

**HTS 3075 – FOUNDATIONS OF SPORTS STUDIES****Spring 2018**Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 - 10:45 AM  
Architecture West 258**Instructor:** Dr. Matt Ventresca**Office Hours:**

Tues 3:15pm – 4:45pm

Thurs 11:15am – 12:45pm

and by appointment

**Contact Information:**

Old CE Building, Room G17

[matt.ventresca@gatech.edu](mailto:matt.ventresca@gatech.edu)**Course Description**

This course is designed to teach students about the historical, social, economic, and technological importance of sports in local and global contexts through multidisciplinary case studies. Students will learn about sports as mass-cultural phenomena and examine their relationship to broader social and economic domains (including education, consumer culture, science and technology, communities, politics, and the media) to better understand sports practices and controversies. We will also consider how race, gender, social class, and sexuality have shaped contemporary and historical sporting experiences. This course also provides an opportunity to investigate how social, political, and economic trends related to sport have emerged in Atlanta and at Georgia Tech specifically. Yet the underlying goal of this course is to critically interrogate the ideas and philosophies supporting the different ways we can study sport across academic disciplines. To do this, students will engage with foundational material from a number of sports studies disciplines and conduct individual and group research projects, representing their findings through a variety of scholarly and media formats.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Students will apply concepts and methods from a number of scholarly disciplines related to the study of sports.
- Students will compare and contrast major social issues impacting sports cultures.
- Students will analyze how social, political, and/or economic forces shape the culture of sports on local, national, and global scales.

**Course Format**

This course requires students to participate in class discussions, apply critical reading skills, and undertake group and individual projects. Students will also learn from a number of guest lectures by experts from different academic/industry disciplines related to sports studies.

Students will engage with readings from both the academic literature and popular press, and interrogate definitions of sports by conducting sports studies research.

Students are expected to complete assigned readings **prior to each class** (i.e. take notes, prepare questions) and be ready to discuss them. Course readings will be provided on T-Square (in the Resources section) well in advance of the class for which they assigned.

### **Grading and Requirements**

Course grades are made up of the following components:

**Attendance and Participation: 20%**

**Module 1 & 2 Exam: 15%**

**Module 3 & 4 Exam: 15%**

**Projects: 50%**

- Georgia Tech Sports History Archives Assignment: 15%
- Media Analysis: 15%
- Podcast Assignment: 20%

Further instructions for each of the course requirements will be provided in class and on T-Square (in the Assignments section).

### **Grading Scale:**

**A: 90 - 100%**

**B: 80 - 89%**

**C: 70 - 79%**

**D: 60 - 69%**

**F: 59% and below**

### **Attendance and Participation – 20%**

**Attendance Grade: 5%**

Attendance at all classes is mandatory and the instructor will take attendance during each class (including guest lectures). Students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared to discuss assigned readings, participate in class activities, and actively listen (i.e. take notes and prepare follow-up questions).

**Participation Grade: 10%**

Success in this course is dependent upon your preparation and active in-class participation. Participation grades will be calculated based on in-class engagement, contributions to class discussions, and completion of other small assignments corresponding to specific topics throughout the term. Instructions for these requirements will be discussed in class and posted to T-Square.

**In-Class Reading Quizzes: 5%**

The instructor will administer 6 short quizzes throughout the term to assess students' level of engagement and familiarity with the assigned reading(s) for that

class. The dates of these in-class quizzes will **not** be posted in advance; thus, students should come to each class prepared to complete a quiz to the best of their ability drawing on their knowledge of assigned readings. Each quiz will be graded out of 20 with each student's lowest grade being dropped from final grade calculations. The formats of these quizzes will vary with more details being provided in class.

### **Attendance Policy**

As stated in the Institute's attendance policy, "students are responsible for all material covered in their absences, and they are responsible for the academic consequences of their absences" (<http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/class-attendance>). Students missing classes because of documented personal emergencies or participation in Institute-approved activities (e.g. class field trip, athletic events) are permitted to make up work missed during class time, but will be expected to attend class in all other circumstances. Please let the instructor know as soon as possible when you will miss a class due to a personal emergency or participation in an Institute-approved activity so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

### **Module 1 & 2 Midterm – 15% (Tuesday, Feb 27)**

This exam will involve a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blanks, and short answer questions. The exam will be held in-class and will cover all readings and lectures from these modules (including guest lectures).

### **Modules 3 and 4 Exam – 15% (Thursday, May 3)**

Modules 3 and 4 will be evaluated through an exam featuring multiple choice, fill-in-the-blanks, short answer, and an essay-style question. This exam will cover all readings and lectures from Modules 3 and 4 (including guest lectures), but will also include a short essay-style question asking students to reflect on the course as a whole.

