

University of Florida
Department of Political Science/Center for Latin American Studies
Spring 2024

Carlos A. Suárez Carrasquillo, Ph.D.
Grinter Hall 331
Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00-2:30, and by appointment.
casuarez@ufl.edu
(352) 273-4724

Politics of Sports and Stadiums (POS 4931/LAS 4935)

Course Description

This class will address how sports and stadiums are frequently intertwined political forces. The course will address issues such as the public funding of private stadiums, bidding for Olympic Games, and gentrification in the name of sports. The class will also examine how cities, identity, and politics are significant to sports.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will be able to understand how government interact with sports, and the dynamics of power found in sports. In addition, students will be able to assess the predominant role that stadiums and sports have as one of the sites where these political forces interact. And finally, students will learn to think critically, write concisely, and to use textual evidence as part of their writing and class discussions.

About the Syllabus

Based on the composition of the class, our progress discussing these issues, elements beyond our control, and student needs, this syllabus is flexible and may change. Throughout the semester, you will be notified of any changes that might emerge. During the first day of class the professor will read and explain this syllabus at length. It is the student's responsibility to understand the requirements for this class and asking all the appropriate questions about this document to the professor. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalogue.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance>.

Readings

The assigned texts are required and available at the UF Bookstore. It will be our source of discussion and used extensively. In addition, during the course the professor will offer required readings that will be available on our Canvas page identified by a C. This syllabus is a living document, and in case of changes in the readings students will be properly notified.

Class Texts

Alan Bairner, John Kelly and Jung Woo Lee (eds.) (2017) *Routledge Handbook of Sports and Politics*. New York: Routledge.

John Gold and Margaret Gold. (2016) *Olympic Cities*. New York: Routledge

Texts for papers

Richard Gruneau (2017). *Sport and Modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Andrew Zimbalist (2015). *Circus Maximus*. Washington DC: Brookings Institute.

Writing Requirements and Grade

The grade will be based on a first short paper (20 points), a mid-term examination (20 points), second short paper (20 points), reaction papers (10 points), second examination (20 points), attendance (5 points), participation (5 points).

Reaction Papers (10 points)

Class members will be asked to submit via Canvas 490-500 words, single spaced- reaction paper every Thursday before class (unless told otherwise by the professor). The reaction paper should not be a summary of the readings, but instead it should: *ask probing questions, propose what might come next, compare or contrast this reading or concepts to another paper or concepts we have discussed in class, highlight important implications of the work for understanding Politics of Sports and Stadiums*. The rubric and specific details will be made available on Canvas. The grade scale for this assignment is 0 points for papers that were not submitted, 1 point for a satisfactory submission and 2 points for a remarkable submission. The professor will randomly grade six weeks, and out of those six reactions papers the five papers with the best grades will be used to calculate your grade. Papers that are not submitted through Canvas will be penalized. Please familiarize yourself with Canvas.

Two Four Page Papers (20 + 20= 40 points)

Students will read one of the books (see above) and address the question offered by the professor. This four-page, double-spaced paper should have a total of 980-1,000 words. The assignment will rely only on the selected book as a source.

Midterm Exam (20 points)

The mid-term will be held during class hours. Blue books will be required and the student is expected to complete the exam during the exam period.

Second Exam (20 points)

The second exam will be due at the end of the semester. The format of the exam will be announced in a timely fashion during the semester.

Participation (5 points)

Students are expected to attend and be active components of the class and discussion. It is expected that by the end of the semester all students have participated by offering quality contributions. The rubric for participation will be posted on our Canvas page. If you do not feel comfortable by participating in class feel free to send me an email with your thoughts to casuarez@ufl.edu.

Attendance (5 points)

The professor will take attendance using Canvas. Students are therefore allowed three absences from days of class without penalty. Four absences will see a three-point penalty out of five points. Five or more absences will lead to 0 points for the attendance grade. A student who leaves the class before it is over will not be considered as present in terms of attendance. Written evidence will be required to justify absences. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of their number of absences during the semester. If a student has any questions about

their attendance on a particular day, this issue should be brought up in writing no later than the following class. Students that are late will be marked as such, and three recorded late arrivals will be counted as one absence.

Grade scale

A	94 and above
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
E	59 and below

The Canvas grade book will be updated as class assignments are graded. Please note that the grade book does not include the grades for Participation and Attendance.

On Timeliness

Students are expected to turn in their assigned work on time through Canvas, not email. If a student is not able to turn in their work on time through Canvas they will have offer written evidence in order to justify the tardiness. If said evidence is not produced one letter grade will be deducted per day after due date.

Academic Honesty

An important component in academic work is recognizing one's work as well as others. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are not allowed. **Any violations of the academic honesty policy will be vigorously pursued. All students are expected to adhere scrupulously to the University policy concerning academic honesty.** In order to respect this principle students are expected to abide by the Academic Honesty Policy. A copy of the Academic Honesty Policy can be found in the following link, <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>. It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the policy. Following these guidelines will assure that original academic work will be recognized and celebrated.

Concerns with a Grade

In the case that a student disagrees with a grade that concern should be presented in writing. This statement should be handed in writing the next class day after receiving your grade. The merits of the concern will be evaluated taking into consideration how deeply the student is thinking about the subject at hand, and whether or not this student can provide textual evidence to justify their claim. After careful evaluation, I will notify the student about my decision and adjust the grade accordingly if applicable.

Incompletes

Students who have not completed the required class work will only be evaluated by the work that was turned in by the day it was due. Incompletes will only be awarded under exceptional circumstances. Incompletes will be given when students comply with the following conditions, (1) notifying the professor two weeks prior to the last day of class, (2) providing written evidence for the medical condition, or situation that has prompted the student to request an incomplete. The student and professor should agree upon a proper arrangement on how the missing work will be submitted. The student will have the following semester as the time period to complete the missing work; failure to do so will result in an E.

