

Course Last Updated 9/23/2024



Sport in Australian Society

Section I: Course Overview

Course Code: SOC356

Subject Area(s): Sociology

Prerequisites: One 200 level course or two 100 level courses in sociology, sport management, or another relevant field

Language of Instruction: English

Total Contact Hours: 45

Credits: 3

Course Fees: None

Course Description

This unit involves the study of sport in Australian culture, exploring Australia's historical sporting context through to its importance in today's Australian society. As a sports sociology unit, the course is focused on the ways sports are entangled in social, cultural, political, and economic forces that operate within and across the micro, meso, and macro levels of Australian society. It addresses some of the ways individuals are involved in sports organizations and activities, including our participation in sport for purposes of recreation and leisure, self-expression and personal fulfillment. The course also foregrounds the importance of spectatorship and the consumption of sports as entertainment commodities. The course deals with sports and sports culture as sites that enable the analysis of social issues, structures, and forms of inequality. This includes exploring sport in Australia in terms of social norms, roles, and power relations, including all the complex social dynamics that characterize forms of social stratification (e.g., by race, class, and gender).

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to:

- Analyse the historical context of Australian sports and their relationship with the socio-cultural and economic development of the nation.
- Describe the role of sport and recreation in community building and belonging.

- Explain the role of ethics, integrity, power and equity in sporting contexts.
- Discern how sport is shaped by social differences and inequality such as income, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality and education.
- Identify tensions between the traditional model of amateur sport and the emerging model of professionalism, globalization and sport as a commodity in Australia.

Section II: Instructor & Course Details

Instructor Details

Name: TBC

Contact Information: TBC

Term: TBC

Course Day and Time: TBC

Office Hours: TBC

Grading & Assessment

The instructor assesses students' mastery of course learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted toward the final grade. The Assessment Overview section provides further details for each.

Engagement – 20%

Midterm Exam – 25%

Individual Research Essay – 30%

Group Research Presentation and Report – 25%

Assessment Overview

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Forms of assessment may be slightly modified in the term syllabus.

Engagement (20%): Students are expected to be engaged in class, to have read the CEA CAPA Engagement Policy, and to understand the [Class Engagement Rubric](#) that outlines how engagement is graded.

Midterm Exam (25%): The first half of the term provides an introduction to foundational sociological theories that will be tested in Week 8 via a take home exam. Questions will focus on key themes explored in the unit. All students will have one attempt at the exam. All students will have exactly one week to attempt the exam.

Individual Research Essay (30%): For this assignment, students are required to provide an academic essay, including concepts from the course, and a minimum of FIVE scholarly sources, TWO of which are to be from the weekly readings.

Group Research Presentation and Report (25%): Group Presentations will be organised in Week 6 and will run in Week 12. Using live sporting events as a starting point, each group is to consider the following quote: 'Sports are distinguished from play and spectacle in that they involve combinations of both intrinsic enjoyment and extrinsic rewards for performance' (Coakley 2007, p. 7). Students need to reflect on their own live sporting experiences – including but not confined to the unit field trips – to develop their response. Your group will need to engage with research related to a topic covered in the unit and use a minimum of 3 scholarly sources to advance a conceptual argument.

Active Learning

Experiential learning is an essential component of education abroad, and participation in field studies is a required part of coursework. In this course, students explore the city in which they are studying using a variety of methods. This provides the opportunity to gain nuance and perspective on the host context and course content, as well as to collect information and resources for assigned papers, projects, and presentations. This course offers:

- Stadium Visit
- Community Sport Event

Readings and Resources

The below readings and resources are representative of what will be assigned as required in this course, but may vary slightly in the term syllabus.

All students are given access to the online library of the University of New Haven (UNH), accessible [here](#), and are expected to comply with [UNH Policies](#) regarding library usage.

Wherever possible, required readings are made accessible through the online library or Canvas. Students are responsible for obtaining all required readings.

Each course utilizes Canvas as its LMS. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates and deadlines. Canvas is also the primary platform for contacting your instructor in case of questions or concerns about the course.

Required

Blackburn, K. 2015. "Introduction." In *War, Sport and the Anzac Tradition*, Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Brennan, J. 2016. "The Todd Carney 'bubbling' social media scandal." *Popular Communication* 14(4): 199-211.

Churn, N. 2012. "Bogan time and the race that stops the nation." Pp. 103-114 in *Movements in time: revolution, social justice and times of change*, edited by C. Lawrence and N. Churn. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Fuller, L. K. 2021. "Athlete activism relative to clothing: A case study of Ibtihaj Muhammad and the sport hijab." In *Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives* edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.

