

Sociology of Sport

SPM5016 | Class # 14863, 18841 | 3 Credits | Spring 2025

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COURSE INFO

INSTRUCTOR	George B. Cunningham, PhD Email: g.cunningham@ufl.edu Preferred Method of Contact: Email
OFFICE HOURS	Meetings available by appointment.
MEETING TIME/LOCATION	Access course through Canvas on UF e-Learning (https://elearning.ufl.edu/) & the Canvas mobile app by Instructure

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Advanced principles and applications of social issues, within the sport industry. An in-depth look at how amateur and professional sport business enterprises reflect societal values and issues in the arena of sport.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

No prerequisite.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

All required readings will be posted on Canvas course page, available at <http://elearning.ufl.edu>.

COURSE FORMAT

The course is delivered completely in an online format. Lectures, readings, discussion forums, and course materials are all available on the Canvas course page. Students will also complete their assignments and participate in online discussions through the Canvas course page.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Define the sport sociology.
2. Summarize the major sociological theories and research approaches in sport sociology.
3. Evaluate the contribution (or lack thereof) of sport to health.
4. Explain the intersection between sport and broader societal issues.
5. Analyze the different ways sport is delivered in the US.
6. Assess how individual differences correspond with access to and experiences in sport.
7. Explain how sport can be used to create social change.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

1. Watch the Introduction and Syllabus Review video.
2. Visit the course multiple times each week and read the Announcements posted in Canvas.
3. Complete and submit all readings, assignments, and discussion boards on time (all times in Eastern).
4. Remain proactive with any personal circumstances that potentially interfere with your ability to meet a deadline. University guidelines pertaining to excused absences and late assignments are available [here](#).
5. Contact me within three (3) days of a deadline with any questions or concerns about your grade.
6. Contact me with other questions at g.cunningham@ufl.edu.

COURSE & UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The course is delivered completely online so attendance is not a part of the final grade. As noted in the following sections, your preparation for the course and participation in the course activities, including assignments and discussions, will impact your grade.

PERSONAL CONDUCT POLICY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies several behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

Furthermore, you are obliged to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult the instructor..

MAKE-UP POLICY

A student who is absent from class or any required class-related activity because of illness should contact their instructor, if feasible, as early as possible prior to the missed class or activity. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered during an excused absence. Students should contact their college by the deadline to drop a course for medical reasons. Students can petition the Dean of Students Office to drop a course for medical reasons. The university’s policy regarding medical excuse from classes is maintained by the Student Health Care Center. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.”

ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting their Get Started page at <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a

professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

GETTING HELP

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 352-392-1575
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) - Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies) <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>
- Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/> On-Line Students Complaints: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

CIVILITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Inclusion is a UF core value, as we “celebrate differences in identities, thoughts, and abilities, and seek to provide equitable access to opportunity.” Freedom and Civility are also core values, as we “embrace the freedom to inquire and express ideas without condemnation, and to show respect for the right of others to do the same.”

We should all (instructor and students, alike) seek to uphold these core values in the course. Some of the topics we discuss will be challenging, and students will be asked to reflect on why they hold their particular views or positions. Part of the learning process involves growth and encountering new ideas and concepts. Thoughtful, critical thinkers use evidence to support their positions – not endorsing a view because they have always done so. Through the learning process, let us sustain the UF Core Values and embrace our differences while ensuring we have an equitable, inclusive learning environment.

University of Florida Core Values

Inclusion: Celebrate differences in identities, thoughts, and abilities, and seek to provide equitable access to opportunity.

- Excellence is only possible by including people who bring diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Our growing diversity enhances discovery and innovation. It is reliant on freedom and civility. It enriches the UF community. It is rooted in stewardship. It is the connective tissue for all of our Core Values.

Freedom and Civility: Embrace the freedom to inquire and express ideas without condemnation, and to show respect for the right of others to do the same.

- We are a community that affirms and embraces openness to an inclusive range of viewpoints. An open-minded culture is the foundation of freedom of expression and affirms our commitment to academic freedom, which is rooted in mutual respect of others. We encourage curiosity in research, scholarship and exploration, and we create the conditions where inquiry can flourish. We should guard others' right to express themselves as unequivocally as we expect that right for ourselves.