Accommodations

Testing accommodations and other needs will be addressed for students with proper documentation. Please make sure to inform me of these needs in writing during the first week of class. Retroactive accommodations will not be considered. In case of questions about Disability Resource Center feel free to contact them at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Classroom interaction

Respect is always required. Textual evidence is crucial when engaging in intelligent academic debates. Please make use of this tool when elaborating your arguments in the classroom. Refrain from comments that are not related to class discussion. Unauthorized video or audio recording of the class is not allowed. The use of cell phones is prohibited; laptops will be allowed until disruptive to the class. The topics we discuss in this course may be controversial and may touch upon deeply-held positions or beliefs held by you or your classmates. While I want to encourage open discussion, I also encourage you to consider how your interventions affect others. How we say something is often even more important than what we say; if you are struggling with how to articulate your questions or reactions to the readings please inform the professor.

Course evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

I. Introduction (1/8)

Review course syllabus.

II. Thinking about Sports and Politics (1/10-1/12)

Reading: Handbook, *Chapters 1 and 2*.

Questions for discussion: How has the talk of governmentality impacted sports. How can we link sports and policy?

III. Elected/Unelected Officials and Stadiums (1/17-1/22)

Reading: Roger Abrams. *Hardball in City Hall*. C

Questions for discussion: How recent is the interaction between sports and politics in the United States? How does the dynamic play out at the municipal level?

Reading: Joshua Sapatichne. *Rhetoric and Strategy in Stadium Development Politics*. C
Questions for discussion: How do different groups rhetorically engage the debate over stadiums? Can the framing of the debate impact the eventual outcome?

Reading: Frey, *How the Smallest Market in Professional Sports had the Easiest Financial Journey*. C

Questions for discussion: What makes the experience of Lambeau Field different from any other? What types of lessons could be learned?

IV. Sports and Political Ideology (1/24-2/5)

Reading: Handbook. *Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8*.

Questions for discussion: What are some of the main characteristics of these diverse political ideologies and sports? What are some of the challenges?

First Paper Topic Distributed (1/31)

Reading: Brentin, *From the Concept*. C

Questions for discussion: How did ideology influenced the project of the New Man? How was sports crucial to the project of the New Man?

V. Olympic Games (2/7-2/28)

Reading: Olympics Cities. *Chapters 2, 3, 5*.

Questions for discussion: What are some of the main characteristics of the Summer/Winter/Paralympic Games? What are some of the challenges?

Reading: Olympic Cities. *Chapter 6*.

Questions for discussion: What are the commercial forces that impact Olympic Cities? How has that changed throughout the years?

First Paper Due (2/14)

Reading: Olympic Cities. *Chapter 7*.

Questions for discussion: Who are the main actors when it comes to promoting an Olympic City? What are the main selling points that cities use in order to promote a particular candidacy?

Reading: Handbook, *Chapters 33, 34, 36 and 37*.

Questions for discussion: What are the main arguments that have been developed against the idea of the Olympic Games? What kind of evidence have our readings offered?

Reading: Boykoff and Gaffney, *The Tokyo 2020 games*. C

Questions for discussion: How has the Tokyo 2020 games helped to shape the author's contention? How does late capitalism connect to their argument?

Mid Term (3/1)

VI. Sports, Late Capitalism, and Branding (3/4-3/22)

Reading: Handbook. *Chapters 19, 20, 23, and 29.*

Questions for discussion: What are the commercial forces that impact Olympic Cities? How has that changed throughout the years?

Reading: Olympic Cities, Ch.11.

Questions for discussion: Why is tourism such an important piece to the Olympic City experience?

Reading: Palvarini and Tosi. *Globalisation, Stadiums, and the Consumerist City.* C

Questions for Discussion: How can neoliberalism influence the construction of new stadiums? What are some of the values that are present behind these constructions?

VII. Race, Gender, and Politics (3/25-4/10)

Reading: Handbook, *Chapters 12, 26, 27 and 28.*

Questions for discussion: Are there any commonalities in these readings when it comes to identity? What are they?

Reading: Ehrlich, *With name, image, and likeness.* C

Questions for discussion: How has the issue of image and likeness changed the landscape of American college sports?

Reading: Lesch, *State Politics and gender diversity.* C

Questions for discussion: How have states intervened in sports? Why is gender one of the most frequent sites for stated intervention?

Second Paper Prompt will be distributed (3/29)

Reading: Flores, *Public Attitudes Towards Transgender Participation in Sports.* C

Questions for discussion: What is the view that the public has towards transgender individuals participating in sports?

Reading: Harris, *The politics of exclusion, US transgender athletes.* C

Questions for discussion: How have different organization have taken steps to keep members of the transgender community out of organized sports? What are some of the arguments that have been made to justify the exclusion?

Second Paper Due (4/12)

VIII. Sports as political contestation (4/12-4/22)

Reading: Handbook, *Chapters 30 and 31.*

Questions for discussion: Why is sports a frequent site for protest? Why are sports ultimately framed as apolitical?

Reading: Dubinsky, *Clashes of Culture.* C

Questions for discussion: What is sportwashing? How was Qatar 2022 an important site for the author's argument?

Reading: Cashmore, *The New Politics of Sport*. C

Questions for discussion: What is the separation of politics and sports? Do the authors understand that sports and politics should be separate?

Reading: Burroughs, *Stick to Sports*. C

Questions for discussion: Why is there a growing sentiment in some elements of society that athletes should “stick to sports”? What lessons can we gather from the notion that talking politics is problematic?

Second Exam TBA