- Hargreaves, J. and McDonald, I., 2000. "Cultural Studies and the Sociology of Sport." Pp. 49-61 in Coakley, J. & Dunning, E., *Handbook of Sports Studies*. London: Sage.
- Hutchins, B. 2005. "Unity, difference and the 'national game': Cricket and Australian national identity." Pp. 9-27 in *Cricket and National Identity in the Postcolonial Age: Following On*, edited by S. Wagg. London and New York: Routledge.
- Light, R. and Robert, E. J. 2018. *Stories of Indigenous Success in Australian Sport: Journeys to the AFL and NRL*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Majumdar, B. and Naha, S. 2020. "Live sport during the COVID-19 crisis: fans as creative broadcasters." *Sport in Society* 23 (7): 1091-1099.
- Melnick, M. J. and Wann, D. L. 2011. "An examination of sport fandom in Australia: Socialization, team identification, and fan behavior." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 46(4): 456-470.
- Messner, M. 2007. "Sport and Male Domination: The Female Athlete as Contested Ideological Terrain." Pp. 31-46 in *Out of Play: Critical Essays on Gender and Sport*. State University of New York Press.
- Miah, A., Fenton, A. and Chadwick, S. 2020. "Virtual reality and sports: The rise of mixed, augmented, immersive, and esports experiences." Pp. 249-262 in *21st Century Sports* edited by Sascha L. Schmidt. Cham: Springer.
- Moyer, V. 2022. "Revising trans-exclusionary narratives in women's sports activism." In *Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.
- Nurka, C. 2013. "Shame and disgrace in Australian football culture: rape claims and public affect." Pp. 43-51 in *Women's Studies International Forum* 38. Pergamon.
- Rossiter, P. "Bogans: A Sticky Subject." *Continuum* 27 (1): 80-92.
- Schulz, S., Blanch, F. R., and Elliott, S. 2022. "Across field and classroom." In Chapter 14. In *Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.
- Stewart B., 2004. "Sport and Australian society." Pp. 3-15 in *Australian Sport—better by Design?: The Evolution of Australian Sport Policy*: Psychology Press.

Course Calendar

Session 1	
Topics	<p>Kick off!: Why study sport and what is its place in Australian society?</p> <p>The lecture introduces the unit content and the basis of this unit which is to explore society and culture through an investigation and analysis of sport and sporting culture. This week we will examine what it means to take a sociological approach to sport and you will be introduced to a number of foundational theories and ideas of sociology. We will also explore our individual and collective interests in sport – as fans and perhaps even athletes ourselves!</p>
Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 1
Readings & Assignments	Stewart B., 2004. "Sport and Australian society." Pp. 3-15 in <i>Australian Sport—better by Design?: The Evolution of Australian Sport Policy</i> : Psychology Press.

	Hargreaves, J. and McDonald, I., 2000. "Cultural Studies and the Sociology of Sport." Pp. 49-61 in Coakley, J. & Dunning, E., <i>Handbook of Sports Studies</i> . London: Sage.
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Session 2	
Topics	From Cricket to Cockroach Races: Sport and Australian National Identity This week we explore the centrality of sport to Australian national identity. We will be taking a very broad approach as we investigate cricket as a national sport and contrasting this with micro level events such as cockroach racing.
Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 2
Readings & Assignments	Blackburn, K. 2015. "Introduction." In <i>War, Sport and the Anzac Tradition</i> , Palgrave Macmillan UK. Hutchins, B. 2005. "'Unity, difference and the 'national game': Cricket and Australian national identity." Pp. 9-27 in <i>Cricket and National Identity in the Postcolonial Age: Following On</i> , edited by S. Wagg. London and New York: Routledge.

Session 3	
Topics	Race and Sport In this week's class we turn to the issue of race and racism in sport. Our required reading investigates the particular experiences of iconic Indigenous athlete Cathy Freeman, and in our seminar we will also explore the career of, and racist attacks on AFL player Adam Goodes. To engage in a critical analysis of race and sport we will also be utilizing critical race theory and critical whiteness theory as we explore the complex relationship between sport, whiteness, and national identity in Australia.
Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 3
Readings & Assignments	Light, R. and Robert, E. J. 2018. <i>Stories of Indigenous Success in Australian Sport: Journeys to the AFL and NRL</i> . Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Session 4	
Field Trip	

Session 5	
Topics	Sport and Bogan Australia Australia is a sporting nation, but sporting events and the ways people experience and perform spectatorship is also 'classed'. This week we turn to the issue of class in Australian society as we analyse the place of the Melbourne Cup - 'the race that stops the nation' - and the construction of 'bogans'.
Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 4

Readings & Assignments	<p>Churn, N. 2012. "Bogan time and the race that stops the nation." Pp. 103-114 in <i>Movements in time: revolution, social justice and times of change</i>, edited by C. Lawrence and N. Churn. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.</p> <p>Rossiter, P. "Bogans: A Sticky Subject." <i>Continuum</i> 27 (1): 80-92.</p>
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Session 6	
Topics	<p>Cheers and Tears: The emotional and affective intensities of sporting events</p> <p>This week we turn to the experience of spectatorship and the implications for changed modes of sporting consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our readings direct us to the emotional and affective experiences of live matches and spectating through user-generated content and integration of online and offline fandom as we consider how we are 'moved' by sport and how, if at all, the atmosphere of collective sporting passions manifests and affects us.</p>
Activity	<p>Bring an article or opinion piece on the Melbourne Cup. Your focus should be on the Melbourne Cup as a social and cultural event, rather than on the specific outcome of the race.</p> <p>Online: Discussion Topic 6</p>
Readings & Assignments	<p>Majumdar, B. and Naha, S. 2020. "Live sport during the COVID-19 crisis: fans as creative broadcasters." <i>Sport in Society</i> 23 (7): 1091-1099.</p> <p>Melnick, M. J. and Wann, D. L. 2011. "An examination of sport fandom in Australia: Socialization, team identification, and fan behavior." <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> 46(4): 456-470.</p>

