Sports as Social Science

I. Course Information

Quest 2 Theme: Identities

Summer A 2025

Online

Asynchronous

Primary General Education Designation: Social & Behavioral Sciences

Writing Designation (if seeking): Writing Designation (WR) 4000 words

A minimum grade of C is required for general education and writing credit.

Instructor: Dr. Drew Brown

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Office hours: by appointment

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Course Description:

A social science approach to examining issues in sports. Students employ qualitative and quantitative analysis, deepening their understanding of social science research. Presents a multidisciplinary approach that enhances skills in understanding societal issues through sports.

This course uses social science research methodologies to explore the multifaceted relationship between sports and U.S. society and answer the pressing question, "What can we learn from sports?" By studying sports as a lens into broader social phenomena, students will effectively analyze and evaluate qualitative or quantitative data to develop a deeper understanding of social science research and its application to real-world contexts. Through a critical examination of the multi-disciplinary dimensions of sports, students will learn how to conduct research using various social science methods and approaches that are relevant to pressing questions concerning human society. Through social science research, students will learn how sports can be studied to better understand social issues, enhancing their intellectual, personal, and professional development.

Course Goals:

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. To understand the social and cultural significance of sports within society.
2. To examine key theories and approaches within social science research.
3. To develop practical skills in designing and conducting social science research on sports.
4. To analyze and critically evaluate research findings related to sports and society.
5. To apply social science research to contemporary issues in sports and society.

Required Course Materials (to purchase/rent):

1. Jones, Ian. Research Methods for Sports Studies. Routledge, 2022.
2. Atkins, Larry. Foul Or Fair?: Ethical and Social Issues in Sports. McFarland, 2024.

II. Coursework & Schedule

1. List of Graded Work

Assignment	Description	Points
Quizzes (5)	There will be quizzes that evaluate the reading assignments. The lowest quiz will be dropped.	40
Test 1	There will be one tests to evaluate students' mastery of the course material.	50
Paper #1: Pre-Research Analysis	Write a 500 to 550-word paper that analysis the social significance of researching a sports-related topic.	5
Paper #2: Topic Introduction	Write a 600 to 650-word Introduction and thesis statement that presents your topic.	10
Paper #3: Literature Review	Write a 900 to 950-word Literature Review that synthesizes relevant literature, examines key themes and findings, and identifies gaps in research for a chosen research topic.	20
Paper #4: Group Methodology	Write a 900 to 950-word Methodology that outlines the theoretical framework and research methods for a research project.	15
Paper #5: Group Data and Findings	Write a 1400 to 1600-word Data Coding and Findings section for your research paper that outlines the key themes, trends and/or other findings. Students will participate in various field data collection methods and document findings.	25
Paper #6: Post-Research/Conclusion	Write a 500 to 550-word Conclusion that analyzes the practical applications of their research findings in the real-world.	5
Group Presentation	Prepare a 10–12-minute presentation summarizing a chosen research project and how the research impacted their own intellectual, personal, and professional views.	30
	Total:	200

2. Course Schedule

Module	Activity:	Topic/Assignment: (Subject to change)
Orientation	Topic:	Course Introduction
	Lectures:	Orientation
	Readings/Films:	Syllabus and Orientation
	Assignments:	Paper 1: Pre- Research Analysis Orientation Quiz

Module	Activity:	Topic/Assignment: (Subject to change)
Module 1	Topic:	What is Social Science Research?
	Lectures:	Introduction to Social Science Research (Part I): What is Scientific Research? Introduction to Social Science Research (Part II): What is the Social in Social Science Research? Introduction
	Readings/Films:	Jones Ch1: Research Methods for Sports Studies Atkins p. 15-21
	Assignments:	Quiz 1 Paper 2: Introduction

Module	Activity:	Topic/Assignment: (Subject to change)
Module 2	Topic:	Reading Social Science Literature
	Lectures:	What is a Literature Review?
	Readings/Films:	Atkins (Research topic specific) What is a Literature Review
	Assignments:	Quiz 2 Paper 3: Literature Review

