What I know most surely about morality and the duty of mankind I owe to sport….  
Albert Camus

PREREQUISITE:

This course is for Sociology majors and minors only. Note that SC359 is NOT a university Core course.

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE:

I assume that you are taking this course because you have some interest in sports, as a participant, a fan, or just as a TV spectator. As such, you are probably familiar with the simplistic cliches that praise sport (“Sport builds character”) and with the equally facile criticisms (“Athletes are dumb jocks”). A sociological approach to sport will help us to discover how much or little truth there is in these cliches or critiques.

Sociology is the systematic study of human behavior as it occurs in and is influenced by social groups, institutions, organizations, and societies. Note the emphasis on "systematic." This means that we must go beyond (but not exclude) our personal experiences. We will use the theoretical frameworks and research methods of sociology to look at and better understand sport. I assume that sport, as a social phenomenon, is inherently neither good nor bad. Such value judgments are meaningful only after we place sport in a social context and examine the antecedents and consequences of sport in a specific social system.

Finally, I assume that sport presents us with a microcosm of our society. By looking at sport, we also look at and learn about our society. For example, looking at racism in sport should help us to understand racism in general.

READINGS: [NOTE: This list may be added to from time to time.]

There is one required text; this is available in the BC Bookstore and elsewhere.
George H. Sage and D. Staley Eitzen. Sociology of North American Sport (9th ed.).

In addition, you will have to read and report on two additional books from the list below. Most of these will be available in the Reserve Room of O'Neill library; you might also find inexpensive used copies at Amazon or other outlets.

Tamir Siorek, *Arab Soccer in a Jewish State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2007. GV944.175 S66

Additional readings may be assigned from time to time; most of these will be on reserve in O'Neill or available electronically.

All reading assignments should be completed prior to the corresponding class session. This is not a make-work request. Lectures are more comprehensible if you’ve read some related material beforehand. Studying is easier if you don't have to cram. And I DO value discussion in class; it is easier for you to participate in discussion if you know what we are talking about.

**GRADING:**

Your grade will be determined as follows:

10% -- Miscellaneous short assignments
10% -- Class participation (includes required attendance at and brief report on one on-campus lecture on Monday, March 11 at 7pm).
15% -- Mid-term Exam: Thursday, March 15.
10% -- Two one-thousand word book reviews (due at various times).
35% -- Term Paper: DUE no later than Monday, May 6 at 3:00PM.
>>> WARNING: LATE PAPERS WILL BE PENALIZED! <<<
>>> A paper is late if it arrives at 3:01! <<<

20% -- Final Exam: THE FINAL EXAM IS ON THE DAY AND TIME SET BY THE UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR: MONDAY, MAY 13 AT 12:30 PM. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Do not ask for an alternative date. Do not buy airline tickets for an early departure. If you must get sick on that date, get very, very sick.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

1. For all written work I expect to receive TYPED papers.

2. The papers are due on the assigned dates, at the beginning of class. None of the following excuses is acceptable: • My dog chewed it up. • My room was robbed last night. They got everything, even your paper. • I had it in my suitcase but the airplane lost it; you know how they are. • Didn't you get it? I put it in campus mail! (or e-mail!) • My roommate spilled coffee on it. • Etc. ad nauseum.

3. I expect your papers to reflect a university level of writing. Any paper that contains three or more misspelled words on a page, or contains gross grammatical errors, or is badly organized, may be penalized. Papers may be returned for rewriting. THEREFORE: (a) Please prepare your paper sometime before the eve of the due date. (b) Write a rough draft, show it to a friend for comments, then write a final copy; (c) Proofread your paper and have a friend also proofread it.

4. PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. It is your obligation to be fully aware of the Boston College policies on academic honesty. ANY violation may subject the offender to severe penalty, including course failure. If you are not familiar with the Boston College policy on academic honesty, see the Boston College Bulletin, or on the web at: http://www.bc.edu/integrity

5. Keep copies of all of your work. Retain all of the work that is returned to you until after you have received your final course grade.

