

## Sports in U.S. History

HIS276/W

MW 9:00-10:15am

Location 315 B&L

**Instructor:** Dr. Brianna Theobald

**Contact Info:** btheobal@ur.rochester.edu

454 Rush Rhees Library

**Office Hours:** MW 10:30-11:30am and by appointment

**Course Description:** This course will explore U.S. history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through the lens of sports. Among the many questions we will consider are: How might one define a “sport,” and how have popular understandings of “sport” changed over time? What functions have sports served in American life? How have sports reinforced inequities in American society, such as those among racial, socioeconomic, and/or gendered lines? To what degree have sports defied these boundaries, acting as agents of democratization? Above all, we will ask: What does it mean to study sports historically?

### Required Reading:

Walter LaFeber, *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999).

Students will also read some combination of articles, book chapters, and/or primary sources before each class session. All reading besides LaFeber will be available on Blackboard, so students do not need to purchase this material.

### Grade Breakdown:

94-100% = A	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+	67-69% = D+
90-93% = A-	83-86% = B	73-76% = C	63-66% = D
	80-82% = B-	70-72% = C-	60-62% = D-

### Assessment:

An overwhelming majority of your grade will be derived from *writing*. We will talk more in class about what constitutes a good paper, but at this point it suffices to note that I expect students to submit polished, well-organized work. I encourage students to visit me during office hours to brainstorm essays, work through problems, and, if necessary, discuss strategies for improvement. Additional writing assistance is available through the U of R Writing and Speaking Center. Learn more about this resource here:

<http://writing.rochester.edu/tutoring/index.html>.

Students will write three short essays (approximately four pages in length) that analyze and synthesize the material covered in class and also incorporate material from assigned reading. Students should approach these essays with the same preparation and seriousness with which they would approach a formal in-class exam. I will post a prompt on Blackboard one week before each due date, and essays should be submitted via Blackboard at the dates and times indicated on the below schedule.

In addition, students will write a paper that uses newspaper articles as primary sources. For this paper, students should review the below schedule and select a topic that relates in some way to the material covered between weeks 6 and 11. Students are encouraged to consult with me regarding topics of interest. See the instruction sheet on Blackboard for examples of possible topics, specific requirements for this paper, and tips for writing historical research papers. We will also discuss this paper in class.

HIS 276: Newspaper Papers should be five to six pages in length and are due via Blackboard at the start of class on Wednesday, Nov. 14.

HIS 276W: Newspaper Papers should be eight to ten pages in length. Complete rough drafts are due to me via email at the start of class on Wednesday, Nov. 14. I will provide feedback on rough drafts by Friday, Nov. 16, and revised papers are due via Blackboard at the start of class on Wednesday, Nov. 28.

Finally, each student will write a review (approximately three pages in length) of Walter La Feber's *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism*, which will be due via Blackboard at the start of class Monday, Dec. 10. See the instruction sheet on Blackboard for specific guidelines for writing book reviews.

The remainder of a student's grade will be based on attendance and participation. Students are expected to attend each class session, and absences will only be excused if I am notified beforehand and for reasonable causes. **More than three unexcused absences will result in a notable decline in the participation grade. Be aware, however, that regular attendance is only the bare minimum.** To be adequately prepared for class, students need to have completed the assigned reading listed on the schedule below. Class sessions will be a mix of lecture and discussion, and students are expected to participate regularly in these discussions.

Participation:	15%
Short Essays (3):	45% (15% each)
Newspaper Paper:	25%
Book Review:	15%

## **Course Policies and Expectations:**

Late Assignments: Assignments incur a 10-point penalty for every 24-hour period or portion thereof that passes from the deadline until the assignment is submitted. If an assignment is due at the start of class on September 13 and it is not turned in until the evening of September 13, ten points will be automatically deducted. If it is not turned in until the afternoon of September 14, twenty points will be deducted.

Accommodation Policies: I'm happy to make accommodations as recommended by UR Disability Services. Should you need accommodations, I encourage you to make these arrangements sooner rather than later.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is at the core of the historical discipline, and you'll find that it is something I care deeply about. All work submitted must be your own, prepared especially for this course. Unacceptable breaches of your obligation as a student include: submission of the same work or portions of the same work to more than one class, turning in work prepared by another person as if it were your own; and the unattributed use of text of any length from any source, including websites. I will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the University's Board on Academic Honesty. That said, I am happy to discuss any and all questions you may have about what does and does not constitute plagiarism, provided this conversation occurs *before* you submit the assignment.