Module 3	Topic:	Choosing a Methodology
	Lectures:	Theoretical Framework Research Methods
	Readings/Films:	(Chapter: Data Collection - 3.9 & 3.10) Bhattacherjee, Anol. *Social science research: Principles, methods, and practices*. USA, 2012.
	Assignments:	Quiz 3 Paper 4:

Module 4	Topic:	Data Collection and Findings
	Lectures:	Collecting Data and Reporting Findings
	Readings/Films:	Types of Research Methods
	Assignments:	Quiz 4

TEST 1

Module 5	Topic:	Developing an Analysis
	Lectures:	Making a Discussion and Conclusion
	Readings/Films:	Analysis: Applying Critical Thought
	Assignments:	Quiz 5 Paper 5: Data and Findings

Module 6	Topic:	Presenting Research
	Lectures:	Discussion and Conclusion How to Present Your Work
	Readings/Films:	Presenting Your Work (Link) How to work a stage like a pro (Link) Tips for Confidence When Delivering a Research Paper (Link)

| | Assignments: | Final Presentations |
| | | Paper 5: Post-Research/Conclusion |

III. Grading

3. WR Statements and Grading Rubrics

For courses that confer WR credit, the course grades now have two components: To receive writing credit a student must receive a grade of "C" or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. The writing assignment ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

PLEASE NOTE: A grade of "C-" **will not** confer credit for the University Writing Requirement.

The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar punctuation, and mechanics. Conferring credit for the University Writing Assignment, this course requires that papers conform to the following assessment rubric. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the semester. All writing assignments are required to be in APA format (See link in the recommended course materials).

Writing Assessment Rubric

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit at least some evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide at least an adequate discussion with a basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit at least some identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement but may require readers to work to follow the progression of ideas.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the Satisfactory range, documents may provide only a generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical sentence structure. At a minimum, documents will display a less precise use of vocabulary and an uneven use of sentence structure or a writing style that occasionally veers away from word choice or tone appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.

MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the Satisfactory range, papers may contain some spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive so they do not muddy the paper's argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

UF QUEST PRESENTATION RUBRIC

	Criteria	4	3 (Target)	2	1
Content	**Content** *Demonstrates knowledge of the topic presented, balances depth and breadth effectively.*	Knowledge presented is relevant and exceeds and/or enhances the course material. Content reflects breadth and depth of knowledge in the topic area that exceeds expectations.	Knowledge presented reflects course material adequately. Content presented reflects the expected level of depth and breadth.	Knowledge presented reflects some gaps in knowledge of course material. Content reflects limited breadth or depth.	Knowledge presented reflects major gaps in knowledge of course material. Content is superficially represented, incomplete, and/or unrelated to the topic.
Critical Thinking	**Materials** *Selects appropriate media/ physical/tools engage audience, materials, and technology to effectively convey the topic message.*	Media and materials are ideally suited to convey the topic message, balanced throughout the presentation, and facilitates audience engagement.	Media and materials are appropriate for the topic message, are balanced, and maintain audience engagement.	Media or materials sometimes distracts from audience engagement or the message.	Did not leverage media and materials for audience engagement or message delivery.
Communication	**Delivery** *Communicates effectively to facilitate audience understanding of the topic.*	Elegant, sophisticated and articulate oral/written communication, facilitating audience understanding of the topic. Eye contact, gestures and body language are nuanced to enhance meaning and keep the audience engaged.	Oral and written communication is clear and effective in facilitating audience understanding of the topic. Eye contact, gestures, and body language convey meaning and help hold audience attention.	Oral and written communication is occasionally unclear and limits audience understanding of the topic. Eye contact, gestures, and body language hinder the audience's attention or meaning-making.	Oral and written communication is inappropriate and/or ineffective for facilitating audience understanding of the topic. Eye contact, gestures, and body language prevent the audience from understanding the message.
Communication	**Organization** *Logically sequences and structures the presentation to maximize desired audience outcomes.*	Exceptional sequencing and/or innovative structure maximizes audience understanding.	Appropriate sequencing and structure facilitate audience understanding.	Lapses in sequencing and structure limit audience understanding.	Sequencing and structure prohibit audience understanding.
Connection	**Reflection** *Connects the learning experience to the student's intellectual, personal, and/or professional development at UF and beyond.*	A thoughtful, profound, and insightful connection of the learning experience to previous learning and/or the student's intellectual, personal, and professional growth.	A basic connection of the student's learning experience to previous learning and/or the student's intellectual, personal, and professional growth.	A partial and incomplete connection of the student's learning experience to previous learning and/or the student's intellectual, personal, and professional growth.	Provides a superficial connection of the student's learning experience to previous learning and/or the student's intellectual, personal, and professional growth.

