

Just a Game? Sports and Society

Winter 2021

Instructor: Chris Miller

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Office Location Hours: Virtually by appointment

The Waterloo, Kitchener, and Cambridge campuses of the University of Waterloo are situated on the Haldimand Tract, land that was promised to the Haudenosaunee of the Six Nations of the Grand River, and are within the territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples.

Currently working in Toronto, Canada, I am on the land of the Anishinabewaki ᐱᓂᓴᓇᑲᓄᐩ Vᐸᐱᑭ, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Huron-Wendat, Mississauga, and Haudenosaunee peoples. Since we will all be meeting from different places this semester, students are encouraged to visit <https://native-land.ca/> to learn more about the land on which they are situated.

General Arts 130 Description

This course provides an introduction to diverse intellectual modes of inquiry in the social sciences and humanities with an emphasis on the development of communication skills. In a small seminar setting, students will explore a variety of topics based on instructor expertise in order to build social awareness, ethical engagement, and communication competencies in comprehension, contextualization, and conceptualization. Students will be expected to engage with the work of others, articulate positions, situate writing and speaking within contexts, practice writing and speaking for situations beyond the classroom, engage in basic forms of research, and workshop, revise, and edit writing.

Sports and Society Description

Sports are – and have long been – an important part of the fabric of society. This course uses sports to explore larger themes, such as race, class, gender performance, postcolonialism, identity, and meaning-making. Is an athlete's ritual a distraction, or does it help them stay focused? How are student-athletes implicated in the billion-dollar business of sports? Using disciplinary lenses from Anthropology, Sociology, History, and Cultural Studies, students will explore the larger implications behind the seemingly simple movement of bodies according to prescribed rules.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon Completing Arts 130, Students should be able to:

1. Understand their own diverse experiences, strengths, and goals as communicators.
2. Examine their views and perspectives and, through the practice of interpersonal communication, develop a deeper awareness of their role in the communication process.
3. Look critically at context, audience, and genre and use that information to be more persuasive in communications.

4. Collaborate with classmates and provide, incorporate, and reflect on feedback.
5. Use communication to consider their own ideas and the ideas of others.
6. Identify and work with different technologies that will help with effective communication.

Upon Completing Sports and Society, Students should be able to:

7. Explain the relationship between sports and society
8. Recall and describe key examples of sports events with significant social dimensions
9. Identify how race, religion, class, gender, and other dimensions are connected to understandings of sport
10. Apply key sociological theories to current events and everyday life
11. Analyze how meanings are constructed, reconstructed, and attached to sports and culture

Required Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. Required readings will be made available through Library Course Reserves. Additional required resources will include films, articles, and podcasts, which will be posted to the modules on Learn for the weeks in which they are required.

*Course Reserves can be accessed using the **Library Resources** widget on the **Course Home** page.*

Course Format

Please note, that based on UW policies, this course will be running remotely in the Winter 2021 semester. Although we will attempt to schedule a select number of synchronous meetings, most of the course will be running asynchronously. While we will not be meeting on a weekly basis, it is your responsibility to complete all of the assigned material (readings, lecture materials, podcasts, online workshops) by the end of that week. For the purposes of this course, and as outlined in the course schedule, the 'Week' will run from Monday morning until Sunday evening. *Please pay specific attention to your Discussion Board Posts and other assignments which may have specific due dates in the middle of a week.* The Required Readings for the course will be available through Course Reserves for the entire semester, but you are expected to have completed a reading by Sunday evening of that Week. Other course materials (Lecture Slides, a brief introduction, and Additional Recommended Materials) should also be completed by the end of a given week.

