



**COURSE SYLLABUS  
Politics and Sports  
PSCI 249 (23927)  
SPRING 2026**

**January 13 through May 5, 2026  
Tuesday/Thursday 2:00pm-3:15pm  
Location: Ferguson Social Science Building, Room 312**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor: Dr. Robert G. Rodríguez**  
Professor, Political Science  
Interim Associate Department Head, Department of Social Sciences  
Coordinator, Sports Media Studies Major

Office Location: **Ferguson Social Science Building, Room 149**

Office Hours:

**Tu/Th 12:15pm-2:00pm and 3:15pm-4:00pm** (please send me an email in advance if you would like to meet at a specific time/date); **or by appointment** (in-person or zoom).  
The BEST way to contact me is via email.

Office Phone: **903-468-3094, however, the best way to contact me is by email.**

University Email Address: [robert.rodriquez@etamu.edu](mailto:robert.rodriquez@etamu.edu)

*Check this Syllabus to see if your question is answered FIRST.*

Preferred Form of Communication: Please send me an email if you would like to contact me.

**\*\*CHECK YOUR EMAIL FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS DAILY\*\***

## COURSE INFORMATION

### Required Readings

There is **ONE** required book for this course. The book is **FREELY ACCESSIBLE ONLINE** through the ETAMU Library Website, however, if you would like to purchase a printed version, the bibliographical information is as follows:

#### **American Sport in International History: The United States and the World since 1865**

Author Daniel M. DuBois  
Published 2023  
Bloomsbury Academic Publishing  
ISBN 9781350134706

### Course Description

This course will analyze political, social, historical and cultural issues that are bound to sports, sporting events and athletes within and among various nation-states. Topics are organized thematically and chronologically, providing an overview of the numerous connections between politics and sports. The course analyzes specific political issues that have emerged in sports such as soccer, baseball, American football, boxing and international events including the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup.

***Note: You will NOT be told what to think in this course. Rather, you will be provided with the tools to make your own assessments about political issues.***

**Classroom Discussions:** Each class session will feature a discussion of assigned readings. We may occasionally discuss significant national and international events that relate to this course as they occur by utilizing news articles and/or editorials mostly -but not exclusively- from *The Dallas Morning News*. The selected reading materials will be provided to students just prior to these classroom discussions, and the content cannot be determined in advance, as the editorials/articles will be published at the time these events occur. We may also host guest speakers, either in-person or via zoom that will discuss issues relevant to this course. There will be assigned videos that address issues in politics and sports to watch on D2L during specified dates.

Your **attendance and participation** in class discussions are mandatory and essential to your success in this course. Attendance will be taken during each class session and **will count toward your grade, as will your participation**. These discussions will NOT be recorded nor streaming online. **EXAMS will take place in-person** in the classroom.

Please be aware that in order to attend class discussions, you **MUST** adhere to ALL of the following rules:

1. **Electronic devices** (such as cell phones, laptops, ipads, earbuds, smartwatches, etc.) of any kind are **NEVER** permitted during class, unless specified for a specific purpose by your professor. You will be directed to stop using these items and/or leave the classroom immediately if you have an electronic device visible.
2. **Disruptions of any kind** (as determined by your professor, such as side-conversations and ANY display of disrespect to anyone) are absolutely prohibited in a university classroom. You will be directed to cease this type of activity and/or leave the classroom immediately if you disrupt class in any way. Persistent disruptions will be reported to the Dean of Students office for further action and you will be prohibited from attending class until the Dean of Students has authorized your return.
3. **Be on time.** The class door will be closed and locked 5 minutes after class begins, and will not be opened for anyone until class is dismissed. If you know you will be arriving late or need to leave class early for any reason, you must inform your professor before class begins.
4. **Follow the 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 direct students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the classroom 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 dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook: [http://www.tamuc.edu/student\\_guidebook/Student\\_Guidebook.pdf](http://www.tamuc.edu/student_guidebook/Student_Guidebook.pdf)

