use your class presentations and your required readings. **You will not be allowed to use any outside sources.** Each argument essay will contain several prompts. Your job will be to select one (1) prompt which, in answering, will require you to develop and support an argument.

The argument essays serve several important purposes. First, the argument essays offer an opportunity for you to demonstrate your knowledge of the material we cover during a particular period. Equally important, the argument essays offer an opportunity for you to develop and hone your analytical and writing skills. These are two of the more important skills you will develop during your academic careers. Skills that you can use to succeed in your other classes as well as in your professional careers. As a result, the argument essays are not asking you to merely restate facts. Rather, the argument essays are asking you to analyze the information we covered so you can present your interpretation in a well-written paper.

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!**

Discussion Board Postings: To help you prepare for the argument essays, you will be required to write several brief discussion board posts during the fall term, **as outlined in the course schedule**. The discussion board posts serve several important purposes: 1) they are designed to facilitate closer readings and sharper analysis of the material; 2) they will give you an opportunity to hone your writing and analytical skills; and 3) they are designed to facilitate an interactive, online community.

Once you have submitted your discussion board post, you must also respond to **at least one of your classmates**. Strong responses can **respectfully**: 1) offer a constructive question with a rationale for the question; 2) provide a suggestion to improve your classmate's post; or 3) support or oppose an opinion that is backed by course material.

As you post in the discussion board, **please be respectful of me and your classmates**. Online communication can be much different from face-to-face communication. Without hearing the tone of a person's voice, or seeing a person's facial expression, comments in an online setting can take on a different meaning. For instance, statements that can be viewed as good-natured ribbing in a face-to-face setting may be viewed as disparaging or bullying in an online forum. Therefore, we must make every effort possible to respect each other and our views. We may disagree with each other, and that is fine. That is even awesome because how boring would things get if we all agreed with each other all the time! But we can disagree and be respectful.

In line with this sentiment, comments that are – or can be construed as – disrespectful and/or offensive will not be tolerated. As you post in our discussion boards, please refrain from cursing, making derogatory statements toward race, religion, sexual orientation, gender preference and/or disability. Please also refrain from trolling and flaming.

Violating this rule will result in an automatic zero for the discussion board post.

Module Quizzes: To help you prepare for the exams, there will be several quizzes during the semester. The quizzes are designed to help you stay up-to-date on the readings and notes. Equally important, the quizzes are designed to help you build a knowledge base that you will need to do well on the exams. All quizzes will be announced, with dates outlined in the "**Course Schedule**" section. Approximately a week before each quiz, I will hand out a study guide to help you focus on the important people, events, and themes we covered. **All quizzes will be made available on Blackboard.**

Video Project: For this assignment, you will create a 6-to-8-minute video using Kaltura or any video-producing software, focusing on a prompt that can be found in the Course Schedule section. This assignment is designed to help hone your skills on synthesizing a volume of information on a given subject and communicating a balanced point of view.

You can be creative with this video. For example, you can present yourself as a news anchor providing commentary at the end of a news segment, or you can be interviewed by a reporter who is doing a story on the subject. Your video can simply be a conversation where your friends come to you to learn more about the subject at hand.

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: if you score higher on your second argument essay, I will divide the difference by two (2). For example, if you scored an 80 on your first argument essay and a 90 on your second essay, I would add five (5) points to your first argument essay ($90 - 80 = 10$; $10 \text{ divided by } 2 = 5$).

Late Assignments:

Given that many of you have jobs, families, and other classes, **you will have the opportunity to work through this course at your own pace – but only to a point. You are welcome to submit any assignment early if you wish.** However, I have also established deadlines that are outlined in the course schedule. **The deadlines are established to prevent you from falling behind.**

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 if your computer crashes or your internet goes out at an inopportune time. Equally important, please make sure you back up your assignments if your files become compromised. **Computer and internet-related issues will not be considered a reason for late submissions.** I will deduct one (1) point for each day a discussion board post is late, and five (5) points for each day all other assignments (i.e., argument essays, quizzes, The Year in Baseball Research Paper assignments) are late. **The only exception will be if you provide documentation of an illness or family emergency.**

Grade Breakdown:

Assignment	Percentage
Video Project	10%
Discussion Board Posts	10%
Module Quizzes	20%
Argument Essay 1	30%
Argument Essay 2	30%

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	

A Note on Grades and Class Policies: Sometimes, things do not work out as we plan. Questions about how things were graded come up. There is a disagreement about a policy or about a final grade. Please know that there is a process by which these issues can be addressed.

