



**COURSE NUMBER: POLS 298 – Winter 2010**  
**COURSE TITLE: Sports and Politics**  
**INSTRUCTOR: Dr. J.R. Lacharite**  
**OFFICE HOURS: By Appointment**  
**OFFICE: 3013 – Third Floor, Administration Building**  
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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Welcome to POLS 298 – Sports and Politics. This course serves as an introduction to the study of sports and sporting events from a socio-political perspective. A number of critical areas will be examined such as: 1) the extent to which sports reflect the common values and dominant power structures that exist in modern democratic societies; 2) how sports and international sporting events tend to reinforce national identity and a form of tribalism; 3) the politics and economics of sports and more specifically, who benefits and who pays when it comes to professional sports; 3) the contemporary problems of violence and drug use in sporting events; 4) sports as a predominantly ‘male-oriented’ activity; and 5) the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games and the implications of ‘sports policy’ on collective goods, equity, and resource redistribution.

It is hoped that by the end of the course students will have developed a solid understanding of the basic concepts and theories that influence modern sports studies. It is also hoped that students will come to appreciate the importance of the relationship between sports, sporting events, power, and politics.

***Please Note:* If there are students in this course who, because of a disability, may have a need for special academic accommodations, please come and discuss this with me, or contact Disability Services located in room 7-103.**

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To introduce students to the study of sports and politics;
- To develop the student’s ability to present his/her views in an articulate manner;
- To foster a better understanding of the pervasiveness and importance of sports and sports related conditioning to modern political systems;
- To develop the student’s ability to critically reflect the material under review; and
- To build confidence through in-class participation.

## REQUIRED TEXTS:

Zirin, Dave, *Welcome to the Terrordome: The Pain, Politics and Promise of Sports* (Haymarket Books, 2007)

***\*The remaining reading material is either Internet accessible or located on reserve in the Library.\****

## SUGGESTED REFERENCE MATERIALS:

Bairner, Alan, *Sport, Nationalism, and Globalization: European and North American Perspectives* (New York: State University of New York, 2001)

Coakley, Jay and Eric Dunning, *Handbook of Sports Studies* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002)

Collins, Mike, *Sport and Social Exclusion* (New York: Routledge, 2003)

Houlihan, Barrie, *The Government and Politics of Sport* (New York: Routledge, 1991)

Houlihan, Barrie, *Sports, Policy, and Politics: A Comparative Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 1997)

Silver, Jim, *Thin Ice: Money, Politics and the Demise of an NHL Franchise* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 1996)

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE WEIGHTING:

Assignment	Due Date	Grade Weighting
Exam (1)	February 3, 2010	30%
Exam (2)	March 17, 2010	30%
Take Home Exam	March 31, 2010	30%
In-class attendance and group participation	N/A	10%

**Extensions policy:** Extensions on assignments are not permitted, except in case of illness or due to serious extenuating circumstance. In the event of illness or serious extenuating circumstance, **the student** must inform the instructor before the due date and documentary evidence of the illness or serious circumstance must be provided to the instructor. In addition, **the student** must also provide the instructor with a draft of his or her assignment at the time of the illness or serious circumstance that indicates that substantial progress has already been made towards a final product. Assignments that are not submitted on the due date will receive a grade of zero.

**Exam Policy:** Please note that the term ends on the final day of the exam period **NOT** on the last day of classes. Students are advised not to make arrangements to travel on a date prior to the final exam as scheduled by the Registrar. The instructor will not hold early exams for the purpose of accommodating travel requests.

## **ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION:**

*Class attendance and participation:* All students are expected to participate in class discussions. Class lectures will normally include a 30-45 minute discussion on the readings' key issues. Only constructive and thought-provoking comments or observations will be rewarded. In other words, do not simply 'speak up' for the sake of 'speaking up.' In addition, do not respond to your fellow classmates' comments or questions in a belligerent or discouraging tone.

### ***Discussion Questions:***

Weeks 1 and 2: i) To what extent do sports merely reinforce dominant cultural values? ii) Is hockey on the way out?

Weeks 3 and 4: i) It is the sport that makes the nation! Is there a value in international sporting competitions? ii) Should governments subsidize amateur and/or professional sports organizations or events? At what level?

Weeks 5 and 6: i) Product marketing and quality entertainment: Are professional sports still accessible? ii) Should fighting be eliminated from hockey?

Weeks 7 and 8: i) Do women's sports really matter? ii) In what ways does religion influence sports participation, sports values, and competition?

Weeks 9 and 10: i) Are we obsessed with sports? ii) Why do the media focus so much attention 'sports' related stories and results? The 'Tiger Woods' phenomenon!

Weeks 11 and 12: i) What is next for Canadian sports? Will the 2010 Winter Olympics live up to the hype?

