

MCO 3403: TOPICS IN MEDIA STUDIES (CRN 1945)

Sports Movies & Media

SYLLABUS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT PROFESSOR'S DISCRETION)

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Office: **Zoom**

Office hours: Tues. 12:30pm-1:30pm

Semester: Fall 2021

Class Time: T/R 2:00pm-3:15pm **Class Location**: Zoom & Canvas

Email is the best way to reach me. When emailing me, please include your course # and section # in the subject, a greeting, a sign-off, and your name.

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Course Description

An in-depth examination of representations of sports and athletes in film, documentary, social media, and news media via several critical approaches, including gender and critical race theories.

Learning Objectives

- 1. *Express proficiency* in critical viewing skills, including identifying formal & thematic elements of narrative cinema, documentary, and commercials using the vocabulary of film & media studies, gender theory, critical race theory, and postcolonial theory
- 2. **Show** understanding of the cultural, historical, and political contexts of relevant sports-related "texts," e.g. film, social media posts, news stories and broadcast, athletes
- 3. *Create* well-organized and well-written work in the language of scholarly media analysis
- 4. *Express proficiency* in clear, compelling oral communication skills
- 5. **Develop** research & writing skills including locating, understanding, evaluating & integrating primary and secondary source materials

Warning

Because this course is meant to challenge the status quo and encourage critical thinking, it contains material that some students may find difficult to encounter. Please let me know if you have any specific trigger warning (TW) requests via email, in person, or on your introduction sheet, but please also realize that it would be impossible to warn you before every instance of potentially traumatizing material. For a discussion of these issues, see https://trigwarnings.wordpress.com

Policy regarding circulation of course materials: The materials presented in this class are copyright protected and may not be used without the express prior consent of the instructor. Intentional misuse of the intellectual property of another may subject the user to penalties up to and including dismissal.

HOW THIS COURSE IS DELIVERED: Synchronous Zoom Meetings & Modules (on Canvas)

The Modules are as follows:

Semester-Long Assignments

Resources

Weeks 1 & 2: The "All-American" Sport

Weeks 3 & 4: "All-American" Sport, cont.

Weeks 5 & 6: Sports History as Political History

Weeks 7 & 8: White Savior Films

Weeks 9 & 10: Sports Spectacles: Dennis Rodman & Michael Jordan

Weeks 11 & 12: Billie Jean King & Tonya Harding

Weeks 13 & 14: Serena Williams & Caster Semenya

Weeks 15 & 16: Media Analysis

<u>Each module will include</u>: Links to required & optional readings, formal assignments (with instructions and due dates listed), and discussion board forums. <u>Make sure to check Modules</u> (rather than the Assignments tab) for all assignments and due dates!

Required Materials

There is one required book for the course. Make sure to buy the edition listed below so that we are all literally on the same page:

 Gocsik, Karen, Dave Monahan, and Richard Barsam. Writing about Movies (5th edition), Norton, 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0393664904

I also **recommend** the following book, which you can access online for free:

• Wagg, Stephen, et al. Key Concepts in Sports Studies, SAGE Publications, 2009. [LTU]

In addition, much of your required & recommending reading will be posted on **[Canvas]** under "Modules" or on **Perusall**.

Out-of-class film viewing: You will also be required to watch several films outside of our class meetings. Please plan on renting these for about \$3.99 each. **ALSO NOTE:** Many public libraries offer **Hoopla** and/or **Kanopy** streaming. You may have access through your home library, but you can also apply for a Southfield Public Library card as an LTU student. You will need to go in person to the Southfield Public Library to request a card at the front desk. If you are a Southfield resident, you just need to show ID; if not, you will need you LTU student ID card. Once you get a card, you can view 20 films per month on Kanopy for free from your LTU or home computer. NOTE: Anyone who

got an eResources card last year can still use it, but the card expires every year your birthday, so you'll need to go to the SPL and renew it before then.

I've noted in the schedule below the films that are available via Kanopy at the Southfield Public Library **[Kanopy]**—or where I have found them streaming for free, to rent, or via subscription. In addition, you may check <u>justwatch.com</u> for where to find required and recommended films to stream (for free), rent, or buy. For more obscure foreign films, check <u>telescopefilm.com</u>.