*(Left margin labels: **UF Quest Outcomes**)*

4. Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

A	94 – 100% of possible points		C	74 – 76.99%
A-	90 – 93.99%		C-	70 – 73.99%
B+	87 – 89.99%		D+	67 – 69.99%
B	84 – 86.99%		D	64 – 66.99%
B-	80 – 83.99%		D-	60 – 63.99%
C+	77 – 79.99%		E	<59.99%

A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

IV. Quest Learning Experiences

5. Details of Experiential Learning Component

The course's research project positions students in the midst of experiential learning by immersing them in the research process—from literature review to conducting surveys and interviews. By formulating research questions, creating methodologies, and analyzing data, students sharpen their analytical and problem-solving skills.

Specifically, in the data collection phase, students will actively collect data using techniques such as surveys, interviews, observations, and content analysis to bridge classroom theories with the real world, using sports data to uncover insights into societal issues. This hands-on method not only enhances their understanding of complex social phenomena but also embodies the essence of applying academic learning to practical scenarios.

6. Details of Self-Reflection Component

The oral presentations require students to reflect on how the project has impacted their beliefs about their chosen topic. This process encourages students to engage in self-reflection, considering their own perspectives and how they may have evolved throughout their studies. Through the reflection, students can assess the growth and development of their ideas, arguments, and understanding of the impact of sports on society. This self-assessment allows students to recognize their progress and identify areas where they have expanded their knowledge and critical thinking skills.

V. General Education and Quest Objectives & SLOs

7. This Course's Objectives—Gen Ed Primary Area and Quest

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) At the end of "Sports as Social Science," students will be able to…

Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the discipline(s).

- Identify, describe, and explain the cross-disciplinary dimensions of a pressing societal issue or challenge through social sciences research on sports. (Quest 2, S).
- Identify, describe, and explain the historical processes and contemporary experiences of minority athletes of various identity groups such as (but not limited to) race, gender, class, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and disability to better understand human differences and their intersection. (Quest 2, D).

<div align="right">Assessments: Quizzes, papers, presentation, tests.</div>

Critical Thinking: Students carefully and critically analyze data from multiple disciplinary perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within sports.

- Critically analyze and evaluate qualitative and quantitative data derived from to draw conclusions and test hypotheses about the experiences of athletes from various identity groups (Quest 2, S).
- Analyze and evaluate how social inequities affect various identity groups in the U.S. (Quest 2, D).

<div align="right">Assessments: Papers, presentations, tests.</div>

Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms.

- Develop and present, in terms accessible to an educated public, clear and effective responses to proposed approaches, policies, or practices that address important societal issues or challenges. (Quest 2, S).
- Communication outcomes that help explain the historical processes and contemporary experiences of minority athletes of various identity groups. Quest 2, D).

<div align="right">Assessments: Papers, presentations, tests.</div>

Connection: Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.

- Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond. (Quest 2, S).

<div align="right">Assessments: Oral presentation.</div>

Social and Behavioral Sciences (S):

Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe, and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes, or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

