

COURSE INFORMATION

Sociology of Sports **SOCI 319-500 Fall 2025**

Meeting Day/Time: T/TH 9:35am-10:50am
Classroom: HECC 110
Credit Hours: 3

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

Dr. Troy Harden
Texas A&M University
Email: tharden@tamu.edu (best contact!)
Phone: Sociology Department Office Phone (979 845-5133), leave message
Office Hours: Tuesdays 230pm-330pm, and by appointment. Office hours will take place virtually, please email the instructor for a Zoom link, and students can request to meet in person.
Office Location: Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Building (LASB) 339

TEACHING ASSISTANT: Janesha Hollerman: jhollerman@tamu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will cover multiple aspects of the social institution of sport. While some of the theoretical perspectives and examples will come from a trans-national context, the majority of the course focuses on the USA context. Course Themes include race, sex/gender, class, sexuality, the media, organizations, policy, and politics in sport.

Because students may have diverse backgrounds, this course is designed to facilitate different learning styles. Each week's classes will consist of a combination of lecture, discussion, and/or group activity. We will cover a wide range of topics related to sociology and sports in this course. Because of this, the class is heavily discussion based. I will guide these discussions, but keep in mind these are student-centered discussions and feature dialogue regarding weekly readings and topics. Please be prepared by reading the required material prior to class.

My goal is for you to be able to effectively develop and articulate your own interpretation of the key concepts covered in this course. Participatory activity is not meant to punish you but instead sharpen your critical thinking skills. I want you to be able to logically apply the material covered in class to the outside world, and vice versa. I will interweave empirical research and popular media references to demonstrate the parallels between social theory and real-world sports dynamics. The aim is for each student to be able to apply sociological concepts to their everyday sports scenarios. Always feel free to speak up and give relevant examples that add to mine.

Course Prerequisites: 300-level course eligibility

Special Course Designation:

This course is designated as a Cultural Discourse (CD) course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Texas A&M University has identified student learning outcomes that describe our institutional commitment to your educational goals. These include the ability to demonstrate critical thinking, effective communication, and social, cultural, and global competence. Please see TAMU Student Learning Outcomes at: http://provost.tamu.edu/essentials/pdfs/copy_of_UndergraduateLearningOutcomesFinal.pdf

Learning Outcomes for this Course

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the connection between sports and other aspects of the social world.
2. Apply academic theories to real life examples in sport.
3. Describe the relationships between course themes
4. Utilize a more critical perspective in their interpretation of sport
5. Better understand how the larger social structure and institutions impact sport.
6. Gain insight about their social experiences and those of others in a diverse and globalized world of sport.
7. Utilize the sociological imagination and other sociological principles to describe how sports operate in the United States of America.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

There is one required textbook:

Delaney, T. & Madigan, T. (2021). Sociology of Sports: An Introduction. 3rd edition. McFarland & Company, NC.

All other required readings and links to other required materials (videos, podcasts, etc.) can be found on the course Canvas page in the weekly folders.

GRADED REQUIREMENTS

Quizzes four at 50 points each (200 points total): An online quiz will be administered at different points in the semester covering lecture and reading/video materials during the time between the quizzes. These quizzes will be multiple choice. The quiz for each week will open on Thursdays at 5pm and close on Sundays at 11:59pm, with the exception of the final quiz, which will take place during Finals week.

Discussion Topics four at 25 points each (100 points total): Students will respond to four discussion prompts during the semester. The discussion prompts will be based on class topics from the readings and course discussions and will be posted on Canvas. Students are required to answer the prompt and respond to at least two of their peers' prompts. Details will be available on Canvas.