Getting Help

I'm here to facilitate your learning. I'm available during our Zoom lectures, by email, and via regular face-to-face online office hours to help you address any questions you have about the course and its material. I'm not, however, tech support. If you're having **technical difficulties** with the Canvas site or accessing any of the materials, please contact the <u>IT Helpdesk</u> at helpdesk@ltu.edu. Are you new to **Canvas** or unfamiliar with its tools? Click here for Welcome to Canvas and Canvas for Students.

COURSE POLICIES

1. Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

- a) I appreciate that most students are honest, but let's be clear on the policies. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. You are expected to be the author of your own work. Don't ask for or receive help from others on your individual work, don't represent someone else's work as your own, don't let your parent or friend re-write or "fix" your paper for you, and don't turn in work for this class that you turned in previously (either for a different class or this class) without first receiving permission from me.
- b) Many students assume they understand plagiarism when they really don't. Often, plagiarism is unintentional. Unintentional or not, all forms of plagiarism (e.g. print sources, Internet sources, fellow students, your professors, your own work from this or another course) will be grounds for receiving an 'F' on the assignment and/or for the course, and students who plagiarize will be reported to the university.
- c) The Department of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Communications requires students to submit all final copies of expository essays to VeriCite, anti-plagiarism software. The following pledge is required on all academic work submitted by undergraduate students at Lawrence Technological University:

"I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in completing this work, nor have I presented someone else's work as my own." ~Your Name

- d) Note that plagiarism is an insult to me as your instructor and to your peers. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please don't hesitate to ask me or a librarian. When in doubt, cite your source in the Works Cited and in-text (author page)—and cite as you research and write!
- e) For more information on how LTU defines and deals with cases of plagiarism, see: https://www.ltu.edu/current-students/honor-code.asp

2. **Zoom Meetings: Synchronous Communication Expectations**

- a) This course will meet in "real time" via Zoom meetings during our normal class times. You are expected to show up consistently and on time to these meetings; treat them as in-seat meetings.
- b) Your classmates and I are making ourselves vulnerable by turning our cameras on during Zoom meetings; *you are expected to do the same*. Facing the camera will show

- us that you are invested in the course. You are free to use a fake background, but your real-time face should be in the frame. If you have concerns about this, please email me.
- c) Feel free to mute yourself if there is too much background noise in your space, but also try to remember to unmute yourself when you are speaking.
- d) **Please be respectful to everyone in class.** *Practice active listening.* Criticism should always be constructive and class discussions should be a place to respectfully talk through ideas. Any comments or actions that instigate or contribute to a hostile environment in the classroom will be discussed with the professor and resolved with the help of university support services if needed.
- e) Please physically raise your hand OR (especially when I am lecturing) digitally 'raise your hand' via the icon on Zoom—and wait for me to acknowledge you before speaking. This will encourage an organized online space where as many voices as possible can be heard.
- f) Arriving late is disruptive and inconsiderate. Please be respectful to your classmates and me by **arriving to our Zoom meetings on time.**

3. <u>Netiquette: Asynchronous Communication Expectations</u>

- a) The student/instructor relationship is a professional one. Make sure that your emails name your concern and address your instructor with respect. Be sure to include openings and closings, and to sign your name. See: http://mleddy.blogspot.com/2005/01/how-to-e-mail-professor.html
- b) We will be using the course **Canvas** website, so please make sure to check it regularly for course updates and grades.
- c) You will also submit all written work through **VeriCite** on Canvas, a program that helps me determine if you've plagiarized.
- d) The online space has etiquette—social and professional codes of polite, professional behavior—the same way the face-to-face classroom does. This is particularly important because your audience isn't in front of you, likely doesn't know you, and therefore is not always able to infer your tone. What might sound hilarious to you when you're writing (because you know the inflection of your wording), might not come across the same way to your reader.
- e) The first rule of netiquette is: Remember the human.
- f) See "Discussion Board Tips: TRUST" on Canvas Modules → "Semester-Long Assignments"

g) Email Guidelines:

- i. An email address should be reflective of your professionalism
- ii. Remember to identify the course and the name of the relevant assignment in the subject line
- iii. Include a formal salutation
- iv. Avoid informal phrases or language that is best used in social relationships
- v. Treat the body of the email as you would a formal business letter, beginning with a clear statement of the main idea, followed by necessary information
- vi. End with a clear request for next steps if relevant
- vii. Avoid "text" and DM shorthand
- viii. Utilize spell check and proofread your email prior to pressing send

h) Just so you know:

- I will try to answer your emails within 24 hours on weekdays, and I will not be available on weekends
- Due to FERPA regulations, I will only respond to emails sent using an LTU student account.

