A. Course Goals:
This course is an experiment, as any political science course devoted to the “trivial” and the “nonpolitical” inevitably must be. It will explore the tentative theoretical proposition that, in certain contexts and cultures, political scientists should conceive sport as an integral part of the political sector. Long the province of historians, sociologists, and economists, political scientists have, for the most part, not envisaged the world of sports as falling within either the political sphere or their professional purview. After all, unless one is a professional athlete or involved in sports in some other professional capacity (coach, trainer, executive, writer, journalist, broadcaster, agent, lawyer, business contractor, and so forth), sport is at best a recreational activity. This holds true both for those who participate in some capacity, as well as for those who merely observe from the comfort of their couch or from the Olympian heights of a barstool. In other words, whether one is a participant, an observer, or simply not interested, almost by “definition” sport is trivial. Why should we study sport when there are far more critical issues crying out for attention? Indeed, in those rare instances when political scientists actively consider sports, they are usually inclined to consign them either to the “private” sector or to the domain of civil society.

Something is amiss, however. Although there is no recognized sub-field of political science that focuses on the politics of sport, in most of the world there are ministries of sport and sports are an integral part of the public, political sphere even when teams and leagues are privately owned and operated. Furthermore, depending on the time, place, and context, sports often evoke the intense emotions usually associated with nationalism, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, and gender, as well as with the politics of identity more generally. Trivial? Nonpolitical? This is politics writ large and this course will devote substantial attention to these broader issues.

Sport is also, and often, politics writ small. This means two things. The first is that sport may be seen as a microcosm of the larger society in which it is embedded and that, therefore, whatever political fault lines may appear in the wider realm of politics are also likely to appear in the smaller political arena of sport. Sport may thus be used as a point of entry to the study of various political forces in any society. The second way in which sport is politics writ small is that for many individuals, sport occupies a significant space in what we might call the subjacent, or “unthinking,” politics of daily life. This, for example, might well have something to do with how we relate to figures and structures of authority; how we understand “rules,” competition, cheating, and corruption; how we internalize and come to understand certain lessons of power; or how we think of subjects as varied as merit and reward, just and legitimate punishment, participation, inclusion and exclusion, and the proper parameters of the political community.
One goal of this course, then, is to begin a comparative and multinational exploration of the politics of sport that examines the intersections of sports and politics — writ both large and small. A second goal, far more difficult to achieve, is to encourage all of us to think about politics, and sports, in new and different ways. The political-economy, political culture, and the political sociology of sport, as well as the many and varied intersections of politics and sport in various corners of the globe will be the subject of our collective deliberations.

During this semester we shall also consider indirectly a number of other themes and questions. In no particular order, but interspersed throughout the course, we shall consider the role of sport in the social and political imaginary, the political (or “non-political”) status of top-flight professional athletes, the role of sport in collective and individual memory and the political consequences of this, and the globalization of sport. Although most of our attention will be focused on football (soccer) and baseball, other sports will certainly be welcomed both in our discussions and as sources of possible term paper topics.

**B. Course Requirements:**

There will be two lectures each week and it is expected that students will attend. “Lecture” should not imply that your questions, comments, and observations are out of order. Far from it. Within the limits imposed by a large class, time, and the necessity of completing the course outline, student participation is actively encouraged for the instructor values dialogue more than monologue. It is thus essential that students keep up with the reading and appear in lecture ready to share their questions, thoughts, and observations.

To facilitate a friendly and comfortable learning environment for all, recording devices of any sort will be permitted only with the instructor’s consent. In addition, and with the same goal in mind, all cell phones, pagers, and other such devices should be turned off during our class sessions. Students wishing to use laptop computers to take notes may do so, but please observe the following simple rules of etiquette: a) be sure your sound is off at the beginning of class; b) please stay focused on the course: surfing, gaming, or checking out the Facebook status of your friends is distracting to those around you; and c) during certain periods laptops may be prohibited (during exams or films, for example), so please respect these times.

There will be a mid-term examination on Wednesday, 16 October 2013 as well as a two-hour final examination on Saturday, 21 December 2013 starting at 10:05 a.m. (Please note well that since you have been alerted to this bit of university scheduling on day one of the semester, and since it has been readily available on the web since last spring, requests to take the final at alternative times because you have scored tickets for the Packers game against Pittsburgh on the following day or because of your own winter break travel arrangements will not fall on sympathetic ears.)