6. The OWL is wise. Use the OWL.

The Online Writing Lab (OWL) is a branch of the Connors Family Learning Center’s writing tutorial services. Staffed by graduate and undergraduate readers trained at responding to the work of their peers both critically and constructively, the OWL provides free tutoring assistance to the Boston College community. As with in-person tutoring, their mission is to help students improve their writing at the global level, with attention to argument, organization, and effectiveness, rather than extensive grammatical and syntactical revisions.

I strongly recommend that if you are submitting to the OWL for the first time that you begin by reading their Frequently Asked Questions page. The FAQ and other OWL Information is at:

http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/writing/owl.html

ATTENDANCE:

THREE unexcused absences are permitted during the semester. For each absence over three, the course grade will be lowered by one step (e.g., from a B+ to a B). The only "excused" absences are those presented to me in writing (a) by a health care practitioner certifying that you had a sound medical reason to be absent from class (and note that the BC Infirmary often does not
give out such notes) or (b) by your Dean certifying that you had a serious personal reason to be absent from class.

EXAMS, DUE DATES, ETC.:

Each exam will be based on reading material and class content. The mid-term will cover sections I-III (roughly) of the outline. The final exam will cover the entire course, with much emphasis on Sections IV and V. Except for extreme emergencies, I do NOT give make-up exams. If you anticipate any problems with an assignment due date or an exam date, you MUST notify me IN WRITING at least one week in advance. The date for the final exam is set by the University Registrar; I will make no exceptions for this.

IN THE CLASSROOM:

- I will always try to begin class on time; I also expect you to be here on time.
- All electronic devices (cell phones, computers, etc.,) must be turned off during class.
- Unless you have a medical condition (of which you should notify me), please use the bathroom before class; do not leave the room for a bathroom (or other) break unless it is an emergency.
- The classroom is not a dining hall; no food is allowed; a liquid in a spill-proof container is allowed.
- Gentlemen do not wear hats in the classroom, except for religious reasons.

Approximate Course Schedule
(Dates for topics covered are tentative and subject to change.)

I. INTRODUCTION (Week of Jan. 15)
   A. Sociology and the Sociology of Sports: Why Study Sports?
      READ: S&E, Ch. 1
      James, Ch.2, "Against the Current" from Beyond A Boundary (reserve)
      Assignment #1 (Due Jan. 17)
   B. Sociological Theory and Sport (Jan 22)
      READ:
   C. A Brief Historical Perspective (Jan. 29)
      READ: S&E, Ch. 2

II. SPORT, SOCIETY, AND VALUES
   A. Sport as a Shaper of Values (Feb. 5)
      READ: S&E, Ch. 3
      Stevenson, "Becoming an International Athlete" (reserve)
      Donnelly and Young, "Construction and Confirmation of Identity" (reserve)
      Chambliss, "Mundanity of Excellence" (reserve)
   B. Sports for Children (Feb. 12, 19)
      READ: S&E, Ch. 4
Spring Break: March 4-8

Required University Lecture:
Monday, March 11 at 7:00 pm

C. Sports in High School and College (Feb. 26, March 12)
   READ: S&E, Chs. 5 and 6

Midterm Exam: March 21

III. SPECIAL TOPICS IN SPORT SOCIOLOGY

A. Deviance and Violence (March 19)
   READ: S&E, Ch. 7
   Wacquant, "The Social Logic of Boxing…" (reserve)
   Kraeger, “Unnecessary Roughness” (reserve)

B. Sport and Politics (March 26)
   READ: S&E, Ch. 9

Easter Break: March 28

C. Sport and the Economy (April 2)
   READ: S&E, Ch. 10

D. Sport and the Media (April 9)
   READ: S&E, Ch. 11

E. Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender (April 16, 23, 30)
   READ: S&E, Chs. 12, 13, 14
   Acosta & Carpenter, "Women in Intercollegiate Sport" (reserve)
   Foley, "The Great American Football Ritual" (reserve)

THE TERM PAPER IS DUE MAY 6 AT 3:00 PM
LATE PAPERS WILL BE PENALIZED

V. CONCLUSION: The Future (May 2)

   READ: S&E, Ch. 15

   Last day of this class is Thursday, May 2

THE FINAL EXAM IS ON MONDAY,
MAY 13 AT 12:30 PM
NO EXCEPTIONS NO MAKE-UP EXAMS