## **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

This course is divided into TWO units. There will be TWO exams: a **mid-term** covering Unit 1 and a **second exam** given during finals week that only covers Unit 2. There will also be THREE **short video essays**, and your final project in this course will be a **poster presentation** that will be displayed at a symposium at the end of the semester. Note: There is not a comprehensive final exam in this course.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade will be comprised of:

- A) Two in-person **Exams (worth 25% each, 50% total)**
- B) Three online **Video Essays (worth 4% each, pass/fail, 12% total)**
- C) **Poster Presentation (worth 25%)**
- D) **Attendance (worth 10%)**
- E) **Participation (worth 3%)**
- F) Your submitted **Student Statement of Personal Responsibility (1% Extra Credit-- IF submitted to me by the deadline).**

**Each element of your grade is described below.**

**A) Examinations:** In this course, **all students are required to take TWO IN-PERSON exams**, each of which will consist of multiple-choice questions. Together, these exams will comprise **50%** of your grade (each exam is worth 25%). The exams are NOT comprehensive. You **MUST** bring a pencil and a GREEN or BROWN scantron on the dates of the exams.

**If you do not complete an exam during the designated class session, you will receive 0% for that exam.**

If you have a **legitimate reason** for not completing an exam during the designated class session (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 inability to take the exam, then you may **request** taking a **make-up exam that will take place during the first Tuesday following the exam date immediately before or after class**. Requests for make-up exams **MUST** be made either in advance of the exam date (for example, if missing class to participate in a university activity) OR within 72 hours of missing an exam if the absence was caused by a legitimate unexpected reason.

***\*NOTE: Forgetting to take an exam is NOT a legitimate reason for missing an exam and you will not be allowed to make it up.\****

Requests for taking the make-up exam must be **submitted in writing VIA EMAIL and include SCANNED documentation** explaining and substantiating why your inability to take the exam during the designated class session was legitimate. An approval to allow

you to take a make-up exam **will be based solely upon the professor's evaluation of your request and any supporting documentation.**

#### **EXAM DATES:**

- **UNIT 1 Exam March 5**
- **UNIT 2 Exam May 5**

**B) Video Essays:** On March 17, 19 and 24, we will NOT be meeting in our classroom. Your assignments on those dates are to watch a total of THREE assigned documentaries that you can access through D2L. Watch each film, then write a 200-word essay for each film that clearly demonstrates you watched it entirely by both describing the contents and critiquing the what you saw. These are pass/fail assignments **worth 12% of your grade** (4% each).

#### **VIDEO ESSAY DUE DATES:**

- **Essay 1 March 17 ONLINE**
- **Essay 2 March 19 ONLINE**
- **Essay 3 March 24 ONLINE**

**C) Poster Presentation:** You will be assigned to create a poster presentation focusing on a topic of your choice (with professor approval) on Politics and Sports (politics, policy, history, etc.). This assignment is an INDIVIDUAL project, not a group project. You will be provided with detailed instructions after Spring Break, and **MUST** follow the provided instructions and format to successfully complete this assignment. You will present your poster at a research symposium that will be held during our class time on **TUESDAY, APRIL 28**, Location TBA. The research symposium will be held on-campus and will open to the entire university community. Your poster presentation is worth **25%** of your grade in this course.

#### **POSTER PRESENTATION DUE DATE**

- **April 28, Location TBA**

**D) 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. 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 or writing assignment-read previous section.)

**You can miss up to TWO class sessions without penalty for any reason. More than three absences will result in a reduction in your grade.**

**The attendance grade scale appears below:**

- 0 absences = you will get a bonus of 2% added to your grade
- 1-2 absences= no penalty
- 3 absences= -2% from your grade
- 4 absences= -3% from your grade
- 5 absences= -4% from your grade
- 6 absences= -5% from your grade
- 7 absences= -6% from your grade
- 8 absences= -7% from your grade
- 9 absences= -8% from your grade
- 10 absences= -9% from your grade
- 11 or more absences= -10% from your grade

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

Your contributions to the class discussions are essential for your success 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:

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

**F) STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

**YOU MUST SUBMIT A STATEMENT ON D2L** ACKNOWLEDGING YOU HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING *STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY* BY **THURSDAY, JANUARY 22 by 11:59 p.m.** This is a requirement to remain enrolled in this course and **1% extra credit** will be added to your total grade in this course **IF** you submit it to me by the deadline.