- **Do you have a grading question?** If you have questions about how an assignment was graded, please send me an email, or make an appointment via FaceTime, Skype, or Zoom to talk about the issue. I want to be sure you understand how points were assigned **and** that I correct any grading errors before final grades are submitted.
- **Do you have a question about your final grade?** If you review your final grade and do not believe it is accurate, please send me a message through Canvas. I will send you a list of all grades entered into your final grade that you can review against what you see on Blackboard. If there are discrepancies, we will work together to settle them. I do not intend, nor do I benefit from, “stealing” or “hoarding” points. I want to be sure you are awarded all the points you have earned.
- **Do you have a question about a course policy?** If you have questions about policies, please come and talk to me about them. I guarantee there is a reason behind every policy, but I am open to talking about policies and any changes that may be needed.

Course Schedule:

Module 1	June 27, 2022 to July 3, 2022
	<p>The Origins, Development, and Divisions of Baseball</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The game is an immigrant”: The International Origins of America’s Game • “The arrival of the Age of Baseball”: The Game’s Growing Popularity • When Baseball Went White: Drawing Baseball’s Color Line • Lipstick and Line Drives: Baseball and the New Woman • “We’ll toss the ball”: The Rise of Professionalization • The First Professional Leagues • “Beer and Whiskey”: The First Baseball War <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Guide for Quiz 1 will be distributed. <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, <i>Baseball: A History of America’s Game</i>, 1-59. • Begin reading White, <i>Uppity</i>. <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Base Ball Discovered,” Link on Blackboard

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Inning 1”</i>: Burns’ <i>Baseball</i>
Deadline	Module Quiz 1 due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 3.

Discussion Board Post	<p>For your first discussion board post, please take the opportunity to introduce yourself to me and your classmates. You can include information about your major, your favorite baseball team and why you root for them, or even a favorite baseball memory. You can even indicate what you hope to get out of the course. If you do not like baseball, have a favorite team, or have a favorite baseball memory, that is okay! You can share an interesting fact about yourself. As you draft your message, please only share information that you are comfortable sharing with others. Please also make sure you respond to at least one of your classmates.</p> <p>The discussion board post and classmate response must be posted by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 3, 2022.</p>
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Module 2	July 4, 2022 to July 10, 2022
	<p>Baseball Comes of Age</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Players Revolt • The Great Baseball War: The Formation of the American League • “It’s our game”: American Exceptionalism and Baseball’s Invented Origins • “Katie Casey was Baseball Mad”: Baseball in the American Mind • The “outlaw league”: Labor Unrest and the Federal League • “Work or Fight”: Baseball During World War I • Prelude to a Fix, or: Baseball in the Stranglehold of Gamblers • “It ain’t true, is it Joe?”: Myth, Truth, and the Aftermath of the Black Sox Scandal <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Guide for Quiz 2 will be distributed. <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, <i>Baseball: A History of America’s Game</i>, 60-122. • Continue reading White, <i>Uppity</i>. <p>Videos:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Inning 2” and “Inning 3”: Burns’ Baseball</i>
Deadline	Module Quiz 2 due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 10.

Video Project	<p>For this assignment, please create a 6-to-8-minute video using Kaltura or any video-producing software. You can present your video as a sports commentary, a news report, or a conversation among friends. In creating your video, you have free rein on how you present the information and your views.</p> <p>Grantland Rice, seen by many as the father of sports journalism, believed athletes should be treated as heroes. In line with Rice’s sentiment, please read and/or watch the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “An Open Letter to Jackie Robinson,” <i>New Amsterdam News</i>, September 13, 1947. • John Updike, “Hub Fans Bid Kid Adieu,” <i>The New Yorker</i>, October 22, 1960. • Paul Simon, “The Silent Superstar,” <i>New York Times</i>, March 9, 1999. • “Say it ain’t so, Sergeant Joe” (with DiMaggio’s Army Records), <i>The Smoking Gun</i>, August 3, 2010. • Roy Firestone, Video: Brooks Robinson. • Dan Steinberg, “Brooks Laich on meeting his namesake, Orioles legend Brooks Robinson,” <i>The Washington Post</i>, April 15, 2013. • Michael Beschloss, “Clemente, the Double Outsider,” <i>New York Times</i>, June 19, 2015. • Video: “‘Baseball’s last hero’: Roberto Clemente’s Humanitarian Efforts Rivalled His MLB Success.” <p>These articles and videos cover Jackie Robinson, Ted Williams, Joe DiMaggio, Brooks Robinson, and Roberto Clemente. How would you define a hero? Why are the baseball players covered for this assignment viewed as heroes? Are these baseball players heroes to certain groups of people, or are they heroes to everyone?</p> <p>Lastly, based on your definition, can any of these players be seen as heroes? Why or why not? As you answer this question, please consider the faults and failings that are attributed to some of these players. Do these faults and failings hurt the player’s status as a hero? Why or why not?</p> <p>The Video Project will be due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 10, 2022.</p>
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Module 3	July 11, 2022 to July 17, 2022
	<p>“The national tonic”: Baseball in Prosperity, Depression, and War</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damn Yankees: The Rise of the Game’s Most Storied Franchise • “One hell of a hangover”: Baseball, Normalcy, and the Age of Ruth • Breaking the Slump: Baseball and the Great Depression • Down on the Farm: Baseball Responds to the Depression • “Only the Ball was White”: The Negro Leagues • The Double V: World War II and the Coming Civil Rights Movement • Belles of the Ballpark: The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Guide for Quiz 3 will be distributed. <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, <i>Baseball: A History of America’s Game</i>, 123-154. • Continue reading White, <i>Uppity</i>. <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Inning 4,” “Inning 5,” and “Inning 6”: <i>Burns’ Baseball</i> • <i>A League of Their Own</i>
Deadline	Module Quiz 3 due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 17.
Deadline	Argument Essay 1 due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 17.