4. Late Work

- a) Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day they are late, *but only up to 5 days past the deadline*; e.g. if the assignment is due 11:59pm on the 10th and you turn it in at 12:01am on the 11th, your grade on that assignment will automatically drop 10%; if you turn it in on the 15th, you will earn a zero.
- b) I will NOT accept assignments five days past the deadline, except for the following reasons: 1) physical or mental health illness, only if you email me to let me know before the assignment is due & provide proper documentation; and 2) an immediate family emergency, only if certified by an official document. In either case, such documentation must be provided within two weeks of the deadline.
- c) NOTE: Each student gets one free "late pass" per semester, but only up to 5 days past the deadline, and you must email me before the assignment is due to receive it. Please remind me that you've used your late pass when you submit your assignment in the notes section on Canvas. (The late pass should be used only on formal assignments and FINAL DRAFTS submitted through VeriCite on Canvas.)

5. Attendance & Absences

- a) You cannot learn or participate if you do not come to class. Absences will affect your grade to be determined by the outcome of your performance in class. Per LTU guidelines, I will take attendance and will report to the university if you have been absent for *two consecutive weeks*. I will verify your attendance ONLY via your showing up *on time* to our synchronous Zoom meetings at regular class times. That is, I will report your absence to the university even if you turn in an official assignment but have not 'shown up' to class via Zoom.
- b) Further, if you miss more than 2 weeks of our course sessions *total* (with or without email communication or documentation), your grade may be at risk. If this is the case for you, please email me as soon as possible so we can go over your options. Excessive tardiness to Zoom meetings, or leaving Zoom meetings early or too often, will reduce participation points at the instructor's discretion. "Leaving" Zoom meetings includes keeping your computer on and logged into Zoom but leaving our discussion; be sure to keep your face in the frame whenever possible to illustrate your commitment to the lecture, materials, and conversation.
 - a. Last day to withdraw from class is Nov. 19.
 - b. If you fail the course **and** if you have been absent from our Zoom meetings more than 8 times, I will submit a "WF" (Failure due to non-attendence) rather than an "F." The WF grade distinguishes students who fail due to non-attendance from those earning and "F" grade due to substandard academic performance. **Note:** It holds the same GPA value of an "F": 0 (zero). See https://www.ltu.edu/registrars office/general-policies.asp
- c) Meaningful and thoughtful participation is an integral part of this course. When you are absent you are responsible for any material covered in class and for arranging to submit any materials due on that day. Please do not contact me about what you will have missed because of your absence; instead, contact one of your classmates. I recommend you exchange email addresses for this purpose and for proofreading each other's written work.

6. Services & Accomodations

- a) The Zaven Margosian Academic Achievement Center (AAC) is an academic support hub for LTU students. You may stop in to meet with study groups, study alone, or get tutoring help for classes or to improve notetaking and study habits. Tutoring is offered for many core classes, including writing. You can schedule a tutoring session online at http://aac.lut.edu.
 - i. **AAC location:** lowest level of the A. Alfred Taubman Student Services Center in C201
 - ii. **AAC contact:** <u>aac@ltu.edu</u> / 248-204-4120

- b) The Horldt Family Writing Center offers tutoring sessions to help you improve your writing skills! Fill out the form on their site to make a Zoom appointment: https://www.ltu.edu/onestop/hwc.asp
 - i. Writing Center contact: writingcenter@ltu.edu
- c) Please let me know if you need an accommodation for this course. I will work with <u>Disability Services</u> to provide what you require. I am willing to take suggestions specific to this class to meet your needs.
 - i. **Disability Services location:** Office of the Dean of Students, Suite C405, A. Alfred Taubman Student Services Center, 4th floor.
 - ii. Disability Services contact: disability@ltu.edu / 248-204-4100
- d) LTU currently offers counseling via zoom or phone from Monday through Friday for LTU students.
 - i. Counseling contact: clinicalcounseling@ltu.edu
 - ii. More info: https://www.ltu.edu/student_affairs/student-counseling.asp
- 7. LTU Academic Policies: https://www.ltu.edu/advising/academic-policies.asp