Live Sport Analysis Paper (100 points total): Students will complete one short paper (at least 500 words) identifying and discussing connections between class material and a live sports event. Live sports events should be viewed in person. Students should identify early in the semester events that they are likely to attend. If you have special circumstances, please see your instructor as soon as possible. Papers should show that the student can apply what they are learning in class to examples outside of class, including referencing course readings and material. A rubric for the Live Sport Analysis Papers will be posted on Canvas. I am happy to review and discuss paper drafts during office hours. The paper may be completed and submitted at any time over the course of the semester but no later than **November 21st at 11:59pm.**

Students should use ASA or APA style for their papers. Papers should be single or double spaced, with 12 point font and 1-inch margins. They should be submitted as word documents or PDFs.

Examining sports and sociology infographic (100 points total)

For this assignment, students will work in groups of no more than **four (4)** on this assignment to create an infographic that provides information about an issue related to Sociology of Sport. You must use a topic based on one of the areas below, covered in your textbook or in lecture. Submissions are worth up to 100 points based on the quality of the submission. The infographic can be educational (providing information/education concerning a particular topic either briefly or unexamined in the course) or solution-focused (addressing a social problem in sports and providing innovative solutions). **The assignment is due December 5th at 11:59pm.**

As a group, you will create an infographic related to sociology and a contemporary or historical aspect of sports. Examples of topics are listed below:

- Violence and sports and the impact of violence either within sports or societal, community, or interpersonal violence and its relationship to sports
- Gender, athletes and the impact on sports
- The impact of NIL on college athletics
- Trends in racial/ethnic demographics and sports
- The impact of stadiums, land use, and economic development on low-income and community residents in a specific geographic locale
- Examining the impact of racial justice efforts on professional or amateur athletics
- Assessing mental health issues, concerns, or interventions and efforts to address mental health in professional or amateur athletics.

Infographics are graphic depictions of complex information (e.g., knowledge, data, concepts, ideas, etc.) that use visual elements to clearly and concisely communicate complex information to diverse audiences. Infographics use relatable pictures, data-supported evidence, compelling statistics, easy-to-read fonts, complimentary color schemes, simple charts, bold graphs, and other graphics to disseminate information in quick and easily digestible format.

As a group, select one of the topics as the foundation for creating an infographic. For example,

you may decide to focus on the impact of the NIL on collegiate athletics. You should also decide to focus on a specific population related to this, or a particular focus for your project. For example, you may decide to focus on the relationship between women in college athletics, the NIL, and the transfer portal, or the impact the NIL has on the mental health and well-being of college athletes. Upon selecting a topic, your group will develop an infographic to disseminate the topic in a way that effectively communicates with diverse audiences (i.e., social media users, peers, scientists, non-scientists, clinicians, educators, non-disciplinary experts, disciplinary experts, policymakers, etc.).

Approval of the topic is based on the acceptance of a brief abstract due 3/7/25 (see Canvas). A rubric will be provided on Canvas.

NOTE: Your name and page number must appear on each page of all written assignments. Failure to do so results in an ungraded paper.

Attendance/Participation (50 points): Students are encouraged to be responsible for all course materials, including readings, audio and video recordings, handouts and discussion material. As well, students are encouraged to come to class ready to engage in all discussions by reading all materials and participating fully. Class attendance is extremely important for this course. I will take attendance for all in-person classes. Be aware that in-class discussions expanding upon the readings may be on the exams.

You are responsible for knowing materials covered in class as well as in readings. Weekly reading will include a combination of chapters from the text, journal articles, and/or newspaper articles. To qualify for a non-penalized absence, you must notify the instructor or TA prior to the day of the absence. You must also upload university-approved documentation that verifies your absence is excused according to Student Rule 07. The student will be responsible to obtain notes missed due to absences, whether excused or not. After your third unexcused absence, you will be penalized 3 points per absence. After missing 5 classes (without university-approved excuse), you will earn zero points for participation.

Students should be aware of contemporary issues in sport. This may be achieved by watching daily reports on ESPN's Sportscenter or reading the daily sports page of the local newspaper, social media sites, or the like.