Course Evaluation – Overview

Assessment	Due Date	Weight
Discussion Board	Weekly	20%
Live Sports Thematic Analysis	February 7	10%
Debate:		20% (Total)
Formal Presentation	February 25	10%
Informal Debrief	February 25	5%
Written Reflection	February 25	5%
Mascot Case Study	March 14	15%

Final Paper:		35% (Total)
Proposal	March 7	5%
Draft	March 21	N/A
Peer Review	March 28	5%
Presentation	April 1 OR April 9	5%
Final Paper	April 18	20%

Course Evaluation – Details

What follows is a brief description of each assignment. A more thorough explanation of each assignment can be found in the ‘Assignments’ section on Learn.

Discussion Board – 20%

Throughout the course, we will be using Flipgrid to facilitate class-wide discussions. More information about this platform, as well as how to sign up can be found under ‘Content’ > ‘How-To Guides.’

Throughout the course, you will find discussion questions that correspond to course material from that week. These questions may be based on a specific reading, lecture, slide, podcast, video, etc., but students are encouraged to integrate all relevant material in their responses. Each week, students are expected to contribute an initial post in the form of a 90-second video, responding to the question(s). Students are also required to comment on the responses of other students in their discussion group at least twice. Your responses can take the form of a 30-second video, or roughly 100 words of text. Responses should add something substantial to the conversation, and go beyond simply stating: ‘I agree! Good point!’ *Please be advised that one response and two comments are the bare minimum requirement for this assignment, and students are encouraged to keep the conversation going by adding their insights based on personal experience and course material.*

Due: Your first post is due on Tuesdays by 11:59 PM. Responses to your peers are due on Fridays by 12 PM (noon). Please note that graded discussion boards will not be taking place each week, so please pay close attention to the course schedule. Please see the full posting under ‘Assignments’ on Learn for a breakdown of when Discussion Board Posts are due.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand their own diverse experiences, strengths, and goals as communicators.
- Examine their views and perspectives and, through the practice of interpersonal communication, develop a deeper awareness of their role in the communication process.
- Look critically at context, audience, and genre and use that information to be more persuasive in communications.
- Use communication to consider their own ideas and the ideas of others.
- Explain the relationship between sports and society
- Recall and describe key examples of sports events with significant social dimensions

Live Sports Thematic Analysis – 10%

Students will submit a 2-3 page essay based on a thematic analysis of a live sporting event.

Students will watch one live sports event of their choice. This event can be something that happened in the past (Super Bowl XLIV, available on YouTube, for example) or an event that takes place during the semester. Students must identify and analyze how one concept that we have explored in class deepens understanding of this event.

Due: February 7 @ 11:59 PM.

Learning Outcomes:

- Look critically at context, audience, and genre and use that information to be more persuasive in communications.
- Identify and work with different technologies that will help with effective communication.
- Identify how race, religion, class, gender, and other dimensions are connected to understandings of sport
- Apply key sociological theories to current events and everyday life

Debate – 20%

This assignment will be done in groups and has three components. This includes a Formal Presentation (10%); an Informal Debrief (5%); and a Written Reflection (5%).

In small groups, students will choose a topic/resolution for debate. After confirming the topic with myself, it is up to your group to decide who will argue the ‘Affirmative’ side and who will argue the ‘Opposing’ side. Once students have conducted their research and prepared their arguments, they can begin to prepare the formal components of the assignment which will be evaluated.

Due: All components of this assignment must be submitted by February 25 @11:59 PM

- 1. Formal Presentation (10%):** As a group, students must conduct their debate virtually. This debate must be recorded so that it can be uploaded to Learn for evaluation. The debate should proceed according to the following format:
 - Affirmative Side Opening Arguments
 - Opposing Side Opening Arguments
 - Affirmative Side Rebuttal
 - Opposing Side Rebuttal
 - Affirmative Side Closing Statements
 - Opposing Side Closing Statements
- 2. Informal Debrief (5%):** After the formal debate has concluded, all team members (from both the Affirmative and Opposing sides) will gather for a brief (5-10 minutes) informal conversation that addresses the topic from a more collaborative standpoint. What arguments did team members feel were particularly strong? Your group must also try to reach a more collaborative compromise to your resolution. This conversation must be recorded and uploaded to learn in a separate video file.
- 3. Written Reflection (5%):** After the formal debate and informal debrief have concluded, students must write a brief (1-2 page) reflection on their experience of the debate. Each student in the group must submit their own reflection to the Dropbox on Learn.

