Course Syllabus

Number of Course: HIST 312

Name of Course: Cultural History of Sports

(Requesting permanent number and DPD status. Taught as x10 several times.)

Credit Hours: 5

Course Description:
This course examines the historical development of sports from a cultural perspective. It focuses primarily on the U.S. and Latin America from the pre-colonial era to the present and explores sports and sporting activities from folk games and blood sports to the highly organized, often commercial, professional contests of modern era. We will devote special attention to race/ethnicity, class, gender, politics, economics, education, and the media to investigate how and why sports have become a popular cultural phenomenon, as well as how they have influenced—and been influenced by—broader patterns of cultural and social change. Since sports have historically served as symbolic sites of exclusion, inclusion, protest, and power for women and minority groups, we will examine the impact of athletic competition on the development of race and gender relations.

Readings vary, but in the past I have selected from the following list:

**Texts:**
- Joseph L. Arbena and David G. Lafrance, eds., *Sport in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2002).

**Articles/Essays:**
- Allen Guttmann, “Puritans at Play? Accusations and Replies”
- T.H. Breen, “Horses & Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling Among the Gentry of Virginia”
- Nancy L. Struna, “Gender and Sporting Practice in Early America, 1750-1810”
- Donald Mrozek, “Sporting Life as Consumption, Fashion, and Display—The Pastimes of the Rich”
- Andrew Doyle, Foolish and Useless Sport: The Southern Evangelical Crusade Against Intercollegiate Football”
- Chris Meade, “Joe Louis as Emerging Race Hero in the 1930s”
- Susan Cahn, “Women Competing/Gender Contested, 1930s-1950s”
Learning Outcomes:
Program Outcomes: Content Knowledge (CK); Communication (C); Critical Thinking (CT);
EOU Diversity Requirement: Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD)

Upon the completion of this course, students should be able to:
1.) Identify historical developments related to the history of sports, sporting activities, and sporting cultures in the Americas from the pre-colonial period to the present (CK; DPD)
2.) Demonstrate a familiarity with scholarly interpretations, arguments, controversies, and trends in the subfield of sport history (CK; C)
3.) Summarize and evaluate primary and secondary sources, recognizing contexts and assumptions in historical evidence, drawing informed conclusions, and formulating independent questions and critiques (CT; DPD; C)
4.) Construct, defend, and challenge an historical argument (verbally and in writing) based on primary and secondary source evidence (CT; C)
5.) Demonstrate an improvement in their ability to work independently and in groups (C)
6.) Apply major analytical concepts, including race, class, and gender, to the study of sports in history and culture throughout the Americas (CT; DPD)
7.) Demonstrate an enhanced understanding of the historian’s craft through substantive review and research assignments in the field of study (CT; C)

Means of Assessment:
GENERAL PARTICIPATION (LOs 1-7)
Includes active participation in lectures, class discussions, and related activities. Lectures are interactive and will explore evidence and pose questions related to subject matter and course themes. Aside from a weekly lecture, the course adheres to both a seminar-style and workshop format that underscores student-centered critical thinking about course materials.

GROUP WORKSHOPS OR DISCUSSION BOARD (LOs 2-6)
Our primary opportunity to discuss course readings and themes throughout the term. Features discussion board or small group workshops in which students identify, “unpack,” and analyze primary and secondary source evidence. Students will wrestle with significant questions and controversies, formulate their own interpretations and critiques, and share their findings in discussions, debates, group presentations, and informal in-class essays.

QUIZZES (LOs 1-4, 6)
Creative exercises featuring short answer essay questions that ask students to evaluate scholarly arguments and interpretations based on historical evidence.

SHORT ANALYTICAL ESSAYS (LOs 3-4, 6-7)
Short (2 page) essays provide students an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the primary and secondary source literature on a particular topic, to formulate an argument based on that evidence, and to refine their writing and analytical skills.

MIDTERM EXAM (LOs 1-4, 6)
The midterm exam is, like the quizzes, a creative exercise. It features short and long essay questions that deal with core course concepts, themes, interpretations, and evidence. In-class or take-home.

BOOK REVIEWS (LOs 2-3, 6-7)
Two formal book reviews based on assigned monographs for the course will give students the chance to demonstrate their familiarity with scholarly interpretations, arguments, and recent trends in the subfield of sport history as well as practice a form of writing central to the discipline of history.
FINAL REVIEW ESSAY (LOs 2-4, 6-7)
Multiple-source review essay on a topic of the student’s choice related to course content and core themes. Involves outside research. Students will enter the historical “conversation” and produce a substantive review essay that reflects the conventions of the discipline. May involve a presentation component.

Course Requirements:
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Brief Outline of Course:
WEEK 1 – WHAT IS SPORT HISTORY? and INDIGENOUS CULTURES OF PLAY & COMPETITION
WEEK 2 – POWER, LEISURE, AND PARTICIPATION IN THE COLONIAL ERA: SPORTING CULTURES OF THE AMERICAS
WEEK 3 – THE TRANSFORMATION & RATIONALIZATION OF SPORTS IN RAPIDLY CHANGING SOCIETIES
WEEK 4 – THE CREATION OF GENDER THROUGH SPORTS
WEEK 5 – UNFORGIVEABLE BLACKNESS: JACK JOHNSON, AFRICAN AMERICANS & THE COLOR LINE IN SPORTS
WEEK 6 – SPORTS, HEROISM, AND CONSUMER CULTURE DURING TWO WORLD WARS
WEEK 7 – SPORTS AND NATIONALISM IN THE AMERICAS
WEEK 8 – “I MUST BE THE GREATEST”: SPORTS IN THE AGE OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND BLACK POWER
WEEK 9 – BATTLE OF THE SEXES? GENDER, SEXUALITY, EQUITY, AND SPORTS IN THE LATE-20TH CENTURY
WEEK 10 – NEW BEGINNINGS: THE GLOBAL BUSINESS OF SPORTS, RACE, AND GENDER

General Education Category and Outcomes: n/a

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Content Knowledge: Achieve the ability to synthesize and discuss selected historical experiences in the Americas and in Europe.

Communication: Attain a wide-ranging understanding of the core concepts, events, and historiographical trends in selected areas of American and European history, demonstrated through written and oral work.

Critical Thinking: Master skills in historical research, critical thinking, reading and writing, and polished oral presentation of scholarly work.

DPD OUTCOMES:
1.) Students should 1) identify specific examples of unequal distribution of power and resources in a given society and 2) describe those structures, systems, and ideologies related to specific examples, e.g., social, political, economic, environmental, or cultural.
2.) Students should apply discipline-specific knowledge and concepts to distinguish between the causes and effects of the unequal distribution of power that create the conditions for discrimination.
3.) Students should 1) apply discipline-specific knowledge and concepts to identify societal contributions of under-represented groups and 2) explain how those contributions affect and/or are affected by thinking and learning in that discipline.

University Writing Requirement Outcomes: n/a
Statement on Academic Misconduct:
   Eastern Oregon University places a high value upon the integrity of its student scholars. Any student found guilty of an act of academic misconduct (including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or theft of an examination or supplies) may be subject to having his or her grade reduced in the course in question, being placed on probation or suspended from the University, or being expelled from the University—or a combination of these. Please see Student Handbook at: http://www.eou.edu/saffairs/handbook/honest.html

Statement on Americans with Disabilities:
   If you have a documented disability or suspect that you have a learning problem and need accommodations, please contact the Disability Services Program in Loso Hall 234. Telephone: 962-3081.

Syllabus Prepared By:  Ryan Dearinger

Date:  1/31/13