

**Sports and Politics**  
**[UNCO 1301]**  
**Spring 2020**  
**Monday/Wednesday/Friday (10:00-10:50am)**  
**BA 106**  
**Dr. Robert G. Rodríguez**  
**Associate Professor, Political Science**  
**Coordinator, Latin American & U.S. Latino Studies Minor**

**Office: Social Science Building 149**

**email: robert.rodriguez@tamuc.edu**

**Office Hours: MWF 11:00am-12:00pm and MW 1:00pm-2:00pm; or by appointment**

*The BEST way to contact me is via email.*

**Student Learning Instructors:**

**Gabriela Tamez, gtamez1@leomail.tamuc.edu and**

**Lauren Reyna, lreyna1@leomail.tamuc.edu**

**Course Description:**

Welcome to Sports and Politics!

This class will carefully analyze the political, social, historical and cultural issues that are bound to sports, athletes and sporting events within various nation-states. The course will require extensive readings from a textbook, in addition to contemporary articles. Several historical documentary films will be shown to convey the impact of sports on societies. Guest speakers will be invited to communicate with the students enrolled in this course either in person or via Skype or speaker phone.

The course is organized both thematically and mostly chronologically. We will begin the course with an overview of the numerous connections between politics and sports. Then we will delve into specific political issues that have been manifested in specific sports such as soccer, baseball, American football and boxing. Then, we will analyze how politics have permeated the Olympic Games before rounding out the class with discussions on inherently political themes such as race, ethnicity, religion, economics, gender and masculinity.

Your professor for this course is a former sports journalist who has published a book and numerous scholarly articles/book chapters that focus on the intersection between sports and politics in the United States and abroad. As a journalist -and fan- he has attended numerous sporting events around the world and interacted with many world class athletes.

**Format:**

Each class session will involve lectures and robust discussions about the assigned readings. You will regularly be asked to contribute your opinions about the assigned readings and answer questions about the readings. In addition to the assigned readings listed in the syllabus, we will regularly discuss current topics that intertwine sports and politics.

***NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the professor's discretion.***

***NO PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE ALLOWED IN CLASS AT ANY TIME.***  
***THIS INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO):***  
***CELL PHONES,***  
***LAPTOPS,***  
***iPADS,***  
***iPODS,***  
***MP3 Players/Recorders,***  
***Translation Devices***  
***VIDEO CAMERAS***  
***OR ANY OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECORDERS OF ANY KIND***  
***IF ANY OF THESE DEVICES ARE PRESENT IN CLASS,***  
***THE INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE WILL BE DIRECTED TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM***  
***IMMEDIATELY AND THE ENTIRE CLASS WILL HAVE A POP QUIZ.***

### **Requirements/Assignments**

**Examinations:** In this course, all students are required to take TWO exams, each of which will consist of 30 multiple choice questions that stem directly from the readings. You will have 50 minutes to complete each exam. Together, these exams will comprise **60%** of your grade (each exam is worth 30%). Although Exam 2 will be given during the last week of class, it will only cover the material presented after Exam 1-- there is NOT a comprehensive final exam in this course.

**If you miss an exam, you will receive 0% for that exam.**

If you have a **legitimate reason** for missing an exam (e.g. severe illness or injury requiring professional medical care, emergencies in your immediate family, participation in official university activities, legal obligations) **AND** you have **supporting documentation** for your absence, then you may request taking the MAKE-UP EXAM, which will take place at a mutually-agreed upon time and date **-ONLY IF APPROVED**. Exam 2 will be held during Finals Week, therefore no make-up exams will be scheduled, except in the most extraordinary, legitimate, and documented circumstances.

**Requests** for taking the make-up exam must be **submitted in writing within 24 hours** of the scheduled exam **AND include documentation** explaining and substantiating why the absence was legitimate. An approval to take the make-up exam will be based solely upon the professor's evaluation of your request and any supporting documentation.

**Attendance: 10%** of your grade is based on your class attendance. Students are required to attend class and attendance will be taken at each class session using your Student ID card. **Signing in a student who is not present or asking a student to sign you in when you are absent constitutes academic dishonesty (see p. 4).** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have signed in. Arriving late and/or leaving early will negatively impact your attendance grade. *Attendance is critical, discussions are irreplaceable, and course sessions cannot be "made up."* ***I will not be managing any excuses for absences.*** It is not necessary to provide me with any excuses for absences (unless you are absent during an examination-read previous section.) ***You can miss up to three class sessions without penalty for any reason. More than three absences will result in a reduction in your grade, REGARDLESS of the reason (excused OR unexcused).***

