HISTORY OF SPORTS IN THE UNITED STATES
HIST 341-001
Fall 2018
3 credit hours

Instructor: Professor Chris Elzey  
Location: Merten Hall 1200  
Day: M/W  
Time: 12:00-1:15 p.m.  
Office: Robinson B 369B  
Email: celzey@gmu.edu (please use your MasonLive account when emailing)  
Office Hours: M/W 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Prerequisites for the course  
None

Class Contacts
1. Name and phone number/email:

2. Name and phone number/email:

The Course
History 341 explores the history of sport in the United States from the colonial period to the turn of the twenty-first century. Students will consider the ways in which sports reflected—and oftentimes shaped—attitudes toward race, ethnicity, gender, class, amateurism, professionalization, international politics, and governmental policies. In addition, the course traces the development of sports. Specifically, it explores the ways in which spontaneous games played by Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth century evolved into highly formalized and popular activities—activities that are part of the social landscape and comprise a multi-billion dollar industry.

Goals
Understanding the history of sports in America is one of the most important goals of History 341. After completing the course, students will be able to explain:

• The role of sport in American history
• How and why sports evolved from impromptu events with few rules and customs into major social and cultural activities
• The professionalization of American sports
• The history of intercollegiate sports
• The ways in which race, gender, class, ethnicity, the media, and international politics both reinforced and revealed attitudes about sport
• How and why American sport segregated, and then desegregated
• The history of American athletic clubs
• How sports was used as a tool of political protest
• The international role of sport
• The ways in which sports reflected broad themes in American history
Demonstrating effective and clear expression in both writing and speech is another important goal of the course.

**Required Books**

Readings are to be completed for the day that they are assigned in the course schedule (see below). The books are:

- Wiggins, David K. *More Than a Game: A History of the African American Experience in Sport*. Lanham, MD, 2018. (Book will be available mid-September.)

You are also responsible for reading several articles. All of these are available on Blackboard (so be sure you have access to it). As with the assignments for books, the readings are to be completed by the time you come to class. You might be quizzed on them or there might be an assignment to complete. The articles are:


**Exams, Quizzes and Assignments**

There are two exams. Each covers material from both the class and assigned readings. The exams will consist of identifications, and short answer and essay questions. About two weeks before the exam, I will post a list of identifications (IDs) and several essay questions on Blackboard. From that list, I will select several ID terms, and two essay questions, of which you will answer only one. Each exam will count for 25 percent of your grade.

There are also three short papers (each approximately 3 pages in length). The papers are part opinion pieces, part analysis of the books we will read in class. **DO NOT SUMMARIZE THE BOOK AND ARTICLES. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WRITING ON THREE OF THE FIVE BOOKS.** I would like you to think about the book and articles and write about how they relate to American history and culture. You will be graded on content, persuasiveness, grammar, and overall organization. Papers must be submitted in hard copy. **NO PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED BY**
EMAIL. The scores of the papers will be averaged and count for 20 percent of your grade. Papers are due the day of discussion.

Quizzes are also part of the course, and they may be announced, unannounced, or a small assignment. A quiz will be given on the day of discussion (over that particular book). Please bring a pen or pencil, and writing paper, to class. Also, I will count attendance as a quiz. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest quiz score and calculate the average, which is worth 20 percent of your grade.

The last requirement is a group project. I will divide the class into five groups. Each group will be responsible for one of the five books. You are to develop a short presentation (no more than 20 minutes) on the book. I would like you to include background information of the material discussed in the book (you may present the material using PowerPoint slides or Prezi) and prepare discussion questions, which are to be submitted to me via email NO LATER THAN TWO DAYS before the presentation. I will subtract five points from your overall presentation grade for each day the questions are late. **YOU WILL BE GRADED ON THE PRESENTATION OF BACKGROUND MATERIAL, THE DISCUSSION THAT YOU GENERATE, AND THE QUALITY OF THE QUESTIONS.** I will post the questions that you submit on Blackboard. If you are not presenting that day, you are expected to review the questions on Blackboard; be prepared to answer them (some might even be included on the quiz).

The group project requires you to work with each other outside of class (electronically and/or in person). Each group member must speak. The project is worth the final 10 percent of your grade.