Learning Outcomes:

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- Look critically at context, audience, and genre and use that information to be more persuasive in communications.
- Collaborate with classmates and provide, incorporate, and reflect on feedback.
- Identify and work with different technologies that will help with effective communication.
- Analyze how meanings are constructed, reconstructed, and attached to sports and culture

Mascot Case Study – 15%

In small groups (3-5), students will submit a 5-6 page report based on a case study of a mascot, logo, or team name which has been deemed controversial. In this report, students are expected to offer some historical background on the team/city as well as why that name/mascot was chosen. The report should also offer an overview of the debate regarding a proposed name change. In other words, for people who said the name should be changed, what reasons did they give? What reasons did the people who did *not* think the name should change give? Finally, your case study should report on the current state of the debate, whether or not a conclusive solution has been reached. Was the team name changed? Did the logo change but the name remain the same? Is a review underway to determine if a change is necessary? How have all concerned parties reacted to the change (or lack thereof)?

Due: March 14 @11:59 PM

Learning Outcomes:

- Look critically at context, audience, and genre.
- Collaborate with classmates and provide, incorporate, and reflect on feedback.
- Use communication to consider their own ideas and the ideas of others.
- Recall and describe key examples of sports events with significant social dimensions
- Identify how race, religion, class, gender, and other dimensions are connected to understandings of sport
- Apply key sociological theories to current events and everyday life
- Analyze how meanings are constructed, reconstructed, and attached to sports and culture

Final Paper – 35%

The final paper will be made up of several components which have their own due dates. This includes a Proposal (5%); a Rough Draft and Peer Review (5%); a Presentation (5%); and the Final Paper (20%). By the end of this assignment, students will submit a 7-9 page essay that analyzes an issue within the world of sports. Students must identify a specific issue and demonstrate how it can be more deeply understood using at least three of the concepts which we have explored throughout the course.

1. **Proposal (5%):** In 1-2 pages, students must identify the issue they have chosen and explain the concepts which they intend to apply to understand this issue better. In their proposal, students should be able to briefly describe the background of the issue and

describe some of the specific theories or resources on which they plan to draw to understand the issue.

Due: March 7 @ 11:59 PM

2. **Draft:** Students must submit a rough draft of their final paper, which will be sent to another student for peer review. *Note: This draft will not be graded. Rather, students will be graded based on the quality of the feedback they give to their peer. However, students who do not submit a draft will not be matched up with a peer, and will therefore lose out on that mark. Also, in order to allow students the full week to evaluate your work, there will be no extensions for this assignment.*

Due: March 21 @ 11:59 PM

3. **Peer Review (5%):** Students will be sent a rough draft from one of their peers. Based on this rough draft, students must conduct a peer review. To capture your review, you must use the Comments and Track Changes function in Microsoft Word. You are not being asked to *proofread* your peer's work for spelling mistakes, but rather to *evaluate* it at a deeper, critical level. Students must submit their feedback to the Dropbox on Learn and also return their feedback to their peer via email. *Note: In order to allow your peers to integrate your feedback into their presentations and final papers, there will be no extensions granted for this deadline. Submitting your feedback **before** the deadline is also strongly encouraged for this assignment.*

Due: March 28 @ 11:59 PM

4. **Presentation (5%):** Students will prepare a 5-minute presentation that offers an engaging summary of the issue they have chosen. This presentation will be both audio and visual, but it is up to you to decide whether this entails a narrated PowerPoint slide, a video presentation where you occasionally 'share your screen,' or any other format that you find appealing. You will be assigned either the first or second presentation date at some point in the term. Please note that for the last two weeks of the course, students' presentations will constitute the required content for the course, and will facilitate our discussions for that week. Because of this, students should formulate some questions for discussion in their presentation, and monitor the discussion board associated with their topic during the week they present.