Module 4	July 18, 2022 to July 24, 2022
	<p>An Age of Great Experiments</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing America’s Game: Latin Americans and the Color Line <li>• Baseball’s Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and Baseball’s Color Line <li>• “Happy Series, You-all”: Rights, Resistance, and the 1966 Orioles <li>• “I had a hammer”: Smashing Racial Barriers in the 1970s <li>• Wearing Jackie’s Number: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy <li>• “Playing with the Boys”: Women’s Expanding Place in Baseball <li>• Center Field Shot: Baseball in the Television Age <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Guide for Quiz 4 will be distributed. <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rader, <i>Baseball: A History of America’s Game</i>, 155-203. <li>• Finish reading White, <i>Uppity</i>. <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Inning 7</i>”: Burns’ <i>Baseball</i> <li>• 1944 Court Martial (Link on Blackboard) <li>• Jackie Enters the Majors (Link on Blackboard) <li>• Reese and Robinson Myth (Link on Blackboard) <li>• Social Justice (Link on Blackboard) <li>• Jackie Robinson and Malcolm X (Link on Blackboard) <li>• Words from Jackie Robinson (Link on Blackboard)
Deadline	Module Quiz 4 due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 24.

Discussion Board Post

In the years since Jackie Robinson broke Major League Baseball's color line, much has been made of baseball's relationship with race and civil rights. Robinson has been rightfully hailed as a hero and a civil rights icon. However, what was Robinson's legacy, especially with regards to baseball's relationship with race and civil rights?

This is not an easy question to answer. To reach a conclusion, one must answer a series of other questions. What goal did Robinson seek to achieve by breaking Major League Baseball's color line? In what ways did he succeed? In what ways did he fall short? How did Robinson inspire future generations of African American players?

This is where Bill White's story comes into play. His Major League career began a year after Robinson's ended. In writing *Uppity*, White provided insight into his career as a player, an announcer, and National League President. How did Robinson inspire White? What relationship did White have with baseball, and what did this relationship reveal about the game's relationship with race and civil rights?

Based on the material presented in Module 4, including Bill White's *Uppity*, what is Jackie Robinson's legacy with regards to baseball's relationship with race and civil rights? How has Major League Baseball and baseball in general lived up to what Robinson stood for? Has the game lived up to everything Robinson represented? Why or why not?

The discussion board post and classmate response must be posted by **11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 24, 2022.**

Module 5	July 25, 2022 to July 31, 2022
	<p>Baseball’s Changing Landscape</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseball on the Move: The Game’s Shifting Geography • The Fight for Chavez Ravine • The Players are Empowered • An Age of Labor Unrest • “Economics played a role”: Earl Weaver and the Advent of the Analytics Age • The Reinvigoration of Baseball • “Juiced”: Baseball’s Sorted History with Performance Enhancing Drugs <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Guide for Quiz 5 will be distributed. <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rader, <i>Baseball: A History of America’s Game</i>, 204-282. <p>Videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Inning 8” and “Inning 9”: Burns’ Baseball • Earl Weaver Played Moneyball Before Moneyball • Earl Weaver and Bill Haller
Deadline	Module Quiz 5 due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 31.
Deadline	Argument Essay 2 due by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on July 31.

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

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>
- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

- Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

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