*Exams:* There will be three exams for POLS 298: 1) two term exams; and 2) one take home exam. The term exams will cover all of the reading and lecture materials from Week 1 through to Week 10. They are worth 60 percent of your final grade and will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions only. They will each consist of 5 multiple choice questions and 3 short answer questions. For the SAQs you will be expected to highlight the salient issues and to critically assess the strengths and limitations of the subject material under examination. Regurgitating the lecture notes is not satisfactory. Try to be creative, inclusive, and reflective

The take home exam will be comprehensive in scope and will test your ability to incorporate class lectures and reading materials into a coherent presentation on some aspect of sport in Canadian society. An 'essay question' will be presented at the end of class on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010. You will have approximately 48 hours to submit your completed answer as an e-mail attachment to the following account: [lachari@unbc.ca](mailto:lachari@unbc.ca). Be sure to organize your answer in a concise and sequential fashion. Also, you should attempt to critically evaluate the main topics under investigation.

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

Date	Subject	Readings and Videos
Weeks 1 and 2	Orientation, Introduction, Competing Theoretical Perspectives, and The Emergence of Modern Sports: Why Are Sports Important?	Jason Morris, "Skating on Thin Ice: Hockey and the Canadian National Identity," <i>Proteus: A Journal of Ideas</i> , 25, 2 (Fall 2008): 47-51 (Handout); Barrie Houlihan, <i>Sport, Policy, and Politics: A Comparative Analysis</i> , Chapters 2 and 3 (1997) – Online resource: <a href="http://wizard.unbc.ca/search-S3?/aHoulihan%2C+Barrie/ahoulihan+barrie/1%2C1%2C3%2CB/frameset&amp;FF=ahoulihan+barrie&amp;3%2C%2C3">http://wizard.unbc.ca/search-S3?/aHoulihan%2C+Barrie/ahoulihan+barrie/1%2C1%2C3%2CB/frameset&amp;FF=ahoulihan+barrie&amp;3%2C%2C3</a> .
Weeks 3 and 4	Politics, Societal Values, and Identity: The Relationship Between Sports and Politics	Richard Gruneau and David Whitson, "Hockey and the Politics of Culture (Chapter 1), "in <i>Hockey Night in Canada: Sport, Identities, and Cultural Politics</i> (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1993) – <b>On Reserve</b> ; William J. Morgan, "Social Criticisms as Moral Criticisms: A Habermasian Take on Sports," <i>Journal of Sports &amp; Social Issues</i> , 26, 3 (August 2002) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/3/281">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/3/281</a> ; Damion Thomas, "Is it Ever Just a Game?" <i>Journal of Sport &amp; Social Issues</i> , 29, 3 (August 2005) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/29/3/358">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/29/3/358</a> ; Steven J. Jackson and Brendan Hokowhitu, "Sports, Tribes, and Technology: The New Zealand All-Black Haka and the Politics of Identity," <i>Journal of Sport &amp; Social Issues</i> , 26, 2 (May 2002) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/2/125">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/2/125</a> ; Canada-Soviet Hockey Series, 1972, CBC Digital Archives <a href="http://archives.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/topics/318/">http://archives.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/topics/318/</a> ; <b>Video:</b> 'Hockey: A People's History.'
Weeks 5 and 6	Controversial Issues: The Business of Sport and the Realities of Violence and Drug Use <b>Exam 1:</b> February 3, 2010 <b>Mid-Semester Break:</b> February 15-19, 2010	Jim Silver, <i>Thin Ice: Money, Politics, and the Demise of an NHL Franchise</i> , Chapter 2 (1996) – Online resource: <a href="http://site.ebrary.com/lib/unbc/docDetail.action?docID=10220295">http://site.ebrary.com/lib/unbc/docDetail.action?docID=10220295</a> ; Gruneau and Whitson, Chapters 8 (Violence, Fighting, and Masculinity) and 10 (Hockey and the New Politics of Accumulation) – <b>On Reserve</b> ; Bob Stewart and Aaron C.T. Smith, "Drug Use in Sport: Implications for Public Policy," <i>Journal of Sport &amp; Social Issues</i> , 32, 3 (August 2008) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/32/3/278">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/32/3/278</a> ; ProCon.org, 'Sports and Drugs,' <a href="http://sportsanddrugs.procon.org/">http://sportsanddrugs.procon.org/</a> ; and Houlihan, 'Doping and Sport (Chapter 6),' <a href="http://www.myilibrary.com/browse/open.asp?ID=32757">http://www.myilibrary.com/browse/open.asp?ID=32757</a> ; <b>Video:</b> 'The Code,' The Fifth Estate, February 27, 2009, <a href="http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/2008-2009/the_code/">http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/2008-2009/the_code/</a> ; <b>Video:</b> 'The Man Whose Arms Exploded,' <i>You Tube</i> .