***The attendance grade scale appears below:***

- 0 absences = you will get a bonus of 2% added to your grade
  - 1-3 absences= no penalty
  - 4 absences= -1% from your grade
  - 5 absences= -2% from your grade
  - 6 absences= -3% from your grade
  - 7 absences= -5% from your grade
  - 8 absences= -7% from your grade
  - 9 absences= -9% from your grade
  - 10 or more absences= -10% from your grade
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- ***Attendance Note 1: If a pop quiz or any other assignment is given when you are absent, you CANNOT make it up, regardless of the reason for your absence (excused or unexcused).***
  - ***Attendance Note 2: I will NOT reply to any emails asking what we did in class during your absence- We will follow the syllabus. If you miss class, get notes from a classmate and ask him/her if there were any announcements.***
  - ***Attendance Note 3: Students who attend ALL class sessions and do not have ANY unexcused OR excused absences will receive a bonus of 2% added to their attendance grade.***
  - ***Attendance Note 4: ARRIVE ON TIME! The classroom door will not be opened for late arrivals 15 minutes after class starts. Notify the professor in advance if you need to arrive late or leave early.***

**Participation:** Your participation in this class is worth up to **3%** of your grade.

Your contributions to the class discussions are highly desirable and will make class sessions more interesting. Positive participation includes responding to my questions, asking your own questions, and contributing to class discussions. All of these activities will positively impact your participation grade.

Negative participation includes: sleeping in class, side-talk with your neighbors, coming to class late, and any other class disruptions- any of these activities will negatively impact your participation grade, even if you contribute to class discussions. If you use personal electronic devices in class that will result in a pop quiz for the entire class and your removal from the classroom, and it will negatively impact your participation grade. Also, if you misbehave in class or disrupt class in any way you may be directed to leave the classroom and your participation grade will be negatively impacted.

Your participation grade will be calculated as follows:

Never Contributes to Class Discussions:	0%
Rarely/Sometimes Contributes to Class Discussions:	1%
Often Contributes to Class Discussions:	2%
Almost Always/Always Contributes to Class Discussions:	3%

**Pop Quizzes:** These will be assigned at the professor's discretion, and will count for a total of **2%** of your grade. Pop quizzes will be very difficult to pass if you do not read the material we will cover in advance. If you are *absent* when a pop quiz is given, you **cannot** make it up, irrespective of the circumstances, and will earn 0% for any quiz you miss. Pop quizzes will be graded on the basis of the content and clarity of your answers.

**Poster Presentation (LIONIZING EVENT):** Students will be assigned to groups that will create a poster presentation on an assigned chapter from the course textbook. A symposium will be held at the end of the semester where the campus community will be invited to browse your posters and interact with you about your topic, just as you would if you were presenting your poster at an academic conference. More details about this project will be provided after Spring Break. Your poster presentation is worth **25%** of your grade.

**Grades:**

Your grade in this course will be determined by the criteria listed below. The following scale will be used to determine your grade:

- Exam #1 (**March 6**): 30%
- Exam #2 (**April 26**): 30%
- Lionizing Poster Presentation (**May 4**): 25%
- Attendance: 10%
- Participation: 3%
- Pop Quizzes: 2%

**A 90-100%; B 80-89.9%; C 70-79.9%; D 60-69.9%; F Below 60%**

**Learning Outcome:**

Students will understand the linkages between politics and sports in historical and contemporary contexts in the United States and abroad.

**Global Learning Objectives:**

**Learning Outcome 1:** Students will be able to demonstrate *knowledge* of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems).

**Learning Outcome 2:** Students will be able to *apply* knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics.

**Learning Outcome 3:** Students will be able to view themselves as *engaged* citizens within an interconnected and diverse world.

**Policies:**

**Notes on Academic Dishonesty of ANY kind:** Any student who is caught committing any kind of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” in this course and will be reported to the University administration. “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), signing the attendance sheet for a student who is absent (or asking another student to sign you in when you are absent), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material” (Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12). If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.

**Email Policy:** Before you ask me a question in an email, check to see if the syllabus answers your question **FIRST**. I generally reply to emails within 24 hours, Monday-Friday. Emails sent to me over weekends will be replied to on Mondays. I do not reply to emails that ask questions about items covered in the syllabus, such as what chapters are covered on an exam or what the assigned readings are for a given week.

**Code of Student Conduct:** All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. *Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.* Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, your immediate removal from the class, being immediately dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.

**Campus Carry:** Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

**Note to Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Gee Library Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 [StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

**Non-discrimination notice:** A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

**In order to maximize your performance in this course, you must:**

- ***TURN OFF ALL PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES BEFORE CLASS BEGINS. THIS INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO): CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, Smartwatches, iPADS, IPODS, MP3 Players/Recorders, Translation devices, VIDEO CAMERAS, OR ANY OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECORDERS OF ANY KIND***
- ***IF ANYONE IS FOUND TO BE TEXTING OR ANSWERS A PHONE CALL DURING CLASS, THE ENTIRE CLASS WILL TAKE A *POP QUIZ* ON THE SPOT.***
- Attend each class session AND arrive ON TIME (**the classroom door will not be opened for late arrivals 15 minutes after class starts**; Notify the professor in advance if you need to arrive late or leave early;
- Read the assigned material before class;
- Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class;
- Refrain from reading materials or working on other homework during class;
- Do NOT get up in the middle of class to go to the bathroom unless absolutely necessary;
- Be courteous to -and respectful of- your fellow students and professor.