Grading System:

B: 84-86.99

A: 95-100 B-: 80-83.99 D: 60-69.99 A-: 90-94.99 C+: 77-79.99 F: 0-59.99 B+: 87-89.99 C: 74-76.99

C-: 70-73.99

General Definitions:

- [A] Outstanding. Work displays thorough mastery of material, exceptional writing, and genuine engagement with, and dedication to, the subject matter.
- [B] Good. Work displays accurate understanding of the material.
- [C] Fair. Work displays basic grasp of material with occasional misunderstandings or inaccuracies.
- [D] Marginal. Work displays grasp of material adequate for credit, but quality of work indicates lack of effort.
- [F] Unacceptable. Excessive absences, assignments not completed, or assignments unworthy of credit.

Course Requirements:

1% Introduction Sheet: Submit intro/syllabus agreement to me via Canvas by Aug. 27

• Find the sheet under Canvas Modules

13% Participation: Active, respectful, professional participation is crucial for your learning experience. Active participation includes coming to Zoom meetings **with your camera on** and with **relevant text(s)** *in hand*, being prepared, *actively listening* to your peers and me, speaking up when it is your turn to do so, and fully participating in in-class writing assignments and discussions and Canvas discussion boards.

- Your classmates and I are making ourselves vulnerable by turning our cameras on during Zoom
 meetings; you are expected to join us in this commitment. Facing the camera will show us that you
 are invested in the course. You are free to use a fake background, but your real-time face should be in
 the frame. If you have concerns about this, please email me.
- o I am looking for *quality* rather than quantity:
 - Your verbal & written participation in this course should reflect that you've done the readings/viewings & are responding to them & your classmates' thoughts on them, i.e. *enter*

the scholarly discussion with an educated viewpoint by offering more than simply your 'opinion'

- o Regarding quantity: aim to participate 4 times per week in class discussion and/or on Canvas
- o If you want to say something but we must move on for the sake of time, **jot down your thoughts** and write them under our Canvas Discussion board (any relevant Forum)
- I will assess your participation and give you a participation grade around week 5 or 6 of the semester; this grade will be entirely replaced by your participation grade at the end of the semester—it's just to give you a sense of how you're doing at the time so you can change your behavior if needed (or keep up the good work!)
- o If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate (or two) what you missed and making up the work; if, after this, you have specific questions about course content, email me
 - See Canvas → Modules → Semester-Long Assignments → "Participation Guidelines"

21% Perusall Annotation (7 total, 3 points each): Each student will participate in Perusall annotation (any reading with Perusall after it under "Course Schedule" below):

- Instructions are posted under relevant "Assignments" in Canvas Modules
- Due 2 hours before relevant class begins

20% Integrative Responses (5 total, 4 points each): You will write 5 integrative responses of 600-650 words each on specific media and/or readings. These responses are meant to help you to work through your understanding of the course material, as well as connect texts and contexts. Only responses that demonstrate reading and viewing will receive credit.

- Instructions are posted under relevant "Assignments" in Canvas Modules
- See "Course Schedule" below & Canvas Modules for due dates

45% Media Analysis (4 parts):

10% Analysis Proposal: You will turn in an analysis proposal of 600-650 words

- Guidelines on Canvas Modules
- Due Nov. 20 by 11:59pm

10% Presentation: You will present aspects of your Analysis to the class and integrate our feedback into your Media Analysis Essay

- Guidelines on Canvas Modules
- Due last week of class

10% Analysis Draft for Peer Review: Your Analysis Draft of 1600-1800 words must show understanding of my feedback on your previous written work, including your Proposal

- Guidelines on Canvas Modules
- Due via Canvas Dec. 14 by 11:59pm

15% Analysis Final Draft: Your Film Analysis First Draft of 2300-2500 words must show understanding of my feedback on your previous written work and your peers' feedback on your Analysis Draft

- Guidelines on Canvas Modules
- Due via Canvas Dec. 16 by 11:59pm

COURSE SCHEDULE¹

Unless otherwise noted, you are responsible for reading/viewing course material by the time the day's session begins.