### **Projects – 50%**

Students will be completing the following three projects related to specific aspects of the course:

#### **Georgia Tech Sports History Archives Assignment: 15%**

##### **Due: Tuesday, February 13**

Working in pairs, students will produce an historical timeline of a particular topic related to Georgia Tech's sports culture. Research for this project will be conducted in the Georgia Tech archives and can also involve other historical resources on campus (e.g. Living History Program, the Athletic Heritage Museum, monuments and plaques etc.). In addition to the timeline, students are required to provide a brief introduction to their topic, a written reflection, resource list, and annotated bibliography. Groups and topics will be assigned in class, and in-class periods will be dedicated to a formal orientation at the archives and introducing the tools required to complete this assignment.

**Media Analysis: 15%****Due: Tuesday, March 6**

The project for Module 2, this assignment requires students to complete a content analysis of print media (e.g. *Sports Illustrated* or *ESPN: The Magazine*). Following research methodology outlined in an article provided by the instructor, students will write a **5-6 page** (typed, double-spaced) paper that explains their analysis and summarizes their findings.

**Podcast Assignment: 20%****Due: Friday, April 20**

Working in pairs, students will record a 12 to 15 minute podcast analyzing a contemporary event or news story from the world of sport. The goal of this podcast should be to illustrate the multi-disciplinary nature of sports studies by showing how two (or more) academic approaches covered in class can be used to provide a more complex understanding of a sports issue. Students can choose any event or news story, as long as it is documented in the sports media and takes place during the time period covered by this course (i.e. August to November 2017). These assignments will be uploaded to T-Square as digital files (don't worry, an introduction to podcasting will be provided in class). Podcasts can be structured in a number of different and creative ways (theme songs are always encouraged), but must include the required components specified in the assignment instructions.

**Extra Credit Opportunities**

The following extra credit opportunities will be available throughout the course:

**Panel Discussion Assignment:** On February 19, 2018, the Sports, Society, and Technology program is hosting a lecture and panel discussion on Sports & the Black Freedom Struggle: The Legacy of 1968. Students can attend the event and complete the assigned worksheet for **2% extra credit toward their Module 2 Project grade**. More details will be provided in class.

**Guest Lecture Summary:** Following the guidelines posted to T-Square, students can complete a summary of any one of the guest lectures from throughout the term. Students who submit a complete summary will receive a **2% extra credit toward their participation grade**. Summaries must be submitted no later than one week after the relevant guest lecture.

**Course Expectations**

**Policy for Late Assignments:** Unless a student provides documentation of their involvement in a university-sanctioned event or illustrating extenuating personal circumstances (medical/family emergencies etc.), assignments submitted after their due date will be subject to a 5% deduction per day (weekends count as one day).

**Academic Honesty:** Students in this class will be expected to abide by the Georgia Tech honor code. Academic misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated. All students

are responsible for understanding and complying with Georgia Tech rules. For further information, go to: [www.honor.gatech.edu](http://www.honor.gatech.edu)

**General Courtesy Guidelines:** We expect students to respect their classmates and instructors at all times. Students are expected to be on time for class, refrain from being disruptive, and silence their electronic devices before class begins. Sleeping in class, text messaging, or using a computer for any purposes other than in-class research or taking notes will negatively impact your participation grade. I reserve the right to ask students to leave the class if they are engaging in distracting or inappropriate behaviors.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodation, or you have questions related to any accommodations for testing, note takers, readers, etc., please speak with the instructor as soon as possible. Students may also contact the Office of Disability Services, located in the Office of the Dean of Students (ODS). The ODS phone number is 404-894-2563.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

**The course schedule is subject to change to accommodate the availability of guest speakers.** Please refer to T-Square for the most up-to-date class/reading schedule.

#### Week 1 (Jan 8 – 12)

**Tuesday – Intro to Course**

**Thursday – What is sport and why do we study it?**

“Readings:” Sykes (2017), “The Yin & Yang of Basketball” [podcast]; Knott (n.d.),  
“Critical reading toward critical writing”

### MODULE 1: Socio-historical Aspects of Sports

#### Week 2 (Jan 15 – Jan 19)

**Tuesday – Georgia Tech Sports History**

Readings: Chastain (2011), Assigned Chapters

**Thursday - Orientation at the Georgia Tech Archives**

**NOTE:** This class is meant to help students start the research process for their Module 1 assignment and will take place at the Georgia Tech Archives (located in the Neely Reading Room in the GT Library - near Clough entrance). The class will split into two groups who will each get a 45 minute orientation from archives department head Jody Thompson and her staff. More details will be provided in class.

**Week 3 (Jan 22 – 26)****Tuesday – Doing Sports History I**

Readings: Jarvie (2006), “Sport, history, and social change”; Dreier (2013), “The real story of baseball’s integration that you won’t see in 42.”