GRADING

Student grades will be based on a combination of quizzes, leading a discussion on a topic, participation in online discussions, a comprehensive presentation, and peer feedback on two presentations.

Evaluation Components (Number of each)	Points Per Component	Approximate % of Total Grade
Readings Reviews (6)	15 pts each = 90 pts	90 / 270 = 33.3%
Discussion Leader (1)	30 pts each = 30 pts	50 / 270 = 11.1%
Discussion Boards (6)	15 pts each = 90 pts	90 / 270 = 33.3%
Reflection Papers (3)	10 pts each = 30 pts	30 / 270 = 11.1%
Sociology and the Management of Sport (1)	30 pts each = 30 pts	30 / 270 = 11.1%

Readings Reviews: Readings Reviews are designed to prepare you for the discussion, ensure you are completing the readings, and encourage your critical reflection on the topic. They focus on the “Weekly Readings” assigned for each module. Each readings review should contain (1) a summary of the readings, and (2) your key take-aways from the readings (i.e., your thought about the readings and how you would apply the material to your work in the sport field). Devote equal attention devoted to the Summary and to the Take-Aways. The sources should be cited in the text, with references at the end. Students can choose their citation style. The Readings Review should be about 1000 words and must be submitted by 11:59 pm on the date assigned in the Course Schedule.

Students commonly adopt one of the following formats, though you can choose your own writing style:

Option 1: Summarize an individual article in one paragraph. Provide take-aways of the article in a second paragraph. Continue with subsequent articles.

Option 2: Summarize each of the articles, devoting one paragraph to each. Provide the take-aways for the articles, devoting a paragraph to each.

Option 3: Student chooses their own format, ensuring that each article is summarized and has take-aways.

Discussion Boards: Students will participate in six (6) discussion boards during the semester. Each module discussion board will include sub-boards (e.g., for Module 1: 1A, 1B, and so on), and the number of students in the class will determine the number of sub-boards. To participate, students should:

1. Choose any three (3) sub-boards in which to participate.
2. For *each of the three sub-boards chosen*, watch the video, provide an original post and a response to a student's post, for a total of six (6) discussion board entries.

In responding to the posts, students should adhere to the UF Core Values of Inclusion and Freedom & Civility, as previously outlined. All discussion boards will follow this protocol:

Students will receive full credit for posts that are (1) thoughtful and articulate, (2) completed on time, and (3) represent a critical evaluation of your classmates' posts.

Discussion Leader: Students will be assigned to lead the discussion for one of the modules in the class. I will serve as the discussion leader for Module 1. Students will be graded on their presentation and their ability to facilitate a critical analysis of the topic. The responsibility includes:

Task 1

- Submit a five-minute presentation where you present on a social issue relevant to the module topic. Students should bring in new material, such as a news article, journal publication, video, and so on. (*They should not review the material already covered in that module*). The presentation should include (1) an overview of the topic they are presenting, (2) an argument for or against the current benefits and/or drawbacks of the issue, and (3) discussion of how to improve the outcomes. Discussion Leaders should record their presentation using Voice Thread and then submit the embed code (not the shared link) of the presentation in Canvas by 11:59 pm on the due date in the syllabus. I will then post the presentation to your module discussion sub-board.

Task 2

- Facilitate an online discussion around your presentation – an activity that takes place during the second half of your respective module. Discussion Leaders should visit their sub-boards daily, make multiple postings to facilitate discussion, respond to classmates' postings, and encourage critical analysis.

****** Discussion board leaders should still provide three (3) original responses and three (3) replies to other discussion boards, even on the week when they are the leader.

Reflection Papers: Some of the material covered in the class is controversial, and students might not feel comfortable sharing a particular perspective on the Discussion Board. Thus, students will complete three (3) reflection papers that afford them the opportunity to share their thoughts, reactions, and perspectives on any topic of the class. The focus may include a classmate's posting, readings, or personal experiences with the topic.

The paper should not exceed 500 words, and I will be the only one who reads it. The Reflection Papers be submitted by 11:59 pm on the dates assigned in the Course Schedule.

