



Sports in Irish Society

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: DBLN 3027

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Instructor: Onsite Faculty

Term: Spring 2025

Course Description

This course provides an understanding of sports in Irish culture, their historical context and the importance of Irish sporting bodies as ideological state apparatus. Discussions will consider sport as a reflection of early twentieth century Ireland through to a reflection of diverse and multicultural modern Ireland. Sports have been geographically bound and a signifier of one's identity in Ireland in terms of one's village, townland and county, and students will consider the possible effects of urbanization on sports and one's identity. Students delve into a wide variety of subjects that examine the interface between social structures, state and sporting organizations. Discussions in class will look at the role of education, volunteerism and globalization on sport spectatorship and participation.

Given the role of sport as one of Ireland's most influential state apparatus, focus will be placed on representation in Irish sports; the marginalization and homogenization of groups within sporting culture—based on gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. Additionally, this course will analyze the current state of integrity in sports, including the use of drugs, the influence of gambling, gene manipulation, and biomedical enhancements.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to:

- Explain the historical context of prominence of Irish sports and their relationship with the development of the nation
- Theorize on the role of sports and recreation in community building and education in schools
- Relate the role of ethics, integrity, power, and equity to the Irish sporting context
- Identify how sports are shaped by social differences and inequalities
- Conceptualize the future of sports in Ireland and the impact of emerging social and cultural trends

Methodology

Experiential Learning & Field Visits

Experiential learning is an essential component of education abroad, and participation in field studies is a required part of coursework. In this course, students explore the city in which they are studying using a variety of methods. This provides the opportunity to gain nuance and perspective on the host context and course content, as well as to collect information and resources for assigned papers, projects, and presentations.

- Field trip to Croke Park Stadium and Museum
- Field Study visit to the National Boxing Stadium

Required Reading / Materials

The below readings and resources are representative of what will be assigned as required in this course, but may vary slightly in the term syllabus.

Wherever possible, required readings are made accessible through the online library or Canvas. Students are responsible for obtaining all required readings.

Each course utilizes Canvas as its LMS. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates and deadlines. Canvas is also the primary platform for contacting your instructor in case of questions or concerns about the course.

Readings

- Anderson, E. *Sport, Theory, and Social Problems (2nd Edition)*, London: Routledge, 2018
- Delaney, Liam & Fahey, Tony. "Social and Economic Value of Sport in Ireland," Research Series, Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), number BMI180, July.2003.
- Duggan, B. and G. Mohan (2022). A longitudinal examination of young people's gambling behaviours and participation in team sports, *Journal of Gambling Studies*, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10899-022-10175-x>

- Liston, K. & Maguire, J. "Making sense of 'Ireland', sport and identity: the craft of doing sociology", *Sport in Society*, 23:10, 1587-1605, DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2020.1814572
- Majumdar, B. and Naha, S. 2020. "Live sport during the COVID-19 crisis: fans as creative broadcasters." *Sport in Society* 23 (7): 1091-1099.
- Mitchell, D., Somerville, I., & Hargie, O. "Sport for peace in Northern Ireland? Civil society, change and constraint after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 18(4), 981–996.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148116656987> 2016
- Wright, L., and G. Clarke. "Sport, the Media and the Construction of Compulsory Heterosexuality: A Case Study of Women's Rugby Union." In *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 34, no. 3 (1999): 227-243.

Recommended Readings

- Caudwell, J. (ed.). *Sport, Sexualities, and Queer/Theory*. London: Routledge, 2006
- Chapman, L. and B. Grubisic. *American Hunks: The Muscular Male Body in Popular Culture 1860-1970*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2009
- Choi, P. *Femininity and the Physically Active Woman*. London: Routledge, 2000
- Coakley, J., C. Hallinan, and B. McDonald. *Sport in Society: Sociological Issues and Controversies*. Sydney: McGraw-Hill, 2011
- Corry, E. *An Illustrated History of the GAA*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2006
- Dixon, S., and D. Bergmann. *Socrates, Sport and Students: A Philosophical Inquiry into Physical Education and Sport*. New York: United Press of America, 2011
- Horne, J., A. Tomlinson, G. Whannel, and K. Woodward. *Understanding Sport: A Socio-cultural Analysis*. London: Routledge, 2012
- Hughson, J.E., and M. Dyreson. *The Making of Sporting Cultures*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2009
- Myler, T. *Ringside with the Celtic Warriors*. Ireland: Curragh Press, 2005
- Rouse, P. *Sport & Ireland: A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015
- Rouse, P. *Sport and War in an Irish Town*, 2020. *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, 13:4, 383- 401, DOI: 10.1080/17526272.2020.1829786
- Rouse, P. *Sport in Modern Irish Life*. Dublin. Irish Academic Press, 2023.
- Siggins, G., and Lewis, E. *100 Not Out: The History of Cricket in Leinster*. Self-Published,

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Engagement	20%
Experiential Learning Reports	30%
Mid-term Essay	25%
Group Presentation	25%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

Engagement—20%: Students are expected to be engaged in class, to have read the CEA CAPA Engagement Policy, and to understand the Class Engagement Rubric that outlines how engagement is graded.

Experiential Learning Reports—30%: Throughout this course, students submit three 1,000-word reports based on field studies or guest speakers. Each report addresses the specific question provided in relation to the field study or guest speaker, lecture, and required readings. Students provide correct referencing of the required readings and include three additional references.

