“Sport and Religion” is a graduate-level course offered in a kinesiology department with approximately 450 undergraduate students and 225 graduate students including approximately 20 doctoral students. The class is offered at a state land-grant institution in the United States. The course was designed in a collaborative effort between three faculty members, two of whom co-taught the course. The faculty members come specialized in three different sub-disciplines: sport management, recreation management, and sport sociology. The 24 graduate students who enrolled in the class came from similarly diverse concentrations and specialization from the department including sport management, sport psychology, sport sociology, and therapeutic recreation. The class is also open to students outside the department and there has been some enrollment from these departments. In fact, this was the first class in recent memory that drew students from the otherwise compartmentalized program areas in the department. Thus, this course seeks to address the need to overcome the varying silos in the academy (Kretchmar, 2008) and the need for more interdisciplinarity in kinesiology (Vertinsky, 2009). The class is an elective for the graduate degree programs in the department. This broad interest in the class reflects the reason the faculty have designed the course in the first place. In recent time, “Tebow-mania” and “Lin-sanity” have captured the American imagination in regards to the relationship between sport and religion (Moore, Keller, & Zemanek, 2011). This phenomenon, however, is neither a new (Hoffman, 2010), nor is it limited to Christianity (Coakley, 2009; Light & Kinnaird, 2002). With assignments designed to foster reflective practice (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985), the instructors encourage students to relate their own experiences to the course content and the readings. The ultimate goal is to facilitate what Mezirow (1991) referred to as “transformative learning.”
TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Lecture/discussion, case studies, student presentations, guest lecturers and contextualized application exercises. Note the section of the syllabus related to “transformative learning.”

REQUIRED TEXT


RESERVED READINGS


Assignments and other course material will be posted on the course site. Grades will also be accessible from this site. Information regarding the course will be distributed via e-mail using the Blackboard site.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To allow students to gain an appreciation for the ideological overlap between religion and sports.
- To provide a forum for students to garner an understanding of the ways in which sports reinforce and challenge traditional religious institutions and religious identities globally.
- To foster an appreciation of the inter- and cross-disciplinary use of methods in the study of social phenomena like (but not limited to) sports and religion.
- To allow students the opportunity to examine and discuss the immersion of sport and religion into regional cultures.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the conclusion of the semester students enrolled in this course will be able to:

- Operationalize the basic tenets of three of the world’s religions and how they impact the lives of adherents who participate in sport.
- Define the concept of muscular Christianity and elaborate upon how the “movement” continues to influence sport participation globally.
- Define the difference between religion and spirituality; “religiosity” and “spirituality” and elaborate on how each term and its primary constructs play out in sport.
- Identify the convergence of civil religion, regionalism and sports in the United States.
- Actively engage in the discourse related to the use of religious symbols, overt expressions of religiosity/spirituality as shown by the print and electronic media.
- Elaborate on at least three major issues relating to the “holistic” care of collegiate and professional athletes.
- Identify the role and influence of the Catholic Church and protestant organizations such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Athletes in Action in shaping sport policy.
- Elaborate on the role of religion and sport in promoting peace.
COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a professional obligation. You should come to class just as you would go to work. Students missing more than 25 percent of scheduled class meetings cannot pass the course.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to abide by the Honor Statement of the university student handbook. Each student must adhere to the Honor Statement by turning in original work in all assignments and exams. Any violation of the Honor Statement will be dealt with according to the rules outlined in the university student handbook.

STATEMENT ON TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

The theory of transformative learning was developed by Jack Mezirow (1991) over two decades ago and has evolved into a comprehensive and complex description of how adult learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their experience. Centrality of experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse are three common themes in Mezirow’s theory. In the final analysis, in order for meaningful transformative learning to occur, the teacher and students must be co-partners in creating opportunities for learning. In essence, the instructors play the smallest role in your learning—the student and his/her peers are the catalysts for meaningful learning in this course. A full statement on Transformative Learning is located in the Course Documents folder on Blackboard.