## **Schedule:**

### Week 1:

W Aug 29: Why Sports History?

## **PART 1: GAMES AND THE EMERGENCE OF ORGANIZED SPORTS**

### Week 2:

M Sept 3: Labor Day—NO CLASS

W Sept 5: Native American Games and Sports

Reading: Excerpts from Eastman, *Indian Boyhood*  
Culin, *Games of the North American Indians*, pp. 562-75

### Week 3:

M Sept 10: Iroquois Lacrosse and Other Sports  
No Reading.

W Sept 12: Fighting as Sport?

Reading: Lussana, "To See Who Was the Best"

### Week 4:

M Sept 17: A Physical Fitness Craze

Reading: Beecher, *Letters to the People on Health and Happiness*, intro + Letter Eighteenth

W Sept 19: NO CLASS

Week 5:

M Sept 24: In the Arena and On the Pond: Pedestrianism and Other Competitions  
Reading: Algeo, *Pedestrianism*, preface-ch. 2

W Sept 26: Rare Books & Special Collections Visit. Meet in our regular classroom, and we'll walk over together.

**PART 2: MODERN AMERICAN SPORTS AND SPORTING CULTURES**

Week 6:

M Oct 1: The Emergence of a "National" Pastime  
Reading: Kirsch, *Baseball in Blue and Gray*, ch. 1

W Oct 3: The Amateur Ideal (Guest Lecture: Dan Borus)  
Reading: TBA  
**Essay #1 due via Blackboard at the start of class.**

Week 7:

M Oct 8: Sports in Higher Education  
Reading: Ingrassia, *The Rise of Gridiron University*, ch. 2

W Oct 10: Crises in Amateurism  
Reading: TBA

Week 8:

M Oct 15: Fall Break—NO CLASS

W Oct 17: Sports as Americanization: Indian Boarding Schools  
Reading: Gilbert, "Marathoner Louis Tewanima and the Continuity of Hopi Running"

Week 9:

M Oct 22: Boxing across the Color Line  
Film: Watch *Unforgivable Blackness, Part I* (about 2 hours)  
Bring: A copy of a newspaper article that you have identified as a possible primary source for your Newspaper Paper.

W Oct 24: Race and Gender in Collegiate Sports  
Reading: Liberti, "We Were Ladies, We Just Played Basketball Like Boys"

Week 10:

- M Oct 29: Jim Crow Baseball  
Reading: Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, ch. 2
- W Oct 31: Twentieth-Century Professionalization  
Reading: Crepeau, *NFL Football*, ch. 1

Week 11:

- M Nov 5: The Golden Age of Sports, Sports Writing, and Celebrity  
Reading: Oriard, *King Football*, ch. 1  
**Essay #2 due via Blackboard at the start of class.**
- W Nov 7: Civil Rights and Sports, Part 1  
Reading: Excerpts from Zeiler, *Jackie Robinson and Race in America: A Brief History with Documents*

Week 12:

- M Nov 12: American Physical Fitness  
Reading: Kennedy, "Remarks on the Youth Fitness Program"  
McKenzie, *Getting Physical*, ch. 1
- W Nov 14: Discussion: U.S. Sports in the News  
**Newspaper Paper due via Blackboard at the start of class.**

Week 13:

- M Nov 19: Civil Rights and Sports, Part 2  
Reading: Robinson, Letter to Elliott & *I Never Had It Made* (excerpt)  
Demas, *Integrating the Gridiron*, ch. 5
- W Nov 21: Thanksgiving Break—NO CLASS

Week 14:

- M Nov 26: A Women's Revolution in Sports?  
Reading: Ware, *Game, Set, Match*, pp. 1-11 & ch. 2
- W Nov 28: Cold War Sports  
Reading: Soares, "Cold War, Hot Ice"

Week 15:

- M Dec 3: The Business of Sports in the Late Twentieth Century  
Reading: Oriard, *Brand NFL*, ch. 4
- W Dec 5: The Question of Amateurism at the Turn of the Century  
Reading: Branch, "The Shame of College Sports"

Week 16:

M Dec 10: Sports and Globalization  
Reading: LaFeber, *Michael Jordan and the New Capitalism*  
**Book Review due via Blackboard at the start of class.**

W Dec 12: 2018 in Historical Perspective  
No Reading.

**Essay #3 deadline TBA.**