Category	Institutional Definition	Institutional SLO	Social and Behavioral Sciences	Diversity (co-designation)	Objectives will be Accomplished By:
Content	Content is knowledge of the terminology, concepts, methodologies, and theories used within the subject area.	Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies, and theories used within the subject area.	Identify, describe, and explain key themes, principles, and terminology; the history, theory and/or methodologies used; and social institutions, structures and processes.	Identify, describe, and explain the historical processes and contemporary experiences characterizing diversity as a dynamic concept related to human differences and their intersections, such as (but not limited to) race, gender identity, class, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and disability.	Quizzes Paper #2 Paper #3 Paper #4 Paper #5 Lectures Presentation Test 1
Critical Thinking	Critical thinking is characterized by the comprehensive analysis of issues, ideas, and evidence before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.	Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the subject area.	Apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis effectively to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions. Assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.	Analyze and evaluate how social inequities are constructed and affect the opportunities and constraints of different groups in the United States. Analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultures and beliefs mediate understandings of an increasingly diverse U.S. society.	Paper #5 Paper #6 In-class Activities Presentation Test 1
Communication	Communication is the development and expression of ideas in written and oral forms.	Students clearly and effectively communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning in written or oral forms appropriate to the subject area.	Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively.	The diversity designation is always in conjunction with another category. Communication outcomes are listed in those subject areas.	Paper # 1 Paper #6 In-class Activities Presentation Test 1

VI. Required Policies

8. Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

9. UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

10. Class Attendance and Make-up Work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Click here to read the university attendance policies.

11. University Honesty (Plagiarism) Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Plagiarism

The Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code states that:

"A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
- Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
- Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.

- Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author."

12. Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

13. The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ or at 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

14. Minimum Technology Requirements

The University of Florida expects students entering an online program to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to their degree program. Most computers are capable of meeting the following general requirements. A student's computer configuration should include:

- Webcam
- Microphone
- Broadband connection to the internet and related equipment (cable/DSL modem)
- Microsoft Office Suite installed (provided by the university)

Students are responsible for having adequate Internet service. Poor service is not an acceptable reason for missed assignments or disruptions in test taking.

Minimum Technical Skills

To complete your tasks in this course, you will need a basic understanding of operating a computer and using word processing software.

Materials/Supply Fees

There is no supply fee for this course.

Honorlock

Honorlock is an online proctoring service that allows students to take exams on-demand 24/7. There are no scheduling requirements or fees.

You will need a laptop or desktop computer with a webcam, a microphone, and a photo ID. The webcam and microphone can be either integrated or external USB devices.

Honorlock requires that you use the [Google Chrome](#) browser and that you add the Honorlock extension to Chrome.

For further information, FAQs, and technical support, please visit [Honorlock](#).

15. Technical Difficulties

If you experience any technical issues during a test or quiz, you should email the TA immediately before contacting the Help Desk.

For all other help with technical issues or difficulties with Canvas, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk at:

- [UF Help Desk](#)
- 352-392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups (assignments, exams, etc.) due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the UF Computing Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem.

16. When communicating online:

- Treat the instructor respectfully, even via email or other online communication.
- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you are unsure, use Mr. or Ms.
- Don't refer to a professor by their first name unless specifically invited.
- Use clear and concise language.
- Remember that all college-level communication should have correct spelling and grammar.
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you."
- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14-point font.
- Avoid using the caps lock feature, AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING.
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) .
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm, as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post, and your message might be taken seriously or be construed as being offensive.
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and others).
- Do not send confidential information via email.

Email/Canvas Messaging

When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates:

- Use a descriptive subject line.
- Be brief.
- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them.
- Avoid HTML in favor of plain text.
- Sign your message with your name and return email address.
- Think before you send the email to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
- Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click "Reply All."

- Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along before you click the "Forward" button.

Zoom

When attending a Zoom class or meeting:

- Do not share your Zoom classroom link or password with others.
- Even though you may be alone at home, your professor and classmates can see you! While attending class in your pajamas is tempting, remember that wearing clothing is not optional. Dress appropriately.
- Your professor and classmates can also see what is behind you, so be aware of your surroundings.
- Ensure the background is not distracting or something you would not want your classmates to see.
  - When in doubt, use a virtual background. If you choose to use one, you should test the background out first to make sure your device can support it.
  - Your background can express your personality, but be sure to avoid using backgrounds that may contain offensive images and language.
- Mute is your friend, especially when you are in a location that can be noisy. Don't leave your microphone open if you don't have to.
- If you want to speak, you can raise your hand (click the "raise hand" button at the center bottom of your screen) and wait to be called upon.