COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course draws upon both historical and current events to conceptualize the various ways in which the sporting space provides rich possibilities of cultural, economic, and political shifts. Throughout COMM 387, students will engage with academic, journalistic, and social media texts, examining the ways in which sport serves as both a catalyst and barrier to social change. Using cultural studies, communication, and legal literature, students will develop the theoretical and practical tools to support or challenge dominant narratives surrounding the sports-media complex.

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Classroom conduct** – Throughout this course, we will engage in often controversial and complex case studies. A mutual respect for one another is crucial in cultivating an environment to engage with these texts fruitfully. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. My hope is that this course will serve as a sharpening tool for not only critical skills, but listening ones as well.

2. **Academic Integrity** – This course assesses each individual’s effort and work. Like all classes at USC, this work must be yours. Any attempt to use others’ work as your own is subject to a failing grade and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. You can find more information on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty here: https://libraries.usc.edu/research/referencetutorials and here: http://annenberg.usc.edu/CurrentStudents/GStudentsvcs/PhD/~/media/Academic%20Integrity%20Overview.ashx. This course will uphold the standards outlined by the Student Conduct code in SCampus (http://webapp.usc.edu/scampus). If you have any questions throughout this class regarding academic integrity, please let me know.

3. **Special Accommodations** - Academic accommodations are made when students register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please deliver this documentation to me within the first week of the semester, or as soon as possible. DSP (https://dsp.usc.edu/) can be reached at ability@usc.edu and (213) 740-0776. Please let me know if you are concerned about accommodations for any other reason.

4. **Technology** - Please silence all phones before class and keep them stored during our time together. While computers are allowed for class-related exercises and notetaking, they must be put away during speeches and guest lectures.

5. **Assignment Submission** – All assignments should be printed, stapled, and clearly labeled with your name and date. Given the short nature of this class, due dates are strict and all assignments must be turned in at the beginning of the class they are due. If an emergency arises, please let me
STUDENT RESOURCES

Sexual Assault Policy and Resources - The University of Southern California is committed to fostering a safe campus environment for all members of the university community, free from sexual coercion, violence, and sexual intimidation. The university’s sexual misconduct and sexual assault policies have been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated (https://policy.usc.edu/student-misconduct/). To learn more about your reporting options and your rights, or to speak with a counselor confidentially, contact the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center/Center for Women and Men at 213-740-4900, or contact Student Counseling Services at 213-740-7711. For more information and resources, including off-campus resources like the Rape Treatment Center, visit the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center website at https://sarc.usc.edu/resources/. Finally, remember that you can contact a campus cruiser at 213-740-4911 for a safety escort.

Stress Management - Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge. Moreover, they offer drop-in workshops throughout the semester on managing stress and maintaining mindfulness.

Additional Academic Support - A number of campus resources exist to support you academically. Contact the Center for Academic Support (http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/) at 213-740-0776 or study@usc.edu.

ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW

Introductory paper (10%) – Students will write a two-page, double-spaced paper on their relationship to sport and its possibilities (and problems) regarding social change. Students should be prepared to discuss their paper in a class discussion.

Reading guide (15%) – Each student will be responsible for guiding the class discussion on a predetermined day (a sign-up sheet will be distributed during the first week), and will compile a handout to distribute to the class summarizing a reading. This assignment will be graded on both preparation and presentation of the course materials.

Exam (20%) – This short answer exam will cover the first five areas of this course. Students will be expected to draw from the literature, course discussion and guest speakers in their responses.

Group project (15%) – In this course, students will be divided into groups of 4-5 and build a rich case study combining the content from the sports-media complex and commerce/capitalism weeks into a vivid, tangible, updated sports-media complex model. Students will be graded on both their individual contributions and group presentation.

Final project (25%) – The final project focuses on one area of the course (law, media, technology, or globalization) and its relationship to social change. This eight-page paper will be accompanied by a 5-7
minute presentation with a visual component. Students should use a case study and relevant academic and journal articles to sustain their argument in this assignment.