Sociology and the Management of Sport* – The purpose of this assignment is to apply what is learned throughout the class to the management of sport. The management of sport is considered broadly, and includes issues related to management, marketing, and governance. To complete the assignment, students should first choose a topic we covered in the course. There is no need to cover all elements in a module; rather, just make sure the topic is something we have covered in class. Then, identify how the sociological issues covered in that theme will influence the management of sport. Students should (1) review the topic, including the reading covered in the module; (2) identify the specific area of sport management that is impacted; (3) review at least three additional sources (news articles, journal articles or books) in that area of sport management, noting what researchers have found; and (4) based on that information, note how these issues will influence how they, as sport managers, will deliver sport. Thus, the assignment gives students the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned in the class and how it will impact their work in sport. Based on this information, students should record a presentation that is 7-10 minutes in duration using Voice Thread. The assignment should be submitted in Canvas by 11:59 pm on the due date in the Course Schedule.

***Graduate Final Exam Requirement**

The successful completion of the Sociology and the Management of Sport will fulfill a requirement of the Graduate Final Exam which is a requirement to be completed prior to the completion of the M.S in Sport Management degree at the University of Florida. To successfully complete the Sociology and the Management of Sport, the student must earn a minimum of 24 points (80%) on the assignment. A failure to meet the minimum of 24 points (80%) will require the student to redo the assignment, handing it into the instructor by the stated deadline, which will be before the end of the semester. However, the resubmission grade will not count towards the course but will count towards the successful completion of that Graduate Final Exam portion. A failure to successfully resubmit the Sociology and the Management of Sport will result in earning an “Incomplete” (I) grade for the course until the requirement has been met. (Please note: An “Incomplete” (I) grade becomes punitive to your overall GPA approximately one semester following the assigned “Incomplete” grade.) It is the student’s responsibility to arrange with the instructor and agree in writing the timeline for successfully completing the paper in fulfillment of the Graduate Final Exam portion. If the student successfully earns a minimum of 80% on the first submission of the Sociology and the Management of Sport, then no further action is necessary.

RUBRICS

Reading Review (15)

Element	Description and Point Value		
	Poor	Acceptable	Very Good
Summary	1 point	3 points	6 points
Key take-aways and applications	1 point	3 points	6 points
Grammar and Punctuation	0 points	1 point	3 points

Discussion Boards (15)

Element	On Time		Thoughtful / Articulate		Critical Evaluation	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Sub-Board Post #1	0 points	0.5 points	0 points	1 point	0 points	1 point
Sub-Board Post #2	0 points	0.5 points	0 points	1 point	0 points	1 point
Sub-Board Post #3	0 points	0.5 points	0 points	1 point	0 points	1 point
Response #1	0 points	0.5 points	0 points	1 point	0 points	1 point
Response #2	0 points	0.5 points	0 points	1 point	0 points	1 point
Response #3	0 points	0.5 points	0 points	1 point	0 points	1 point

Discussion Leader (30)

Element	Description and Point Value		
	Poor	Acceptable	Very Good
Presentation: Background Information	2 points	4 points	6 points
Presentation: Arguments for and against	2 points	4 points	6 points
Presentation: Improve the Outcomes	2 points	4 points	6 points
Discussion Board: Facilitate Conversation	2 points	4 points	6 points
Discussion Board: Responses	2 points	4 points	6 points

Reflection Papers (10)

Element	Description and Point Value		
	Poor	Acceptable	Very Good
Summary of the Topic	0 points	2 points	4 points
Thoughts, Reactions, and Perspectives	0 points	2 points	4 points
Grammar and Punctuation	0 points	1 point	2 points

Sociology and the Management of Sport (30)

Element	Description and Point Value		
	Poor	Acceptable	Very Good
Topic Review	2 points	4 points	6 points
Area of Sport Management Impacted	0 points	2 points	4 points
Review of Scholarship	2 points	6 points	10 points
Impact on Sport Delivery	2 points	4 points	6 points
Presentation Quality	0 points	2 points	4 points

GRADING SCALE

Grades will be posted in Canvas. Under normal circumstances, each assignment will be graded within one week. More detailed information regarding current UF grading policies can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>. Any requests for additional extra credit or special exceptions to these grading policies will be interpreted as an honor code violation (i.e., asking for preferential treatment) and will be handled accordingly.

