



SYLLABUS

THE CULTURE OF SPORT AND SPORTS JOURNALISM IN THE UK

Instructor Name: James Pearce

Contact Hrs: 40

**Language of Instruction: English
LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Britain is currently in the middle of what's been called its 'Decade of Sport'. After London's successful hosting of the Olympics in 2012 and the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014, attention will turn to the Rugby World Cup in 2015 and then the World Athletics Championships in 2017.

During this course we will analyse the perceived benefits of hosting major sporting events, and look into the culture of sport. Why does sport matter so much to so many people?

We will delve into the practices of sports journalism, studying how the techniques used by sports journalists compare with those used by other news journalists.

There will also be a very special focus on sports broadcasting. The course will finish with a broadcasting masterclass, with all students given the opportunity to record a TV broadcast with a professional cameraman.

This course will appeal especially to those planning a career in Sports Journalism. Students will attend key sporting events which they will report on and analyse. They will also write leading articles on some of the themes highlighted during the course. They will have the opportunity to draw on their own experience of sport theory and practice in the United States.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Instructional Goals. The course will:

- Acquaint students with the major historical themes and debates in British Sport.
- Examine the theories associated with individual sporting excellence and sporting decline.
- Acquaint students with the UK systems of sports organisation.
- Explain how different news media report on sporting events.
- Compare American Sporting systems with those in the UK.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

The class will be taught through classroom lectures and seminars, guest speakers, as well as practical reporting exercises. There will be at least two day long visits to relevant sporting venues in London. These will most likely be a cricket test match at Lord's and a day trip to Wimbledon.

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

15% Journalistic piece/story
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25% Opinion Piece Essay
30% Long Essay
15% Participation in class and attendance

Written Work

Four pieces of written work are required from students taking this course.

Students will be asked to write two journalistic pieces. These will follow the individual day trips to the major sporting events and focus on a match or performance of an individual athlete or team. The articles will be 800-900 words in length.

Students will need to write an opinion piece (1000 words) on a sporting theme such as drug taking in sport or why a particular player or athlete stands out from the rest.

The fourth piece of work will be a longer piece (2000 words) analysing and giving critical insight as well as current examples on either a historical theme of sport in the UK or one of the issues facing the future success of British athletes. The longer essay will encourage students to draw on their experience and knowledge of sport in the US. It will look to test the student's grasp of the theoretical concepts in analysing sporting culture.

Written work will require students to work independently. They will be offered support and advice at all stages of the course. Additionally, students can submit draft assignments well before deadline, for comment and further advice before finalising their work.

Academic Integrity

It is expected that any written work submitted for this work is entirely a student's own work. If within your work you have relied on outside sources, you will be required to identify them. Failure to acknowledge any source may leave you open to the charge of plagiarism and, at the very least, result in failure to secure a credit for this course.

Attendance

Every class (whether on or off site) must be attended. Absence will only be accepted on grounds of sickness. Sickness must be notified in advance in person (by phone, note or email) either to Susie or Mary. A signed note must be provided within one week. Any unexcused absence will affect your grade. See attendance policy for details.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week One:

Guided tour of Chelsea Football Club

Week Two:

- Class: The Spectator Experience: The Modern Sports Stadium in a Competitive Market

- Visit: Wimbledon (Summer I only)
- Class: Sport in Society: What is it about sport that makes it so central to the lives of so many people? Does sport justify the amount of column inches devoted to it in newspapers?
Essay 1: Does sport matter (800-900 words)
Reading: ‘The Meaning of Sport’ by Simon Barnes

Week Three:

- Class: The Pantomime of Sports Journalism – the need for heroes and villains
Reading: ‘Searching for Heroes’ by Ian Wooldridge
- Class: Subject to be decided (based on current events that week)
- Class: guided tour of Lord’s cricket ground (including the media centre)
Essay 2: Is sports journalism really journalism? How might Woodward and Bernstein have fared as sports journalists?

Week Four:

- Class: Is Hosting the World’s Biggest Sporting Events a Price Worth Paying?
Reading: ‘Olympic Turnaround’ by Michael Payne
- Class: The Big Debate
- Evening outing to a cricket match
Long Essay (2000 words): The international sporting landscape in 2050 – A chance for students to get out their crystal balls, and, using analysis of past and current trends, to predict how the world of sport will look in 2050. The focus should be on results on the field of play, as well as the politics away from it. For example: Is the Qatar World Cup in 2022 just the start in a shift away from traditional Eastern and Western host venues? What is the likely advance in performance by African nations over the next thirty years?

Week Five:

- Class: The Secrets of Success in Sports Broadcasting
- Class: Course Overview and Conclusion

COURSE READINGS

Barnes, S. (2007). *The Meaning of Sport*. Short Books

Wooldridge, I. (2008). *Searching for Heroes: Fifty Years of Sporting Encounters*. Hodder

Payne, M. (2012). *Olympic turnaround: How the Olympic Games stepped back from the brink of extinction to become the world's best known brand - and a multi-billion dollar global franchise*. Infinite Ideas

Standard citation needs to include: APA