Due: April 1 or April 9 @ 10:00 AM

5. **Final Paper (20%):** Students must submit a 7-9 page essay that discusses the issue they have chosen. Students are strongly encouraged to integrate the feedback that they have received through Peer Review and the Discussion Board posts to strengthen their paper.

Due: April 18 @ 11:59 PM

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand their own diverse experiences, strengths, and goals as communicators.
- Collaborate with classmates and provide, incorporate, and reflect on feedback.
- Use communication to consider their own ideas and the ideas of others.
- Recall and describe key examples of sports events with significant social dimensions

- Identify how race, religion, class, gender, and other dimensions are connected to understandings of sport
- Apply key sociological theories to current events and everyday life
- Analyze how meanings are constructed, reconstructed, and attached to sports and culture

Course Schedule:

Week	Dates	Theme	Required Readings	Additional Workshops and Activities	Assignments Due
1	Jan 11-17	Introduction to Arts 130 and Sports & Society		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Arts First? • Arts First Peer Tutor Intro Videos 1 & 2 • Introduce Yourself Activity 	
2	Jan 18-24	Religion	Chidester, "The Church of Baseball, The Fetish of Coca Cola and the Potlatch or Rock 'n' Roll"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your Ideal Writing Process Workshop • AFPT Video 3 	Discussion Board
3	Jan 25-31	Race	Bruce, "Marking the Boundaries of the 'Normal' in Televised Sports"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Academic Information Workshop • Introduction to the Library Worksheet • AFPT Video 4 	Discussion Board
4	Feb 1-7	Gender	Jones, "Female Fandom: Identity, Sexism, and Men's Professional Football in England"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to Read for Research Workshop • AFPT Video 5 	Live Sports Thematic Analysis Due Feb 7
5	Feb 8-12	Community	Kennedy, Silva, and Coelho, "'We Are All Broncos': Hockey, Tragedy, and the Formation of Canadian Identity?"		Discussion Board
6	Feb 13-21	Reading Week – No Classes			
7	Feb 22-28	Canadian Identity	Szto, "#LOL at Multiculturalism: Reactions to Hockey Night in Canada Punjabi from the Twittersverse"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating Sources into Your Writing Workshop 	Debate (all components) Due Feb 25
8	March 1-7	Deviance	<p>Sefiha, "Bad Sports: Explaining Sport Related Deviance"</p> <p>Dickerson, "Ricky and Stick Icky: Marijuana, Sport, and the Legibility/Illegibility of Black Masculinity"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Topic to Thesis Workshop 	Discussion Board Final Paper Proposal Due March 7

9	March 8-14	Settler Colonialism	King, Staurowsky, Baca, Davis, and Pewewardy, "Of Polls and Race Prejudice"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing Your Writing Workshop 	Mascot Case Study Due March 14
10	March 15-21	International Relations	Levermore, "Sport's Role in Constructing the 'Inter-State' Worldview" Smart, "Consuming Olympism"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting and Giving Feedback Workshop 	Final Paper Draft Due March 21
11	March 22-28	Business	Van Rheenen, "Exploitation in College Sports" Edwards, "Crisis of Black Athletes on the Eve of the 21 st Century"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing Effective Presentations Workshop 	Peer Review (submitted and returned to peer) due March 28
12	Mar 29-Apr 6 *All classes cancelled and buildings closed for Good Friday (April 2)	Presentations			Presentations (for half of class) Discussion Board* (for half of class)
13	April 7-14	Presentations			Presentations (for half of class) Discussion Board* (for half of class)

* Please see the 'Discussion Board' Assignment outline on Learn for a list of the specific due dates

Course Policies

Late Work

Late assignments, without a valid University of Waterloo approved reason (e.g. medical reasons with a doctor's note), will be accepted up to 6 days past their due date. For each day that the assignment is late, the final grade of that assignment will be docked 10% (for a total of 60%). After 6 days, assignments will no longer be accepted, and you will receive a mark of 0 on the assignment. Please note that in the case of the Final Paper Draft, Peer Review, and Discussion Board Assignments, no extensions or late penalties will be granted. Missing the deadline will automatically result in a mark of 0.