Letter Grade	Percent of Total Points Associated with Each Letter Grade	GPA Impact of Each Letter Grade
A	93.00-100.00%	4.0
A-	90.00-92.99%	3.67
B+	87.00-89.99%	3.33
B	83.00-86.99%	3.0
B-	80.00-82.99%	2.67
C+	77.00-79.99%	2.33
C	73.00-76.99%	2.0
C-	70.00-72.99%	1.67
D+	67.00-69.99%	1.33
D	63.00-66.99%	1.0
D-	60.00-62.99%	0.67
E	0.00-59.99%	0

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

January 13-19

COURSE ORIENTATION & OVERVIEW

Videos:

- Course Overview and Syllabus Review

Readings:

- No readings this week.

Assignments:

January 19, 11:59 pm

Course and Syllabus Quiz & Student Intro Assignment

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MODULE 1 (January 21-February 2)
OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT

Background Videos:

- Foundations
- Sociological Theory and Research

Weekly Readings for the Readings Review Assignment:

- Coakley, J. (2021). Sociology of Sport: Growth, Diversification, and Marginalization, 1981–2021, *Kinesiology Review*, 10(3), 292-300.
- Chalip, L. (2015). Assessing the sociology of sport: On theory relevance and action research. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50(4–5), 397–401.
- Seippel, Ø. (2018). Topics and trends: 30 years of sociology of sport. *European Journal for Sport and Society*, 15(3), 288-307.

Assignments:

January 26, 11:59 pm	Module 1 Readings Review
January 26, 11:59 pm	Discussion Leader Presentations
January 29, 11:59 pm	Opening Statements to selected Discussion Sub-boards
February 2, 11:59 pm	Responses to classmates in Discussion Sub-boards
February 2, 11:59 pm	Reflection Paper #1

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MODULE 2 (February 3-February 16)

SPORT AND HEALTH

Background Video:

- Sport and Health

Weekly Readings for the Readings Review Assignment:

- Pluhar, E., McCracken, C., Griffith, K. L., Christino, M. A., Sugimoto, D., & Meehan III, W. P. (2019). Team sport athletes may be less likely to suffer anxiety or depression than individual sport athletes. *Journal of Sports Science & Medicine*, 18(3), 490-496.
- Massey, W. V., & Whitley, M. A. (2021). The talent paradox: Disenchantment, disengagement, and damage through sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 38(2), 167-177.
- DiFrancisco-Donoghue, J., Balentine, J., Schmidt, G., & Zwibel, H. (2019). Managing the health of the eSport athlete: an integrated health management model. *BMJ Open Sport & Exercise Medicine*, 5(1), e000467.

Assignments:

February 9, 11:59 pm	Module 2 Readings Reviews
February 9, 11:59 pm	Discussion Leader Presentations
February 12, 11:59 pm	Opening Statements to selected Discussion Sub-boards
February 16, 11:59 pm	Responses to classmates in Discussion Sub-boards

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MODULE 3 (February 17-March 2)
SPORT AND SOCIETY

Background Videos:

- Sport and the Economy
- Sport, Physical Activity, and the Environment

Weekly Readings for the Readings Review Assignment:

- Law, G., Bloyce, D., & Waddington, I. (2021). Sporting celebrity and conspicuous consumption: A case study of professional footballers in England. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 56(7), 923-942.
- Crompton, J. (2004). Beyond economic impact: An alternative rationale for the public subsidy of major league sports facilities. *Journal of Sport Management*, 18(1), 40-58.
- Wicker, P. (2019). The carbon footprint of active sport participants. *Sport Management Review*, 22(4), 513-526.
- Cunningham, G., McCullough, B. P., & Hohensee, S. (2020). Physical activity and climate change attitudes. *Climatic Change*, 159(1), 61-74.