### **Required Readings:**

There is **ONE required text** for this course. ***MAKE SURE TO PURCHASE THE CORRECT EDITION:***

American Sports: From the Age of Folk Games to the Age of the Internet **8th Edition**

by Pamela Grundy and Benjamin G Rader

ISBN-13: 978-1138281998

ISBN-10: 9781138281998

### **Course Schedule:**

#### **Week 1 Introduction to Course; Studying Sports and Politics**

January 13, 15, 17

Read:

- ***Buy your book.*** A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L (you can also access this article using the TAMUC Library)
- "DROPPING THE BALL": The Understudied Nexus of Sports and Politics, Gift, Thomas; Miner, Andrew. World Affairs; Washington Vol. 180, Iss. 1, (Spring 2017): 127-161.

#### **Week 2 Sport and Politics in the United States; *Statement of Personal Responsibility DUE***

January 20 (No Class- MLK DAY), 22, 24

Read:

- ***Statement of Personal Responsibility DUE ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 24.*** A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L (you can also access this article using the TAMUC Library)
- "Chapter 13 Sport and Politics in the United States" in Routledge Handbook of Sport and Politics, 2017. Butterworth, Michael.

### **Week 3 Sport and Politics in the Era of President Trump**

January 27, 29, 31

Read:

- *A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L (you can also access this article using the TAMUC Library)*
- “Taking a Knee, Making a Stand: Social Justice, Trump America, and the Politics of Sport” Lucia Trimbur (2019), *Quest*, 71:2, 252-265

### **Week 4 Sport and Politics in the International Arena**

February 3, 5, 7

Read:

- *A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L (you can also access this article using the TAMUC Library)*
- “Sport, Politics and International Relations in the Twentieth Century”, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, (2008) 25:13, 1689-1706

### **Week 5 Sport and Politics in the 2018 World Cup and Beyond**

February 10, 12, 14

Read:

- *A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L (you can also access this article using the TAMUC Library)*
- “Issues around the FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia: A showcase of how sports and politics mix”, Danyel Reiche, *SUG* 2018; 15 (2-3): 283-296

### **Week 6 The Legacy of Muhammad Ali**

February 17, 19, 21

Read:

- *A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L*
- “The Importance of Muhammad Ali” in Thomas Hauser Muhammad Ali: A Tribute to the Greatest
- “The Long Sad Goodbye” in Thomas Hauser Muhammad Ali: A Tribute to the Greatest
- Online Reading: ESPN “*Muhammad Ali Dies at Age 74 after Long Battle With Parkinson’s Disease*” [http://www.espn.com/boxing/story/\\_/id/15939933/muhammad-ali-dies-74](http://www.espn.com/boxing/story/_/id/15939933/muhammad-ali-dies-74)

### **Week 7 Latinos in U.S. Sports**

February 24, 26, 28

Read:

- *A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L*
- “Latinos in U.S. Sport: 1980-2010”, Iber, Regalado, Alamillo, and De Leon

### **Week 8 Nationalism and Sport in the 1978 World Cup; EXAM 1**

March 2, 4, 6

Read:

- *A link to the Readings for this week will be on D2L*
- “Generals and Goals: Nationalism and Sport in Argentina”, Rodriguez
- ***Exam #1 will take place at the beginning of class on Friday, the 6<sup>th</sup> of March. You will have the entire class period to complete it. The exam will cover all of the material presented since the first class session.***

**Week 9        SPRING BREAK (No Classes)**

March 9, 11, 13

Read:

- Nothing.

**Week 10        Globalizing Sports, Redefining Race**

March 16, 18, 20

Read:

- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 14

**Week 11        The Setting of Organized Sports Since World War II; Professional Team Sports in the Age of Television**

March 23, 25, 27

Read:

- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 15
- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 16

**Week 12        College Sports in the Age of Television**

March 30, April 1, 3

Read:

- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 17

**Week 13        Racial Revolution**

April 8, 10, 12

Read:

- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 18

**Week 14        Women's Liberation; All Sports All the Time**

April 15, 17, 19

Read:

- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 19
- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 20

**Week 15        Sports in the Twenty-First Century; *Exam #2***

April 22, 24, 26

Read:

- Grundy and Rader: Chapter 21
- *Exam #2 will take place on Friday, April 26th. The exam will cover all of the material presented in class since March 16.*

**Finals Week        Lionizing Event**

May 4

- *Your Lionizing Group Poster Presentations will be held on Monday, May 4 at 10am at a location to be announced.*

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**STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the syllabus in its entirety, and understand the guidelines and agree to the policies detailed therein as a condition of being enrolled in this course. I understand my obligation to adhere to these guidelines and policies in this course, and that failure to do so may result in serious consequences, including (but not limited to) being dropped from the course, and/or receiving a grade of “F” in the course.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student PRINTED Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**FAILURE TO RETURN THIS SIGNED STATEMENT BY THE FIFTH CLASS SESSION  
(January 24, 2020) WILL RESULT IN YOUR BEING DROPPED FROM THIS COURSE.**