

**HTS 3089 – SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, & SPORTS**  
**Spring 2015**

Tuesday & Thursday 9:35-10:55 AM  
Architecture East 309

**Instructor:** Dr. Jennifer Sterling  
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**Office:** OCE Building, Room 136

**Office hours:**  
Tuesdays: 3:30 – 5:00 PM  
Thursdays: 12:00 – 1:00 PM  
and by appointment

**Course Description:**

Sport is viewed by some scholars as socially constructed, and therefore, a product of society. This has prompted considerable international attention from researchers from a wide array of disciplines and subdisciplines. The sociology of sport is perhaps the most prominent, largest, and best established of the subdisciplines studying sport. For instance, sociology of sport was the first subdiscipline to be so named, to have a professional organization (The International Committee for Sport Sociology-now the International Sociology of Sport Association) and publish a refereed journal (*The International Review of Sport Sociology*). Additionally, it was first to be studied and have dedicated courses taught in institutions of higher education.

Sociology of sport draws on a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives to study critical social processes. Underpinned by sociology of sport perspectives, this course explores what constitutes a “sport”, debates on the role of social inequality in sports, and the intersection of science, technology, and sports. Course discussions will examine:

- what constitutes a “sport”, science, technology and performance.
- sociological processes relevant to the intersection of science, technology, and sport.
- literature concerning debates on the role of technology in supporting, and contesting, social inequality through sports.
- how scientists describe and interpret perceived human differences (e.g., race, sex) as related to sport performance.
- literature on the impact of science and technology on athletic performance.
- literature regarding safety, risk, and the role of media and politics in sports.
- the role of architects and the built environment in sport.
- debates surrounding cyborg athletes and the future of sport.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- understand the social and cultural dimensions of sport, science, and technology.
- understand the underlying principles of significant debates on the impact of science and technology on sport.
- apply a sociological perspective and its methods to the intersection of sports, science (inclusive of the social sciences), and technology.
- demonstrate a working knowledge of core concepts, theories, and methodologies.
- understand the risks, ethics, and social responsibilities associated with sports, science, and technology.
- understand the relationship between science and ideology in sports.
- critically analyze and evaluate scholarly literature on various dimensions of science, technology, and sport.
- effectively use written and oral forms of communication to construct compelling arguments.
- effectively synthesize research findings.
- gain a deeper understanding of the course materials through collaborative learning with peers.
- gain sociological knowledge and perspectives on contemporary sporting practices.
- improve ability to articulate complex arguments.

**Core Area E:**

This course satisfies the requirement for Core Area E: Social Sciences - student will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.

This course is about the intersections of sports, and studies of it, with science, technology, and society. Students will learn how the social, political, and economic forces at work in, and through, sport, influence social behavior through an examination of: topics concerning the role of technology in supporting, and contesting, social inequality through sports; debates surrounding the impact of science and technology, and perceived human differences (e.g. race, sex), on performance; and, literature regarding risk, ethics, and the role of media and politics in sport.

Students will demonstrate that they have met the Area E learning outcome through critical engagement with course readings, and the completion of research papers and presentations

**Course Format:**

This is a small course that will emphasize close student-instructor interaction, discussion, and individualized course projects.

Students will engage secondary readings, group-lead class discussions, and complete individual and group research papers.

Students are expected to complete assigned readings, and be prepared to discuss them (e.g. take notes, formulate questions), **prior to class**. Course readings will be provided on T-square in advance of their due date.

**Grading and Requirements:**

Further instructions about each of the course requirements will be provided in class and on T-square.

**Participation – 25%:**

Success in this course is dependent upon participation in class discussions. Students are expected to arrive on time and prepared to discuss assigned readings, participate in class activities and discussion, and actively listen (i.e. take notes). Always bring your readings, notes, and questions to each class.

Points will be awarded for on-time attendance and participation during class. Participation is not evaluated in terms of how many times you comment, but by the clear demonstration that you have read and comprehended the assignments, and the quality of your overall engagement in class discussion. Points from the group discussion lead and exhibition review will also count towards final participation grades.

**Attendance Policy:**

Approved absences typically include: illness, religious holidays, family and personal emergencies, and official representation of GT in extracurricular events. To the extent possible, email in advance of anticipated absences to arrange for alternative accommodations.

**Group Discussion Lead:**

Over the course of the semester, each student will serve as part of a group discussion lead. Each group will be responsible for coordinating a 30-45 minute synthesis and discussion of the assigned reading(s). Students are strongly encouraged to supplement the assigned readings with other relevant readings, video clips, and/or activities. The group must meet with the instructor to discuss their plans prior to the class they are leading (preferably the week before).