Weeks 1 & 2: The "All-American" Sport

Aug. 24: Syllabus review; submit introduction sheet via Canvas by Aug. 27

Aug. 26: In class: *Race, Power and American Sports.* Dir. Jason Young, Jeremy Earp, Sut Jhally.

Media Education Foundation, 2012. 46 min. [Kanopy]

Aug. 31: 42 (Brian Helgeland, 2013) [HBOMax, Amazon]

Sept. 2: In class: excerpts, Jackie Robinson. Dir. David McMahon, Ken Burns, Sarah Burns. PBS,

2016. [Kanopy]

Integrative Response 1 due Sept. 6 by 11:59pm

Weeks 3 & 4: The "All-American" Sport, cont.

Sept. 7: A League of Their Own (Penny Marshall, 1992) [Starz, Amazon]

In class: Diamonds in the Rough. Dir. Gan Hanada, Kerry Yo Nakagawa, Pat Morita.

Chip Taylor Communications, 2008. 32 min. [Kanopy]

Sept. 9: Davis, Amira Rose. "No League of Their Own: Baseball, Black Women, and the Politics

of Representation." Radical History Review, vol. 125, 2016, pp. 74–96. Perusall

Peruse: "The History of Latinos in Major League Baseball"

In class: <u>Dick's Sporting Goods</u> commercial, 2020 Tokyo Olympics

Sept. 14: Love and Basketball (Gina Prince-Bythewood, 2000) [HBOMax, Amazon]

In class: Trailer, <u>Juwanna Mann</u> (Jesse Vaughn, 2002)

Recommended: Juffer, Jane. "Who's the Man? Sammy Sosa, Latinos, and Televisual Redefinitions of the 'American' Pastime." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 26, no. 4, Nov. 2002, pp. 337–359 [Canvas]; Hermoso, Rafael, et al. *Speak English!*:

The Rise of Latinos in Baseball. Kent State UP, 2013.

Sept. 16: Sheppard, Samantha N. "Black Female Incommensurability and Athletic Genders."

Sporting Blackness: Race, Embodiment, and Critical Muscle Memory on Screen.

University of California Press, 2020, pp. 106-140. Perusall

¹ The schedule and/or materials covered are subject to change. Please check Canvas "Announcements" & your LTU email regularly for updates.

Weeks 5 & 6: Sports History as Political History

Sept. 21: Assessment Day (No Classes)

Sept. 23: Writing about Movies, Ch. 3

In class: *Not Just a Game: Power, Politics, and American Sports.* Dir. Chris Boulton, Dave Zirin, Jason Young, Jeremy Earp. Media Education Foundation, 2010. 62 min. [Kanopy].

Integrative Response 2 due Sept. 27 by 11:59pm

Sept. 28: One Night in Miami (Regina King, 2020)

Sept. 30: Writing about Movies, Ch. 4

Recommended: *More Than a Word: Native American-Based Sports Mascots.* Dir. John Little, Kenn Little. Media Education Foundation, 2017. 70 min. [Kanopy]

Weeks 7 & 8: White Savior Films

Oct. 5: Glory Road (James Gartner, 2006) [Disney+, Amazon]

Oct. 7: Hughey, Matthew. "The Savior Trope & the Modern Meanings of Whiteness." *The White*

Savior Film, Temple UP, 2014, pp. 2-17. Perusall

Integrative Response 3 due Oct. 11 by 11:59pm

Oct. 12: The Blind Side (John Lee Hancock, 2009) [Cinemax, Amazon]

Oct. 14: Class is asynchronous today (No Zoom Meeting); Dr. Schaefer @NWSA conference

Weeks 9 & 10: Sports Spectacles: Dennis Rodman & Michael Jordan

Oct. 19: The Last Dance, ep. 3 (Jason Hehir, 2020) [Netflix, ESPN]

Oct. 21: Class is asynchronous (No Zoom Meeting); Dr. Schaefer @Cine-Excess conference