**Participation and Attendance (15%)** – This course is designed with several interactive factors built into each class to enhance your confidence and ability to critically think and communicate on the topics covered. Given there are a limited number of summer class sessions, your attendance is important not only for the materials presented, but the participatory nature of this course. Students are expected to attend each class, other than pre-excused absences or emergencies. These excused absences require accompanying documentation. More than two unexcused absences will result in a deduction from your final grade. Additionally, students are expected to be on time; repeated tardiness will also reflect poorly on a student’s final grade.

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**GRADING BREAKDOWN**

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<thead>
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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87.5 – 89.4</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.5 – 79.4</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67.5 – 69.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>A–</td>
<td>89.5 – 92.4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.5 – 87.4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>72.5 – 77.4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>62.5 – 67.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>B–</td>
<td>79.5 – 82.4</td>
<td>C–</td>
<td>69.5 – 72.4</td>
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<td>59.5 – 62.4</td>
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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1: Introduction to Sports & Social Change**

W 6/27 Introduction and Course Overview

F 6/29 Sport as a Vehicle of Change
  Reading: Dave Zirin, “Until the Twentieth Century”; Mark Dyreson, Globalizing the Nation-Making Process: Modern Sport in World History; Susan J. Bandya, “From Women and Sport to Gender and Sport: Transnational, Transdisciplinary, and Intersectional Perspectives”
  Due: Introductory survey

**Week 2: Law, Labor, and Play**

M 7/2 Sporting Labors
  Guest: “Dr.” TJ Finley, Esquire
Week 3: The Sports-Media Complex

M 7/9 What is the Sports-Media Complex?
Reading: Michael R. Real, “Mediasport: Technology and the Commodification of Postmodern Sport”; Lawrence A. Wenner, Media, Sports, and Society (selections); Cheryl Cooky et al, “It’s Not About the Game: Don Imus, Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Media”

W 7/11 Representation in the Sports-Media Complex

F 7/13 New Media Shifts in the Sports-Media Complex
Reading: Timothy Burke & Jack Dickey, “Manti Te’o’s Dead Girlfriend, The Most Heartbreaking and Inspirational Story of the College Football Season, is a Hoax; Ben Rothenberg, “A Macedonian Tennis Racket”; Jon Dart, “New Media, Professional Sport and Political Economy”

Week 4: Commerce & Capitalism in Sport

M 7/16 Capitalizing on Sport

W 7/18 Gambling in Sport
F 7/20 The Sporting Venue
Reading: Tom Ley, “The Texas Rangers’ Ballpark Scam is Even Worse Than We Thought”; Priscilla Leiva, “’Just Win, Baby!’ The Raider Nation and Second Chances for Black and Brown L.A.”; Eric Avila, Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles (selections) Due: Group Project

Week 5: Technological Shifts in Sport

M 7/23 Social Media & Sport
Reading: Marc Tracy, “Sure, He’s Good at Basketball, but How Are His Twitter Skills?”; Brett Hutchins, “Sport on the Move: The Unfolding Impact of Mobile Communications on the Media Sport Content Economy”; David McGillivray, “Platform Politics: Sport Events and the Affordances of Digital and Social Media”

W 7/25 Advanced Sporting Spaces and Statistics

F 7/27 Research Workshop (following exam)
Exam

Week 6: Global Sporting Stages

M 7/30 Nationalism in Sport

W 8/1 Sport as Soft Diplomacy

F 8/3 Protest on a Global Stage
Reading: Johnny Smith, “Reflections: Remembering Muhammad Ali: Myths, Memory, and History” Dave Zirin, “The 1968 Olympics Raise the Bar”; Dave Zirin, “This Rio Olympic Medalist Risked His Life to Show Solidarity”
Week 7: Sporting Futures

M 8/6  The Future of Sport/Presentations
Reading: Gertrud Pfister, “Women in Sport – Gender Relations and Future Perspectives”; Max Thabiso Edkins, “Rio: The Olympics for Climate Change”; Auden Schendler, “Every Olympic Athlete in Pyeongchang Should be Vocal about Climate Change”; Samantha Michaels, “The Biggest Issue in Women’s Sports is About to Come to a Head”; Steven Petrow, “Do Transgender Athletes have an Unfair Advantage at the Olympics?”
Due: Presentation, Final Paper

W 8/8  The Future of Sport/Presentations
Due: Presentation, Final Paper