The Politics of Sport: Gender, Race, and National Identity in Athletic Competitions

WST219, WST219W, HIS200, HIS200W, AAS228

Athletic competitions are not just spectacles that celebrate physical strength and human endurance, but also important symbolic events that serve to reinforce and challenge ideas about gender, race, and national identity. This course explores the origins of stereotypes that permeate sports (such as notions of masculine prowess; women's natural weakness; ethnic and racial limitations and advantages), reasons for their persistence, and the effect they have on our society and the unequal relationship of power. Topics will include the history of the Olympic Games (the Berlin, Mexico City, and Beijing Olympics); the roles of soccer, football, and other sports in shaping national identities; sport, racism, and resistance; sport and sexualization/empowerment of women; sport and masculinity; persistent heteronormality of sport, and many others.

Monday, Wednesday, 10:25 – 11:40.

(fulfills cluster requirements in HIS, AAS, WST)