***\*\*DO NOT EMAIL YOUR STATEMENT TO ME- IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. I WILL PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CLASS ON HOW TO SUBMIT A FILE ON D2L\*\****

*Statement: 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 STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY DUE DATE:**

- *Thursday, January 22, by 11:59pm **ONLINE***

**Grading**

Your grade in this course will be determined by the following scale and criteria:

Exam 1:	25%
Exam 2:	25%
Video Essays:	12% (total, 4% each*3, pass/fail)
Attendance:	10%
Participation:	3%
Poster Presentation:	25%
<u>TOTAL:</u>	100%

*Submit Statement of Personal Responsibility on D2L: 1% extra credit if submitted on or before Thursday, January 22 by 11:59pm.*

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

## COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

### Unit 1

January 13 - March 5

#### ***Required Readings:***

#### **American Sport in International History**

- **Introduction**
  
- **Chapter 1 The Huddled Masses**
  - Immigration And The Emergence Of Modern Sport in America
  - America and the Modern Olympic Movement
  - Baseball and American Empire
  
- **Chapter 2 In Service of the State**
  - The Growing Business of Baseball
  - Professionalization in Other Corners of US Sport
  - The Olympics and War
  
- **Chapter 3 The Dawn of the Activist Athlete**
  - Post-War Professional Sport in America
  - Sport Diplomacy and the Cold War
  - Cold War Competitions and the Arrival of the Activist Athlete

#### ***Required Activities:***

- *Student Statement of Personal Responsibility DUE on D2L ONLY by Thursday, JANUARY 22 (\*ONLINE\*)*
- *EXAM covering Unit 1, Thursday, March 5 (in-person)*

**SPRING BREAK: No Class (March 10 & 12)**

### Unit 2

March 17 – May 5

#### ***Required Readings:***

#### **American Sport in International History**

- **Chapter 4 New Frontiers in Player Empowerment**
  - Sport and the End of the Cold War
  - Social Justice Takes Center Court
  - Global Sport Capitalism

- **Chapter 5 Into the Twenty-First Century**
  - The Highs and Lows of Global Sport Stardom
  - US Professional Sport after the American Age
  - US National Sport in the Twenty-First Century
  
- **Conclusion**

**Required Activities:**

- *We will NOT meet in the classroom on March 17, 19, and 24 as you will be assigned to watch specified videos relevant to the course on those dates.*
- *Watch THREE documentaries freely accessible on D2L:*
  - *Fists of Freedom*
  - *Dare to Dream*
  - *Muhammad Ali: Life of a Legend*
- *Submit three 200-word essays online on D2L (one for each film). Essays DUE on March 17, 19, and 24 (ONLINE).*
- *POSTER PRESENTATION Symposium Tuesday, April 28 (in-person)*

**Finals Week-Exam 2 (May 5)**

**Required Activities:**

- *Exam 2, covering ONLY Unit 2, MAY 5 at 10:30am (Note Time, In-Person)*

**Student Learning Outcome:**

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

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND NOTIFICATIONS**

**Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced.

**Email**

**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 class session.

## **ETAMU Attendance**

For more information about the University attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University 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.

## **Academic Integrity**

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

***If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.***

## **ETAMU COVID-19 Statement**

A&M-Commerce recommends the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories.

## **ETAMU Counseling Center Statement**

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel).

## **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

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**

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

<https://www.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campuservices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/default.aspx>

## **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

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 the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer. Web url: <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> 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.

***\*Some activities in this course will require the use of accessing D2L Brightspace\****

## **TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Minimal Technology Required**

**USE CHROME OR FIREFOX BROWSERS WITH D2L—DO NOT USE Microsoft EDGE as this tends to have bugs when using this learning platform**

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

**Using the learning management system, using Microsoft Word and uploading digital images.**

## **LMS**

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>