**Thursday – GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Johnny Smith - Doing Sports History II**

Readings: Smith (in press), “The magnitude of me: Reggie Jackson, baseball, and the seventies”

**Week 4 (Jan 29 – Feb 2)****Tuesday – The Sociology of Sports I**

Reading: Sage (1990), “A sociological perspective of sport”; Guest (2015) “Fighting the great sport myth”

**Thursday – The Sociology of Sports II**

Reading: Zirin (2008), “Calling sports sociology off the bench;” Harrison (2017), “Stick to Sports”

**MODULE 2: Sports Media and Sports Management****Week 5 (Feb 5 – 9)****Tuesday – GUEST LECTURE: Stephanie Herbst-Lucke - Sports Marketing**

Reading: Klara (2016), “How Nike brilliantly ruined Olympic marketing forever;” *Second reading TBA.*

**Thursday – Sports Management and Sports Marketing**

Reading: Stewart (2015), “Sport without management”

**Week 6 (Feb 12 - 16)****Tuesday – GUEST LECTURE: Larry Keller - Sports Law and Public Policy**

Reading: Epstein & Kiskka-Schulze (2017), “Northwestern University, The University of Missouri, and the “Student-Athlete”

**NOTE:** Georgia Tech Sports History assignment due.**Thursday – Sports and New Media**

Reading: Billings (2014), “Power in the Reverberation”; Gibbs (2016), “More Than Mean’ Roundtable”

**Week 7 (Feb 19 - 23)****Tuesday – GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Mary McDonald – Sports Media Representations**

Reading: Cooky, Messner, & Musto (2015), "It's Dude Time!" Kendall (2015), "Female athletes often face the femininity police"

*Recommended Reading: Martin & McDonald (2012), "Covering women's sport?"*

**Thursday – Module Wrap Up and Exam Review****Week 8 (Feb 26 – Mar 2)****Tuesday – Modules 1 and 2 Midterm Exam****MODULE 3: Local, National, and Global Sports****Thursday – Module Intro**

Reading: Scherer (2001), "Globalization and the construction of local particularities"; Youngblood (2011), "A new Jet age takes flight in Winnipeg;"

**Week 9 (Mar 5 - 9)****Tuesday – Global Sports**

Reading: Thibault (2009), "Globalization of sport"

**NOTE:** Module 2 Media Analysis Assignment due.

**Thursday – GUEST LECTURE: Dr. William Bridel – LGBTQ Issues in Sports: Local, National, and Global Perspectives**

Reading: Barnes (2015), "On contemporary sports cultures: homophobia;" Bridel (2017), "It was a good day..."

**Week 10 (Mar 12 - 16)****Tuesday – The Politics of Sports Stadia**

"Readings:" Fitzgerald (2017). "In the Same Ballpark" [podcast]; Lutz (2017), "Braves home stadium hardly a home run for Cobb taxpayers"

**Thursday – Sports in Atlanta**

Readings: Keating, L. (2001), "The Olympics Era"; Arsenault (2014), "Atlanta games' venues left some lessons for Boston"; Brown (2014), "The eroding legacy of the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta." Godwin (2017), "Neighbors at odds over GSU-Turner Field agreement."

**WEEK 11: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES**

## **MODULE 4: The Art and Science of Sports Studies**

### **Week 12 (Mar 26 – 30)**

#### **Tuesday – Risk, Pain, and Injury in Sports**

Reading: Pike (2004), “Risk, pain and injury;” Clay (2017), “My osteoporosis nightmare”

#### **Thursday – GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Michelle LaPlaca – Sports and Neuroscience I**

Reading: McCrory et al (2017), “Consensus statement on concussion in sport;” Keating, P. (2017), “Why does it seem like nobody cares about female concussions?”

### **Week 13 (Apr 2 - 6)**

#### **Tuesday – Sports and Neuroscience II**

Readings: Liston et al (2016), “On being ‘head strong;” Ventresca (2017), “Can technology alone solve the ‘concussion crisis?’”

#### **Thursday – Sports Film**

“Readings:” Crosson (2013), “The Sports Film Genre;” Horowitz-Ghazi (2017), “Remembering Bruce Brown” [audio clip]

### **Week 14 (Apr 9 - 13)**

#### **Tuesday – Intro to Podcasting**

“Reading:” Clevinger & Rick (2017), “Sports studies and podcasting” [podcast]

#### **Thursday – Sports Science in Context**

Reading: Twietmeyer (2012), “What is Kinesiology?” Assigned ESPN “Sports Science” videos

### **Week 15 (Apr 16 - 20)**

#### **Tuesday – GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Jud Ready – Sports Materials and Engineering**

Reading: James (2010), “The Ethics of Using Engineering to Enhance Athletic Performance”

#### **Thursday – The Sports/Music Nexus**

Reading: McLeod (2006), “We are the champions;” Francis (2017); “Why did the NBA flip-flop on hip-hop?”

### **Week 16 (Apr 22 – 24)**

#### **Tuesday – Course Conclusion/Exam Review**

**NOTE:** Podcast assignment due **April 20 at 11:59pm.**

**FINAL EXAM:** THURSDAY, MAY 3<sup>RD</sup> at 11:30am - 2:20pm in Architecture 258.