SAFE SPACE

Instructors and students share in the responsibility to create a welcoming and supportive learning environment. This includes:

1. Creating an environment where students can speak freely whether they are affiliated with organized religions or not
2. Not proselytizing (i.e., recruiting people for Christianity or another religion)
3. Recognizing that Christianity is a point of departure for the course but not the dominant lens through which we examine issues related to the course
4. Respecting religious diversity and the opinions associated with one’s religious affiliation.
5. Practicing religious tolerance

NOTICE OF POTENTIAL CHANGES TO THE COURSE SYLLABUS

The professor reserves the right to alter the content of the syllabus to adjust for schedule changes, the infusion of new course material, or to allow for deeper immersion into lecture material deemed important to the student’s mastery of the subject matter. Notice of potential changes will be given in advance when possible.
COURSE EVALUATION

ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Analysis</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Community Led Class*</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Papers</td>
<td>10x10 = 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Reflection Paper</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
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GRADE ASSIGNMENTS

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Percent</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 to 100 percent</td>
<td>270 to 300</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88 to 89 percent</td>
<td>264 to 269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 to 87 percent</td>
<td>240 to 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78 to 79 percent</td>
<td>234 to 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 to 77 percent</td>
<td>210 to 233</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 to 69 percent</td>
<td>0 to 209</td>
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PROFESSIONALISM EVALUATION

Professionalism is evaluated with the following criteria:

- Attendance and promptness
- Paying attention while avoiding private discussions during class, phones, computers
- Participation such as professional input, providing current events, and relating class material
- Appropriate dress during presentations and guest speakers
## COURSE CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Religious Concepts &amp; Constructs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Displays of Religion in Sport</td>
<td>Hoffman (pp. 23-98)*&lt;br&gt; Mathiesen (pp. 10-19)&lt;br&gt; Overman (pp. 3-16)&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reflection 1 Due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Historical Antecedents to the Interface Between Christianity and Sport</td>
<td>Forney (pp. 1-45)*&lt;br&gt; Higgs &amp; Braswell (pp. 16-27)&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reflection 2 Due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tennessee Chaplain Roger Woods</td>
<td>Father Charlie Donahue&lt;br&gt; Rabbi Alon Ferency&lt;br&gt; Rev. Dr. Valentino McNeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Civil Religion and Sport</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interfaith Dialogue Panel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Muscular Christianity</td>
<td>Hoffman (pp. 99-143)*&lt;br&gt; Mathiesen (pp. 19-42)&lt;br&gt; Watson (pp. 107-148)&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reflection 3 Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Muscular Christianity: Developing Through the Years</td>
<td>Learning Community 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sport and Spirituality</td>
<td>Learning Community 2&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reflection 4 Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sport and Spirituality: Definitions and Praxis</td>
<td>Gin (pp. 257-269)&lt;br&gt; Higgs &amp; Braswell (pp. 1-15)&lt;br&gt; Light &amp; Kinnaird (pp. 139-159)*&lt;br&gt; Robinson (pp. 22-37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Religious Beliefs as a Constraint to Sport Participation: Gauging the Nexus of Religiosity, Culture and Sport</td>
<td>Harline (pp. 214-277)*&lt;br&gt; Smith (pp. 175-196)&lt;br&gt; Silverstein (pp. 37-55)&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reflection 5 Due</strong></td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Learning Community 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Religion, Sport and the Media</td>
<td>O’ Gorman (pp. 217-255)*&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reflection 6 Due</strong></td>
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<td>Learning Community 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Religion &amp; Sport in the South</td>
<td>O’Gorman (pp. 184-216)*&lt;br&gt; <strong>Reflection 7 Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Assignment(s)</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning Community 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Spiritual Care of Athletes: Holistic Care of the Mind, Body, and Spirit of High Performing Athletes Guest Speaker – Meaghan Galindo: Eating Disorders and Female Athletes</td>
<td>Hoffman (pp. 219-238)* Nesti (pp. 151-170) Null (pp. 241-254) Paas (pp. 61-67) Reflection 8 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Holistic Care</td>
<td>Learning Community 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ecclesial and Parachurch Influences on the Theology of Sport and Global Sport Policy</td>
<td>Forney (pp. 189-208) Mazza (pp. 31-59) O’Gorman (pp. 14-28) Reflection 9 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ecclesial and Parachurch Influences on the Theology of Sport and Global Sport Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Epilogue: Religion and Sport in the 2nd Decade of the 21st Century</td>
<td>Hoffman (pp. 263-292)* Gombis (pp. 275-290) Overman (pp. 331-338) Parry (pp. 201-214) Reflection 10 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Spirituality and Sport Psychology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>European Football &amp; Religious Identity: The Old Firm Rivalry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Faith in Tebow: A thematic analysis of the Denver Post’s coverage of Tim Tebow and the Denver Broncos</td>
<td>Film Analysis Assignment Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Public Prayer and College Football: History, Legality, and Prospects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Film Analysis Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Critical Analysis of the Sport/Religion Interface in Film</td>
<td>Final Reflection Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Review and Reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**NOTES**

1. Readings outside of the course text are on e-course reserve.

2. * Students are required to read the assigned reading for each week as denoted by an asterisk (*) place by the article and then one supplemental reading from the group of articles for the week.