**Grade Breakdown**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (2)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes and assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group project/presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89.9</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-87.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>60-69.9</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0-59.9</td>
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**Missed Exams, Quizzes and Assignments**

Make-up exams will only be given if you have official documentation (a doctor’s note, for instance) excusing you from class. There will be no make-up quizzes. I repeat: **THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES, BUT I WILL DROP YOUR LOWEST QUIZ SCORE.** Late papers and assignments will be docked 5 points for each day they are not turned in (that includes Saturdays and Sundays). So, please do your work; budget your time; and plan accordingly.
Electronic Devices
Cell phones, Smartphones, and other electronic devices that make any kind of noise are not permitted. PCs and tablets are allowed, but only for note taking. If you are seen using your PC or tablet for something other than note taking, you will forfeit your right to use that device in class.

Academic Integrity
You are to do your own work. Students who violate the Honor Code will be dealt with severely. Information on the Honor Code and what constitutes a violation can be found at the website for the Office of Academic Integrity (https://oai.gmu.edu).

Students with Disabilities
Accommodations for students with disabilities are available. See the webpage of the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (https://ds.gmu.edu) or call 993-2474 for more information.

Diversity
The course complies with George Mason’s Diversity Statement, which begins: “George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.” For the full statement, see https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement.

Important Drop/Add Dates
- September 4 is the final day to add the course.
- September 9 is the final day you can withdraw from the course and not incur a financial charge.
- October 28 is last day for selective withdrawal.
Schedule

Week 1
Read: Start Jenkins
August 29: Games into Sports: Society and Culture, 1800-1860
Read: Breen, “Horses and Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling among the Gentry of Virginia”; continue Jenkins

Week 2
September 3: No Class
September 5: Athletic Clubs and Amateurism
Read: Morais, “Eugen Sandow’s ‘Modern’ Marketing Strategies, 1887-1925”; continue Jenkins

Week 3
September 10: Baseball’s Early Years
Read: continue Jenkins
September 12: Baseball at the Turn of the Century
Read: Continue Jenkins

Week 4
September 17: Finish Jenkins, discussion and presentation; paper due
Read: Start Brown
September 19: Sports on College Campuses, 1880-1920
Read: Continue Brown

Week 5
September 24: Women and Sports, 1880-1920
Read: Continue Brown
September 26: Sports Heroes (and Anti-Heroes) of the 1920s
Read: Continue Brown; Wiggins, chapter 1

Week 6
October 1: Sport Heroes in the 1930s
Read: Continue Brown; Wiggins chapter 2
October 3: Sport Heroes in the 1930s (cont.)
Read: Continue Brown

Week 7
October 9 (Tuesday): Finish Brown, discussion and presentation; paper due
October 10: Guest lecturer; Wiggins, chapter 3

Week 8
October 15: Exam #1
Read: Start Remnick (this reading will not appear on exam #1)
October 17: A Separate National Pastime: the Negro Leagues
Read: Continue Remnick; Wiggins chapter 4
Week 9
October 22: Racial Segregation in Sports
Read: Continue Remnick; Wiggins, chapter 5
October 24: Sports during WWII
Read: Continue Remnick

Week 10
October 29: A Women’s Place?: Sports and Post-WWII America
Read: Continue Remnick
October 31: Finish Remnick, discussion and presentation; paper due

Week 11
November 5: “The Greatest”: Muhammad Ali
Read: Wiggins, chapter 6
November 7: Ali (cont.)
Read: Wiggins, chapter 7

Week 12
November 12: “The Greatest” (cont.)
   Read: Finish Wiggins (chapter 8), discussion and presentation; paper due
November 14: The Bitterest of Foes: the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Cold War Rivalry
   in Sports
   Read: Start Longman

Week 13
November 19: Bitterest of Foes (cont.)
   Read: Continue Longman
November 21: Thanksgiving Break (no class)
   Read: Continue Longman

Week 14
November 26: Sports in the Era of America Limitations: the 1970s
   Read: Continue Longman; Rader, “The Quest for Self-Sufficiency and the New
November 28: Finish Longman, discussion and presentation; paper due

Week 15
December 3: Ice Wars: US and USSR Hockey
December 5: Commercialization, Globalization, and Infatuation: Sports in
   the New Millennium

December 17: Exam #2 (starts at 10:30 a.m.)