**Quantified Self Project – 25%:**

Students will participate in a body-focused Quantified Self project during the first two modules. Mirroring the Quantified Self movement, students will engage in self-tracking through various technologies throughout the first 10 weeks of the semester. For more on the Quantified Self movement, go to: [quantifiedself.com](http://quantifiedself.com)

**Individual Research Paper – 25%:**

Students will complete a 12-15 page (typed, double-spaced) research paper that expands upon one of the course topics from Module 1 or 2. Approval of the topic is based on the acceptance of an abstract and references (see Course Calendar). Students will be expected to locate, and provide support from, 3 academic sources in addition to course readings. In-class, and class-release, research days, as well as individual meetings, will provide students with instruction and time to develop, research, and write their research paper. Students are also encouraged to seek assistance from the professionals at the GT library.

**Group Research Paper – 25%:**

Students will form groups of 2-3 to pick a “State of the Field” topic, prepare and deliver a PechaKucha (20 slides, 20 seconds each) presentation, and complete an 8-10 page research paper.

**Grading Scale:****Participation: 25%**

- Class Participation: 10%
- Group Discussion Lead: 10%
- Exhibition Review: 5%

**Quantified Self Project: 25%****Individual Paper: 25%**

- Abstract & References: 10%
- Final paper: 15%

**Group Paper: 25%**

- Presentation: 10%
- Paper: 15%

**A: 90-100%****B: 80 - 89%****C: 70 - 79%****D: 60 - 69%****F: 59% and below**

**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:**

I expect you to respect your classmates and me at all times. You are expected to be on time for class, refrain from speaking out of turn, and silence your electronic devices before class begins. I will not tolerate sleeping in class, text messaging, or using your computer for any purposes other than in-class research or taking notes. If you engage in any kind of distracting or inappropriate behavior I reserve the right to ask you to leave the class.

**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 me as soon as possible. Students may also contact the Office of Disability Services, located in the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS). The ODS phone number is 404-894-2563.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE \***

*\*Subject to change. Refer to T-square for the most up-to-date schedule and assignments.*

### **COURSE INTRODUCTION**

**Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>**

Introduction to Science, Technology, & Sports

**Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup>**

Examining Interdisciplinary Interconnections

Quantified Self Project **INTRODUCTION**

### **MODULE 1: EXTENDING SPORTING BODIES**

**Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>**

Bigger, Faster, Stronger (Documentary)

**Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>**

Modifying Athletes

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**Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>**

Performance Enhancement from Without

**Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Posthuman Prosthetics

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**Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>**

Extending Recreational Bodies

**Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup>**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Cyborgs

Quantified Self Project – **Part 1 DUE**

### **MODULE 2: CONSTRUCTING SPORTING BODIES**

**Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Technologies of the Body

**Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup>**

#your body: Using Technology to Get to Know Yourself

Quantified Self Project - **Part 2 INTRODUCTION**

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**Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>**

Deconstructing the Natural Black Athlete

**Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup>**

Inspecting Gender Verification

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**Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>**

Damaged Selves: Risk, Injury, and Pain in Sport

**Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup>**

Evaluating Inactive Youth

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**Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>**

Research Day (in class)

Research Paper 1 (Individual) **INTRODUCTION**

**Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>**

Research Day (on your own)

Abstract and References **DUE (by midnight)**

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**Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Individual Meetings

**Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup>**

Individual Meetings

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**Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>**

Quantified Self Project – Part 3

Quantified Self Project – **Part 2 DUE**

**Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**

Quantified Self Project – Part 3

Research Paper 1 (Individual) **DUE**

**March 17-19 SPRING BREAK**

**MODULE 3: STATE OF THE FIELD: CURRENT & FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

**Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>**

Scientization of Sports Studies: Competing and Complementary Paradigms

Research Paper 2 **INTRODUCTION**

**Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup>**

Bodies: The Exhibition (Tour)

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**Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>**

State of the Field: Topic 1 (TBD)  
Exhibition Review **DUE**

**Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

State of the Field: Topic 2 (TBD)

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**Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>**

State of the Field: Topic 3 (TBD)

**Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>**

State of the Field: Topic 4 (TBD)

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**Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>**

Work Day (in class)

**Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>**

Work Day (on your own – groups)

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**Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>**

Research Paper 2 (Group) PechaKucha **PRESENTATIONS**

**Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Research Paper 2 (Group) PechaKucha **PRESENTATIONS**

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**FINAL EXAMS**

Research Paper 2 (Group) **DUE by Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 8am**