Students are assessed on the following analyses and critiques, relevant to their topic:

- Their analysis of the role of a variety of educational and institutional directives on the development of sports in Ireland
- Their critical analysis of the relationship of sports to society and the construction of identities
- Their analysis of the meaning of sports as given by a cultural or population group
- Their critique of their own understanding of the relationship between sports, nationalism, politics, and policy
- Their analysis of relevant research material and effective communication of findings in a written format

Mid-term Essay: The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA)—25%: This 1,500-word essay focuses on the history of Ireland's national sport of Gaelic Games. Students must provide a broad historical overview of the GAA including origins, amateurism, and growth (60%). Student must also include a specific focus on one of the following (40%):

- Bloody Sunday
- The rise of female participation in GAA
- Volunteerism and the GAA

Group Presentation—25%: Working with their group, students must select a contemporary issue in sports to focus on for a 15-minute presentation. They should identify the key points surrounding the debate, providing appropriate evidence from literature to support their statements. They should also critically examine the issue and develop a series of questions and themes for their audience to consider.

Examples of debates include:

- Comparative systems in youth sports
- Drug use and alcohol in youth sports
- Ethics in sports around topics such as doping and gambling
- Concussion in contact sports
- Sexuality and athletes going public
- Technology and sports

Students are assessed on the ability to demonstrate the following criteria:

- Understanding of a particular topic through critical examination of relevant research material
- Ability to critically analyze the role sports, schools, national bodies, politics, and individuals take in forming meaning of identity based on sexuality, gender, ability, nationality, or race

Course Content

Unit 1

Irish Sports: History & Identity

Lecture & discussion

- Historical context of prominence of Irish sports
- The GAA

Readings and assignments

- Delaney, Liam & Fahey, Tony. "Social and Economic Value of Sport in Ireland," Research Series, Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), number BMI180, July.2003.

Unit 2

The Impact of Place & Space

Lecture & discussion

- Impact of place and Irish spaces on sporting and cultural life
- Examples: the village, townland, country, suburbia and city

Readings & assignments

- Corry, E. An Illustrated History of the GAA. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2006

Unit 3

The Impact of Place & Space, Part 2

Activity

- Field trip to Croke Park Stadium and Museum

Unit 4

Community Building & Public Health

Lecture & Discussion

- Sports and recreation in building community
- Sports and recreation in public health

Readings & assignments

- Experiential Learning Report 1
- Duggan, B. and G. Mohan (2022). A longitudinal examination of young people's gambling behaviours and participation in team sports, *Journal of Gambling Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-022-10175-x>

Unit 5

Ethics, Power, & Equity

Lecture & Discussion

- Role of ethics, power, and equity in sporting contexts
- The Old School Tie: Rugby and Social and Cultural Capitalism

Readings & assignments

- Mitchell, D., Somerville, I., & Hargie, O. "Sport for peace in Northern Ireland? Civil society, change and constraint after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement" *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 18(4), 981–996. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148116656987> 2016

Unit 6

Social Differences & Inequality

Field Study

- Visit to the National Boxing Stadium

Readings & assignments

- Experiential Learning Report 2

- Liston, K. & Maguire, J “ Making sense of ‘Ireland,’ sport and identity: the craft of doing sociology”, *Sport in Society*, 23:10, 1587- 1605, DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2020.1814572

Unit 7

Mid-Term Break

Unit 8

Gender Identity & Sport

Guest Speaker

Readings & assignments

- Mid-term Essay
- Caudwell, J. (ed.). *Sport, Sexualities, and Queer/Theory*. London: Routledge, 2006. Chapter 1

Unit 9

Sport as a Site of Conformity & Resistance

Lecture & Discussion

- Race, identity, and representation within sport

Readings & assignments

Choose ONE of the following:

- Moyer, V. 2022. “Revising trans-exclusionary narratives in women’s sports activism.” In *Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.
- Schulz, S., Blanch, F. R., and Elliott, S. 2022. “Across field and classroom.” In Chapter 14. In *Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.
- Fuller, L. K. 2021. “Athlete activism relative to clothing: A case study of Ibtihaj Muhammad and the sport hijab.” In *Athlete Activism: Contemporary Perspectives* edited by Rory Magrath. Routledge.

Unit 10

Amateur vs. Professional Sports

Lecture & Discussion

- Tensions between the traditional model of amateur sports and the emerging model of professionalism, globalization, commercialization and sports as a commodity in Ireland

Readings & assignments

- Anderson, E. *Sport, Theory, and Social Problems*, London: Routledge, 2011, Chapter 1

Unit 11

Integrity in Sports

Lecture & Discussion

- Drugs in sports
- Influence of gambling on results
- Technology
- Gene manipulation
- Biomedical enhancements

Readings & assignments

- Anderson, E. *Sport, Theory, and Social Problems*, London: Routledge, 2011, Chapter 5

Unit 12

Social Media & Sports

Guest Speaker

- New technologies and social interactions
- The power of social media on sports and identity

Readings & assignments

- Experiential Learning Reports

- Horne, J., A. Tomlinson, G. Whannel, and K. Woodward. *Understanding Sport: A Socio-cultural Analysis*. London: Routledge, 2012 Chapter 12

Unit 13

Emotional & Affective Intensities of Sporting Events

Discussion of Sports Writing

Readings & assignments

- Sports writing examples (provided by instructor): read and discussed in class
- Majumdar, B. and Naha, S. 2020. "Live sport during the COVID-19 crisis: fans as creative broadcasters." *Sport in Society* 23 (7): 1091-1099.

Unit 14

Future of Irish Sports

Discussion & Course Revision

- Future of Irish sports
- Influences of emerging social and cultural trends

Reading & assignments

- Rouse, P. *Sport in Modern Irish Life*. Dublin. Irish Academic Press, 2023. Chapter 17

Unit 15

Final Assessment

Group Presentation

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).