Mélisse Lafrance and Geneviève Rail, "As Bad as He Says He Is? Interrogating Dennis Rodman's Subversive Potential." *Reading Sport: Critical Essays on Power and*

Representation, edited by Susan Birrell and Mary G. McDonald, Northeastern UP,

2000, pp. 74-107. [Internet Archive: create free account & "borrow" book]

Integrative Response 4 due Oct. 25 by 11:59pm

Oct. 26: The Last Dance, ep. 5-6 (Jason Hehir, 2020) [Netflix, ESPN]

Oct. 28: Kellner, Douglas. "The Sports Spectacle, Michael Jordan, and Nike." Sport and the Color

Line. Routledge, 2004. 371-395. Perusall

Weeks 11-12: Sports Spectacles: Billie Jean King & Tonya Harding

Nov. 2: Battle of the Sexes (Valerie Faris & Jonathan Dayton, 2017)

Nov. 4: In class: 30 for 30: The Price of Gold. Dir. Nanette Burstein, 2014, 78 min. [Amazon]

Integrative Response 5 due Nov. 8 by 11:59pm

Nov. 9: *I, Tonya* (Craig Gillespie, 2017) [Kanopy, Fubo, Showtime]

Excerpts from: Baughman, Cynthia. *Women on Ice: Feminist Responses to the Tonya Harding/Nancy Kerrigan Spectacle*. Routledge, 1995.

Nov. 11: Daddario, Gina. "Sports Film and the Reimagining of American Popular Culture: Billie

Jean and Tonya." Sport, Film and National Culture, edited by Seán Crosson,

Routledge, 2020, pp. 64-76. [Google Books] Perusall

Media Analysis **Proposal** FIRST draft (for peer review) due Nov. 13 by 11:59pm

Your Feedback on Peers' Drafts due Nov. 15 by 11:59pm

Weeks 13-14: Sports Spectacles: Serena Williams & Caster Semenya

Nov. 16: Love, Jessica, and Lindsey Conlin Maxwell. "Serena Williams: From Catsuit to

Controversy." International Journal of Sport Communication 13.1 (2020): 28-54.

Perusall

In class: From Being Serena (2018-) [HBO, Amazon]; Proposal check-in

Nov. 18: Class is asynchronous today (No Zoom Meeting); Dr. Schaefer @NWSA conference

Recommended: Wilks, Lauren E. "The Serena Show: Mapping Tensions Between Masculinized and Feminized Media Portrayals of Serena Williams and the Black Female Sporting Body." Feminist Media Histories 6.3 (2020): 52-78. [Canvas] Litchfield, Chelsea, et al. "Social Media and the Politics of Gender, Race and Identity:

The Case of Serena Williams." European Journal for Sport and Society 15.2 (2018): 154-170. [Canvas]

Media Analysis **Proposal** FINAL draft due Nov. 20 by 11:59pm

Nov. 23: Valerie Moyer, "<u>Threatening the Gender Hierarchy in Women's Sport</u>." *Nursing Clio*, 2019.

In class: Excerpts, <u>Too Fast to be a Woman: The Story of Caster Semenya</u>. Dir. Maxx

Ginane, 2011, 50 min.; Proposal feedback check-in

Nov. 25: **No Classes** (LTU Break)

Weeks 15-16: Media Analysis

Nov. 30: Orgeret, Kristin Skare. "The Unexpected Body: From Sara Baartman to Caster

Semenya." Journal of African Media Studies 8.3 (2016): 281-294. Perusall

Recommended: Miller, Shane Aaron. ""Just Look at her!" Sporting Bodies as Athletic Resistance and the Limits of Sport Norms in the Case of Caster Semenya." *Men*

and Masculinities 18.3 (2015): 293-317. [abstract]

Dec. 2: In class: Media Analysis writing & Presentation prep

Dec. 7: In class: Presentations

Dec. 9: In class: Presentations

Media Analysis **Essay** FIRST Draft (for peer review) due via Canvas Dec. 14 by 11:59pm

Exam period: Wed. Dec 15th 1:45-3:35pm: In class: Peer Review

Media Analysis **Essay** FINAL Draft due via Canvas Dec. 16 by 11:59pm