GRADING

While collaboration is encouraged on the group project, collaboration is not allowed on any other graded work. If you are absent from class or are late to class, ask other students for lecture notes. Extra credit opportunities will not be available for this course. An Incomplete (I) will only be given in cases of emergency late in the semester with official documentation provided. Final grades are determined based on the chart below, and I will not change borderline grades. Please inform me of any circumstances or hardships that may impact your course performance as soon as possible so the issue can be effectively addressed in the context of this course. FERPA law prohibits the transmission of any information about student grades via email or phone, even with student permission or at student request. Grades will be posted to Canvas once each component is graded.

Below is a table showing all graded course components, how much each contributes to your course grade, and how final grades are calculated.

Course Component	Point Value	Percentage of Course Grade	Due date
Discussion prompts	100	20%	9/11, 10/2, 10/23, 11/6
Group Infographic	100	20%	12/5
Live Sports Analysis Paper	100	20%	11/21
Quiz #1	50	12.5%	9/18-9/21
Quiz #2	50	12.5%	10/6-10/9
Quiz #3	50	12.5%	10/30-11/2
Quiz #4	50	12.5%	12/9-12/11
Attendance/Participation	50	12.5%	
Total Points Available	500	100%	

Points Earned	Percentage of Points Earned	Course Grade
448 or more	89.5-100%	A
398-447	79.5-89.4%	B
348-397	69.5-79.4%	C
298-347	59.5-69.4%	D
Fewer than 298	Less than 59.5	F

COURSE POLICIES

Lateness and Late Work: Arriving late can disrupt class and cause you to miss important material. Work submitted late without written documentation of an excused absence will be penalized 10% per day (or part thereof) past the deadline it is submitted [including weekend days]. See Student Rule 7 for information about excused and unexcused absences.

Technology: During face-to-face class meetings, students should use personal laptops, tablets, phones, or other electronic devices only for note taking purposes. If you have trouble accessing course content, taking a quiz or submitting work, please seek help from the Office for Academic Innovation (or Help Desk Central if you get no response from the OAI). See contact information below. Because of the potential for technology issues, it is better to submit assignments early before deadlines. If you are unable to submit on Canvas before a deadline because of technology issues, please send me an email immediately with a copy of your completed assignment attached.

With the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, the ways in which we define our creative processes continue to transform. AI generators are rapidly evolving from simple editing for grammatical errors and spelling mistakes (Grammarly, MS Word Spell Check) to sophisticated text production (ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc.), as well as image, computer code, and audio generation. The presence of such tools, however, does not replace our need to learn how to draft, revise, and reflect on texts, programs, drawings and how to exercise information literacy and personal responsibility in how we locate, evaluate, incorporate, and cite primary/ secondary sources. For example, the Association for Writing Across the Curriculum states the following:

Writing to learn is an intellectual activity that is crucial to the cognitive and social development of learners and writers. This vital activity cannot be replaced by AI language generators (AWAC).

Engaging in the various aspects of creative pursuits (e.g., writing, coding, drawing) is critical to education in a broad sense. While AI technologies will continue shaping how we approach these creative tasks, the critical work of creativity relies on integrity, originality, and ethical conduct regarding appropriate representation as an author or creator. Thus, submitting work with a significant percentage of AI-generated content, unless otherwise permitted, can be considered academic misconduct under Texas A&M University Student Rule 20. Students must therefore cite the use of Generative AI tools and document what they have contributed to an assignment.

Office for Academic Innovation
email: aihelp@tamu.edu
phone: (979) 458-3417

Help Desk Central
email: helpdesk@tamu.edu
phone: (979) 845-8300

Instructor Error: Students should keep a copy of all submitted work and all return work until final grades are posted, and Canvas grades should be checked regularly for accuracy.

Participation: *This course utilizes face to face sessions to encourage discussion and interaction between students in the course and between students and the instructor. A few classes will be via zoom, and students are expected to be present and participate appropriately.*

Email: I will mainly use email and Canvas updates to communicate changes to students, Please be sure to check your TAMU email regularly.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments. Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)). "The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)). Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)