Please Note: If you find that you are having a hard time meeting a deadline, please contact me ASAP so that we can discuss your situation. Speaking with me does not guarantee an extension, but NOT speaking with me in advance of a deadline guarantees that no special consideration will be given. I understand that stressful circumstances can arise which make meeting a deadline difficult, so do not hesitate to get in touch if you are facing challenges.

Email Policy

All course related email must be sent to c22mille@uwaterloo.ca. The subject line must have the title of our course (i.e. "ARTS 130" or "Sports and Society"). I will do my best to respond to

emails within 24 hours from Monday to Friday. Please keep this in mind surrounding the due dates for assignments. If you send me a question at 8 PM Friday night, you may not get a response before a Sunday 11:59 PM deadline.

Formatting and Citations

All submitted written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman Font. Documents must be submitted in either PDF or .doc (or .docx) format. There is no single preferred style for citations in this course. Recognizing that students come from a variety of disciplines, you will likely spend much time learning the preferred style in your field (APA, MLA, Chicago). Please ensure that all work that must be referenced is cited according to the guidelines of one of these styles, and that you remain consistent to one style throughout an entire assignment. Failure to cite work constitutes plagiarism and a violation of academic integrity. If you are unsure about the conventions of a particular citation style, please see the “Writing, Revising, and Formatting” tab in this course’s [Library Guide](#).

Academic integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information. Please be aware that plagiarism, even on minor assignments, is a serious academic offence, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Turnitin

Please be advised that Text matching software (Turnitin®) maybe used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students’ submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment. If you have concerns about submitting your work to Turnitin® I encourage you to contact me immediately to arrange alternatives for each assignment.

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. (Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information). A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic

advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term. Even if you are not registered with AccessAbility Services, please do not hesitate to reach out to me and let me know if certain aspects of the course pose challenges to you, and we can discuss how they can be made more accessible.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

On Campus

- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655
- [MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7

- [Good2Talk](#): Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 ext. 6880
- [Here 24/7](#): Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- [OK2BME](#): set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online on the Faculty of Arts [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

ARTS First Writing Hub

Check out the Arts First Writing Hub! As a student in an Arts 130 course, you have access to your very own Writing and Communication Centre peer tutor, Roniksha. She will add you to a Microsoft Team called The Arts First Writing Hub, where you can meet with her as you plan and

revise your assignments. Everyone benefits from feedback on their writing and communication, so I encourage you to get support from your tutor!

Academic freedom at the University of Waterloo

[Policy 33, Ethical Behaviour](#) states, as one of its general principles (Section 1), “The University supports academic freedom for all members of the University community. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching and research on an honest and ethical quest for knowledge. In the context of this policy, 'academic freedom' refers to academic activities, including teaching and scholarship, as is articulated in the principles set out in the Memorandum of Agreement between the FAUW and the University of Waterloo, 1998 (Article 6). The academic environment which fosters free debate may from time to time include the presentation or discussion of unpopular opinions or controversial material. Such material shall be dealt with as openly, respectfully and sensitively as possible.” This definition is repeated in Policies 70 and 71, and in the Memorandum of Agreement, Section 6.

Intellectual Property

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of the instructor, which can include:

- lecture handouts and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint slides)
- lecture content, both spoken and written (and any audio or video recording thereof)
- questions from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams)
- work protected by copyright (i.e., any work authored by the instructor)

Making available the intellectual property of instructors without their express written consent (e.g., uploading lecture notes or assignments to an online repository) is considered theft of intellectual property and subject to disciplinary sanctions as described in Policy 71 – Student Discipline. Students who become aware of the availability of what may be their instructor’s intellectual property in online repositories are encouraged to alert the instructor