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**FILM ANALYSIS**

This assignment entails watching a sport-related movie and then explaining how religion and spirituality are represented in the movie.

- You will not write a summary of the movie.
- You will need to use examples from the movie to demonstrate your point(s).
You can also use other references to demonstrate your point(s).

Your paper will not start out “I learned ....”

**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

- All written assignments are to be completed on 8 1/2 inch by 11 inch. All work must be double-spaced, and you should have one-inch margins on your paper as well. You need to use Times New Roman font no smaller than 10 points and no larger than 12 points. **All assignments must adhere to the latest edition of the APA Style Manual.**
- You will submit the assignment in class **Week 14**.
- The assignment is limited to four pages.
- References do not need be listed on a separate page. List them at the conclusion of the paper.

**POSSIBLE MOVIES**


**REFLECTIVE PAPERS**

These assignments will be accomplished throughout the semester. It requires you to think and reflect on your experience in class for the week. Reflection is an “activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it” (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985, p. 33).

These assignments are more than just what you liked or disliked about each class. You need to delve into your thought process and uncover why you liked or disliked something. It is not all about course content and structure, either. You need to “reflect” on whether the class might have caused you to become aware of an issue, increased your awareness of an issue or made you feel about an issue. Did your view or understanding of an issue change or become reinforced because of class discussions and activities?

You will be required to submit 10 reflective papers during the course of the semester. These will be due Tuesday of each week at the beginning of class on the dates indicated on the course syllabus. You will also need to submit an electronic copy through the course Blackboard site. You will address four areas in each reflective paper. Use the following subheads in your paper and respond to each area.
Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes: Your reflection should include a synthesis of the course objectives and learning outcomes in regards to the class discussion, speakers and lecture materials covered in class since the previous Reflection Paper was due. Indicate what course objective(s) and learning outcome(s) you believed were met and why.

Currency: Include relevant examples that are occurring in sports and how your experience in the class has influenced the way you think or view those examples.

Transformation: How has this week’s discussion transformed your thinking about this intersection of sport and religion in general?

Professional Development: Did this class aid in your professional development? How can the information be used in a professional setting in the career path you are pursuing?

Submission Guidelines:

- All written assignments must be completed on 8 1/2 inch by 11 inch. All work must be double-spaced with one-inch margins on your paper as well. You need to use Times New Roman font no smaller than 10 points and no larger than 12 points. No cover sheets or anything similar in nature is required. All you need is your name in the upper left-corner.

- Each of the four sections of this assignment is weighted equally in the evaluation of the assignment.

- This is due at the beginning of class on the dates noted on the Class Schedule.

Learning Community Led Class Discussion:

Students will be grouped into Learning Communities (LCs) and will be responsible for one topical presentation during the semester. LCs will have the entire class period for presentation purposes. The presentation should focus on one novel topic that has not been covered in the course to date. Please avoid mimicking the topics presented in the course syllabus. One of the primary aims of the assignment is to present new, current ideas that cannot be covered in the course due to the time constraints. More importantly, select a topic/subject that has meaning to the LC.

This presentation should integrate the assigned reading(s) for the week, any recent, related items that have appeared in print (journal articles; current textbooks from related disciplines—sport management, sport sociology, religious studies, theology—popular press; or web-based resources); “expert” guests and utilize technology to catalyze peer engagement (Skype, podcasts, YouTube, etc.) during the presentation. Synthesis of resources and thought are vital to performing well on this assignment.

Possible topics might include the following: team and personal rituals that have a religious nature; mysticism and sport; sport related missions/evangelistic efforts; the role and function of spiritual advisors to players; the growing popularity of eastern religions (Shintoism, Buddhism, etc.) among players; sport, religion and masculinity; the role of religiosity/spirituality in “restoring” “fallen” athletes.

General Content of the Presentation:

1. Description of the topic/subject matter.
2. How and why did the topic/subject matter emerge?
3. What is the import/impact of the topic/subject matter on society?
4. What are the major theological/religious and sport related implications?
5. Illustrations/examples.
6. What should we learn from this topic/subject matter?
Submit a copy of your presentation electronically so it can be posted to the course Blackboard site by 5 p.m. the day prior to your presentation.

REFERENCES


Kretchmar, R. S. (2008). The utility of silos and bunkers in the evolution of kinesiology. Quest, 60, 3-12