In addition, undergraduates will submit a 2,500 word (roughly 10 typewritten pages) term paper dealing with a contemporary aspect of the comparative or international dimensions of sport. Graduate students (as well as undergraduate honors students) should submit a lengthier, more
theoretically focused, paper of 5,000 words (or 20 typewritten pages). Honors students should treat the requirement of a lengthier paper as the “default” option. Other possibilities exist for fulfilling the honors requirement exist and the instructor will be happy to discuss them with you. All papers are due on Wednesday, 27 November 2013, but will be welcomed earlier. Late papers are a serious “no-no,” and will be penalized severely.

All students should also submit a one-page, typewritten statement of the proposed topic which tentatively indicates some of the sources to be consulted. These paper proposals are due no later than Wednesday, 9 October 2013, but will also be welcomed earlier. Consultations with the instructor will then be arranged for all students desiring, or needing, them. All term paper topics must be approved in this way. Although these paper proposals will not be graded, students failing to submit them will not receive a passing grade. Similarly, all required work must be submitted to be eligible to receive a passing grade. (Students affiliated with the McBurney Center are warmly and strongly encouraged to see the instructor as soon as possible if they are going to need any sort of alternate arrangements.)

Finally, students should use their university e-mail addresses so that they will be able to receive and post messages of interest pertaining to the subject matter of the course. The list address for this course is: polisci616-1-f13@lists.wisc.edu.

C. Grading Criteria:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-term</th>
<th>30%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
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Where possible, the instructor will reward exceptional cases of sustained, consistent, and intelligent class participation. Borderline cases will also be determined on the basis of class participation.

D. Readings:

The following books will be used extensively. In theory, the University Book Store and the reserve reading room of the College Library in Helen C. White Hall should have copies available. They are also all available online from various vendors. Please note: it is required that you read these books, not that you buy them.

PS 616/Comparative Politics of Sport/Syllabus/4


In the course outline which follows, some readings are required (*); others are recommended (#) for those wishing to pursue a subject further. Required books readings should be on three-hour reserve in the College Library at Helen C. White Hall. In addition, all required articles may be accessed both through Learn@UW and the following web link: [web]. (Throughout the remainder of this syllabus this will be abbreviated as [web].) Some of the recommended articles may also be accessed through other indicated links or directly through MadCat. You may need to access these from a UW email or web address, but the relevant journal articles should then be accessible. To facilitate easy access, I will send electronic copies of this syllabus (in WordPerfect, Word, Adobe pdf, and html) to the classlist. This syllabus will also be accessible through [web] and Learn@UW.

E. Course Outline:

1–Organization and Introduction 4 September 2013


## 2—Basic Structures, 1: Initial Concerns


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3–Basic Structures, 2: Individual Lives & International Structures

18 September 2013


Junwei Yu, “China’s Foreign Policy in Sport: The Primacy of National Security and Territorial Integrity Concerning the Taiwan Question,” *China Quarterly* 194 (June 2008): 294-308.


## 5–Football’s Political Side

2 October 2013


6–Nation, Race, Class, 1

***1-PAGE PAPER PROPOSALS DUE: WEDNESDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2013***


#Brian R. Sala, John T. Scott and James F. Spriggs, “The Cold War on Ice: Constructivism and the Politics of Olympic Figure Skating Judging,” *Perspectives on Politics* 5:1 (March 2007):17-29. [web]


7– Analytic Interlude, 1 16 October 2013

***MID-TERM EXAMINATION: WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2013***

8 – Nation, Race, Class, 2 23 October 2013 *Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsman, eds., Africa’s World Cup, 1-199.


#John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, Soccer Culture, National Identity, and the USA World Cup (London: Routledge, 1994).


### 9–Case Studies, 1  
30 October 2013

*Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsman, eds., *Africa’s World Cup*, 200-234.


#Alex Bellos, *Futebol: Soccer, the Brazilian Way* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2002).


### 10–Case Studies, 2  
6 November 2013


**11–Case Studies, 3**


#Peter Alegi, “‘A Nation to be Reckoned with’: The Politics of World Cup Stadium Construction in Cape Town and Durban, South Africa,” *African Studies* 67:3 (December 2008): 397-422. [web]


**12–Gender and Participation, 1**

*Welch Suggs, *A Place on the Team*, 1-104.


#Sarah K. Fields, *Female Gladiators: Gender, Law, and Contact Sport in America* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

**13–Analytic Interlude, 2**

27 November 2013

***TERM PAPER DUE: WEDNESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2013***

**Thanksgiving Break**

**14–Gender and Participation, 2**

4 December 2013

*Welch Suggs, *A Place on the Team*, 105-239.


**15–Final Thoughts**

14 December 2013


#Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

***FINAL EXAMINATION:***

***SATURDAY, 21 DECEMBER 2013, 10:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m., LOCATION: T.B.A.***