Session 7	
Field Trip	

Session 8	
Midterm Break	

Session 9	
Topics	<p>Hitting the 'grass ceiling': Gender inequality in sport</p> <p>The sporting landscape is one defined by gender differences. Sporting competitions are largely organized according to sex, and sports practices and sporting bodies are typically coded as masculine or feminine. Sporting domains have also, historically, been spaces of women's exclusion. This week we turn our attention to gender as an</p>

	organizing principle of sport (and of society more broadly) as we explore the history and contemporary state of sport from a gender perspective.
Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 8
Readings & Assignments	Messner, M. 2007. "Sport and Male Domination: The Female Athlete as Contested Ideological Terrain." Pp. 31-46 in <i>Out of Play: Critical Essays on Gender and Sport</i> . State University of New York Press.

Session 10	
Topics	<p>The (Un)Holy Trinity: Violence, Scandal, and Cheating in Sport</p> <p>While sport and sporting events are often glorified as positive individual and collective leisure past-times, sporting culture has a 'dark side'. This week we explore some of the darker aspects of sport as we explore off-field and excessive violence, scandals, and forms of cheating (such as doping). Our aim is to both investigate particular case studies and to consider the connections often made by theorists between highly masculine and violent sporting cultures, and unacceptable off-field behaviours. We will also be considering the paradoxical tensions that exist between these different case studies, such as how public opinion is charged when cheating scandals are revealed, yet largely silent when athletes are involved in domestic violence charges or sex scandals.</p>
Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 9
Readings & Assignments	<p>Nurka, C. 2013. "Shame and disgrace in Australian football culture: rape claims and public affect." Pp. 43-51 in <i>Women's Studies International Forum</i> 38. Pergamon.</p> <p>Brennan, J. 2016. "The Todd Carney 'bubbling' social media scandal." <i>Popular Communication</i> 14(4): 199-211.</p>

Session 11	
Guest Lecture	

Session 12	
Topics	<p>Sport as a site of conformity and resistance</p> <p>Building on our discussions over previous weeks on gender, race, and class, this week we turn to the issue of sport and politicisation. Often we hear claims to 'keep politics out of sport', but how could that ever be possible when sport is a product of the historical and contemporary social, cultural, economic, and political forces? In this week's class we explore the relationship between sport, power, politics, activism and conservatism, exploring some of the paradoxical ways sport has at times pushed the bounds of social progressivism, and in other ways has been restricted by tradition and exclusionary politics.</p>

Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 10
Readings & Assignments	<p>CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>Moyer, V. 2022. "Revising trans-exclusionary narratives in women's sports activism." In <i>Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives</i>, edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Schulz, S., Blanch, F. R., and Elliott, S. 2022. "Across field and classroom." In Chapter 14. In <i>Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives</i>, edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Fuller, L. K. 2021. "Athlete activism relative to clothing: A case study of Ibtihaj Muhammad and the sport hijab." In <i>Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives</i> edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.</p>

Session 13	
Topics	<p>What is the future of sport?</p> <p>As we come to the end of our term we consider the possible futures of sport, and how sport is itself being redefined and reinvented, from increased localisation to alternative and extreme sport to the rise of eGames and virtual reality. We will investigate some new sporting horizons and query their potential as sites to challenge diverse forms of social inequality as they manifest in sporting culture and society more broadly.</p>
Activity	Online: Discussion Topic 11
Readings & Assignments	Miah, A., Fenton, A. and Chadwick, S. 2020. "Virtual reality and sports: The rise of mixed, augmented, immersive, and esports experiences." Pp. 249-262 in <i>21st Century Sports</i> edited by Sascha L. Schmidt. Cham: Springer.

Session 14	
Group Presentations	

Session 15	
Group Presentations (Continued)	

Section III: Academic Policies and Standards

Academic Policies

Students are expected to review and understand all CEA CAPA student policies, including our [Academic Policies](#) and [Engagement Policy](#). CEA CAPA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. Additional requirements that may be associated with a specific course or program are addressed in the term syllabus.

Student Learning & Development Objectives

CEA CAPA has identified [Student Learning and Development Objectives \(SLDOs\)](#) for all programs in all locations: content in context, navigating differences, power and equity, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, career and professional development, and sustainability and migration. These are meta-level learning objectives that transcend coursework and are infused across all elements of program delivery, beyond specifics of course offerings, addressing student learning holistically and framing it a larger learning context.