Assignments:

February 23, 11:59 pm	Module 3 Readings Reviews
February 23, 11:59 pm	Discussion Leader Presentations
February 26, 11:59 pm	Opening Statements to selected Discussion Sub-boards
March 2, 11:59 pm	Responses to classmates in Discussion Sub-boards
March 2, 11:59 pm	Reaction Paper #2
March 2, 11:59 pm	Mid-Course Survey (Not graded)

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MODULE 4 (March 3-March 14)
DELIVERY OF SPORT

Background Videos:

- Youth Sport
- College Athletics

Weekly Readings for the Readings Review Assignment:

- Pfeiffer, K. A., & Wierenga, M. J. (2019). Promoting physical activity through youth sport. *Kinesiology Review*, 8(3), 204-210.
- Kanters, M. A., Bocarro, J. N., Edwards, M. B., Casper, J. M., & Floyd, M. F. (2013). School sport participation under two school sport policies: comparisons by race/ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 45(suppl_1), S113-S121.
- Springer, D., Anderson, A. J., Foster, S. J., & Dixon, M. A. (2023). Organizational capacity and dual mission achievement in NCAA Division I Power Five athletic programs. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*.
- Menke, D. J., & Germany, M. L. (2019). Reconstructing athletic identity: College athletes and sport retirement. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 24(1), 17-30.

Assignments:

March 9, 11:59 pm	Module 4 Readings Reviews
March 9, 11:59 pm	Discussion Leader Presentations
March 12, 11:59 pm	Opening Statements to selected Discussion Sub-boards
March 14, 11:59 pm †	Responses to classmates in Discussion Sub-boards

† March 14 is a Friday.

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SPRING BREAK (March 15-March 23)

MODULE 5 (Mach 24-April 6) SPORT, ACCESS, AND OPPORTUNITY

Background Videos:

- Sport and Race
- Sport and Gender
- Sport and Social Class

Weekly Readings for the Readings Review Assignment:

- Sveinson, K., Taylor, E., Keaton, A. C., Burton, L., Pegoraro, A., & Toffoletti, K. (2022). Addressing gender inequity in sport through women’s invisible labor. *Journal of Sport Management*, 36(3), 240-250.
- Farrey, T. (2017). The gentrification of college hoops. Andscape. Available online: <https://andscape.com/features/gentrification-of-ncaa-division-1-college-basketball/>.
- Cunningham, G. B. (2020). The under-representation of racial minorities in coaching and leadership positions in the United States. In S. Bradbury, J. Lusted, & J. van Sterkenberg, ‘Race’, ethnicity, and racism in sports coaching (pp. 3-21). Routledge.

Assignments:

March 30, 11:59 pm	Module 5 Readings Reviews
March 30, 11:59 pm	Discussion Leader Presentations
April 2, 11:59 pm	Opening Statements to selected Discussion Sub-boards, March
April 6, 11:59 pm	Responses to classmates in Discussion Sub-boards
April 6, 11:59 pm	Reaction Paper #3

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MODULE 6 (April 7-April 20)

SPORT AND COMMUNITY

Background Video:

- Sport and Community
- Sport for Social Change and Development

Weekly Readings for the Readings Review Assignment:

- Schulenkorf, N., Sugden, J., & Sugden, J. (2024). Sport for Development: History, Themes, and Lessons Learnt. In *Managing Sport Development* (pp. 124-138). Routledge.
- Jones, G. J., Edwards, M. B., Bocarro, J. N., Svensson, P. G., & Misener, K. (2020). A community capacity building approach to sport-based youth development. *Sport Management Review, 23*(4), 563-575.
- Anderson, A., Dixon, M. A., Oshiro, K. F., Wicker, P., Cunningham, G. B., & Heere, B. (2019). Managerial perceptions of factors affecting the design and delivery of sport for health programs for refugee populations. *Sport Management Review, 22*(1), 80-95.

Assignments:

April 13, 11:59 pm	Module 6 Readings Reviews
April 13, 11:59 pm	Discussion Leader Presentations
April 16, 11:59 pm	Opening Statements to selected Discussion Sub-boards
April 20, 11:59 pm	Responses to classmates in Discussion Sub-boards

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SOCIOLOGY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF SPORT

Presentation Due on April 28, 11:59 pm

(End of Course Schedule)