Weeks 7 and 8	Sport, Religion, and Gender	Conrad C. Vogler and Stephen E. Schwartz, 'Women and Sport,' in <i>The Sociology of Sport: An Introduction</i> (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice hall, 1993) – <b>On Reserve</b> ; and John C. Phillips, 'Women in Sport: A revolution in Progress,' in <i>Sociology of Sport</i> (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1993) – <b>On Reserve</b> ; Michael Messner, M. Duncan, and C. Cooky "Silence, Sports Bras, and Wrestling Porn: Women in Televised Sports News and Highlight Shows," <i>Journal of Sport &amp; Social Issues</i> , 27,1 (February 2003) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/27/1/38">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/27/1/38</a> ; and Deborah Stevenson, "Women, Sport and Globalization: Discourses of Sexuality and Nation," <i>Journal of Sport and Social Issues</i> , 26, 2 (May 2002) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/2/209">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/2/209</a> .
Weeks 9 and 10	The Mass Media and 'Sports' Conditioning: Learning and Reinforcing 'Sporting' and Societal Values? <b>Exam 2:</b> March 17, 2010	Daniel S. Mason, "Get the Puck Outta Here! Media Transnationalism and Canadian Identity" <i>Journal of Sport &amp; Social Issues</i> , 26,2 (May 2002) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/2/140">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/2/140</a> ; and Edward S. Herman and Robert W. McChesney, <i>The Global Media: The New Missionaries of Global Capitalism</i> (London: Cassell, 1997) – Chapters 2,5, and 6 – <b>On Reserve</b> .
Weeks 11 and 12	2010 and Beyond: What is Next For Canadian Sports, Politics, Society? <b>Take Home Exam:</b> March 31, 2010	CBC.ca, 'Road to the Games,' <a href="http://www.cbc.ca/bc/features/roadtothegames/news.html">http://www.cbc.ca/bc/features/roadtothegames/news.html</a> ; Geoff Dembicki, "Olympics Spending a Shot in the Arm for British Columbia," <i>Tyee News</i> , <a href="http://thetyee.ca/News/2009/01/26/OlympicSpending/">http://thetyee.ca/News/2009/01/26/OlympicSpending/</a> ; Bruce Constantineau, "The cost of the Games," <i>Vancouver Sun</i> , January 22, 2009, <a href="http://www.vancouversun.com/Sports/cost+Games/1207884/story.html">http://www.vancouversun.com/Sports/cost+Games/1207884/story.html</a> ; Daphne Bramham, "Olympics bill tops \$6 billion – so far," <i>Vancouver Sun</i> , January 23 2009, <a href="http://www.vancouversun.com/Sports/Olympics+bill+tops+billion/1207886/story.html">http://www.vancouversun.com/Sports/Olympics+bill+tops+billion/1207886/story.html</a> ; Jeffery G. Owens, "Estimating the Cost and Benefit of Hosting Olympic Games: What Can Beijing Expect for its 2008 Games?" <i>The International Geographer</i> , 3, 1 (Fall 2005) <a href="http://igeographer.lib.indstate.edu/v31.pdf#page=4">http://igeographer.lib.indstate.edu/v31.pdf#page=4</a> ; and George Wright, "The Political Economy of the Montreal Games," <i>Journal of Sport &amp; Social Issues</i> , 13, 2 (May 1978) <a href="http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/2/1/13.pdf">http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/2/1/13.pdf</a> .

## **Sense of Entitlement: The POLS 298 'Code of Conduct'**

1. You are not entitled to an 'A' or a 'B' in this course or any other course;
2. Instructors do not **give** you a grade; you **earn** a grade through hard work, discipline, and perseverance;
3. An office visit does not guarantee you an A+. Instructors are available to provide guidance and information. The onus is on you to perform well throughout the duration of the course;
4. Working hard on an assignment does not guarantee you an A+. It is important to recognize that instructors evaluate your essay and exam submissions and overall 'classroom performance.' Their professionalism compels them to appraise your work; not you as a person.
5. Grades reflect the amount of energy and effort that you have put into an assignment or series of assignments. Exercise some discretion when you approach an instructor about a grade that you have received and ask yourself, "Is this particular essay submission or exam answer perfect?" and "Where could **I** have made improvements?" In other words, think logically and rationally about your essay and/or exam results;
6. Do not ask your instructor for lecture notes. You have a responsibility to attend class on a regular basis and should endeavour to do so; and
7. You are not entitled to an extension. If you have a legitimate excuse and documentation or evidence to support your request, then an extension will be granted. Otherwise, do not ask.