

Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Siena

Course Code / Title: (WGS3220) Global Perspectives on Gender & Sport

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Women's and Gender Studies / Sports Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites / Requirements: None

Description

This course examines female athletes from a global perspective, comparing and contrasting their experiences, and placing them in historical perspective. Among the topics considered are an examination of the pros and cons of Chinese sports schools; an exploration of the post-apartheid athletic landscape of South Africa; and a discussion of what it means to be female, and how you prove that before, during, and after competition. Closer to "home" for the summer will be a look at Italy's relationship with its female athletes, and particularly the gendered nature of the Palio.

Objectives

Through their participation in this course, students:

- Explore the experiences of female athletes through a historical examination of readings and documentaries.
- Gain an understanding of the issues of gender, race, class, and sexuality, and compare how these issues differ around the world.
- Engage in dialogue centered on defining the complexities of gender and sexuality and examine the voices that are historically excluded in the discussion on gender and sport.
- Improve their ability to critically examine current sociological, historical, and feminist thinking about gender and sexuality
- Examine the meaning of intersectionality as a form of scholarship and how this theory contributes to understanding gender and oppression in sport.
- Reflect on our own role in systemic oppression and gender-based oppression.
- Gain a better appreciation for the advantages and disadvantages that gender expectations produce for both sportsmen and sportswomen.

Course Requirements

Participation and Preparation: As outlined in the CET Attendance Policy, attendance and active participation in all course activities is an essential part of the learning process. This includes not only partaking in discussion during class time, but also arriving to class prepared, having read all assigned materials.

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Reading Responses Journal: A weekly 300-word journal response to the readings is collected at random times throughout the term. This journal will also ask you to make outside connections to other countries and how their sportswomen deal with issues of access to training, gender verification testing and other topics we explore throughout the course.

Reading Reaction Papers: In-class reaction papers during lecture require students to consider a particular question and craft a response about their personal reactions to class readings and lectures.

Exams: The format for both the midterm and the final exam is the same, with the final longer in length.

Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Participation: 20%
- Reading Response Journal: 20%
- Reading Reaction Papers: 15%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 25%

Readings

Articles

- Ayub, Awista. *Kabul Girls Soccer Club: A Dream, Eight Girls, and a Journey Home*. New York: Hyperion, 2009. Excerpts: 3-43.
- Capranica, Laura and Aversa, Fabrizio, "Italian Television Sport Coverage During the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games: A Gender Perspective." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* V. 37, Nos. 3-4 (2002). 337-349.
- "Caster Semenya Loses Appeal for Equal Treatment." Human Rights Watch (May 1, 2019). <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/05/01/caster-semenya-loses-appeal-equal-treatment>
- Dong, Jinxia, "The 'Long March' of Women and Sport in Mainland China: Revolution, resistance and resilience," Hargreaves, Jennifer and Anderson, Eric, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Sport, Gender and Society*. NY: Routledge, 2014. Chapter 9: 87-96.
- Filipov, David, "For Some in Sochi's Gay Community, Attitudes Trump Laws." *The Boston Globe* (February 8, 2014). <https://www.bostonglobe.com/sports/2014/02/08/russian-gay-community-concerned-about-attitudes-more-than-laws/kTnazK2A5Q9NlhbsN30CO/story.html>
- Gerrard, David F., "Playing foreign policy games: States, drugs and other Olympian vices." *Sport in Society* V. 11, No. 4 (July 2008). 459-466. ISSN 1743-0437 print/ISSN 1743-0445 online
- Hargreaves, Jennifer. *Heroines of Sport: The Politics of Difference and Identity*. NY: Routledge, 2000. Chapter 3: The Muslim female heroic: shorts or veils? 46-77.
- Hargreaves, Jennifer. *Heroines of Sport: The Politics of Difference and Identity*. NY: Routledge, 2000. Chapter 5: Sporting lesbians: heroic symbols of sexual liberation. 129-173.
- Kane, Madeline, "Afghanistan's Only Female Marathon Runner Is Racing to Keep Women's Sport

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- Alive." *Outside* (August 5, 2016). <https://www.outsideonline.com/2100721/afghanistans-only-female-marathon-runner-racing-keep-womens-sport-alive>
- Knijnik, Jorge Dorfman and Souza, Juliana Sturmer Soares, "Brazilian women in the sports: a case study." *Journal of Human Sport & Exercise* V. 6, No. 1 (2011). 12-26.
doi: 10.4100/jhse.2011.61.02
- Lenskyj, Helen, "Sex, Gender, Sport, Politics: Russia and the West," *Sexual Diversity and the Sochi 2014 Olympics: No More Rainbows*. NY: Palgrave Macmillian (2014). Chapter 3: 40-59.
doi: 10.1057/9781137399762.0005
- Levy, Ariel, "Either/Or: Sports, Sex and the Case of Caster Semenya." *The New Yorker* (November 30, 2009). <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/11/30/eitheror>
- Magdalinski, Tara, "Sports History and East German National Identity." *Peace Review* V. 11, No. 4 (1999). 539-545.
doi: 1040-2659/99/040539-07
- Moro, Attilio, "What Italy Can Learn from Its Women's Soccer Team." *Consortium News* (July 2, 2019). <https://consortiumnews.com/2019/07/02/what-italy-can-learn-from-its-womens-soccer-team/>
- Nordland, Rod, "Afghan Women, Eager to Play, Are Relegated to the Sidelines." *The New York Times* (April 26, 2016). <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/27/world/asia/afghanistan-women-sports.html>
- Orgeret, Kristin Skare, "The unexpected body: From Sara Baartman to Caster Semenya." *Journal of African Media Studies* V. 8, No. 3 (2016). 281-294. doi:
https://doi.org/10.1386/jams.8.3.281_1
- Rubio, Katia, "The Participation of Women in Brazilian Olympic Sport," Hargreaves, Jennifer and Anderson, Eric, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Sport, Gender and Society*. NY: Routledge, 2014. Chapter 14: 129-138.
- Saner, Emine, "'I'll proudly fight for women and Afghanistan': Sadaf Rahimi is an unlikely Olympian with a powerful sense of purpose." *The Guardian* (March 11, 2012).
<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2012/mar/11/sadaf-rahimi-afghanistan-woman-boxer>
- Taylor, Stephanie, "How Misogyny Affects Soccer in Italy." *Girls Soccer Network* (May 10, 2018).
<https://girlssoccernetwork.com/news/world/soccer-lifestyle-misogyny-in-italy/>
- Tobey, Elizabeth, "The *Palio* Banner and the Visual Culture of Horse Racing in Renaissance Italy." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* V. 28, Nos. 8-9 (May-June 2011). 1269-1282. doi: 10.1080/09523367.2011.567777.
- Wu, Ping, "From 'Iron Girl' to 'Sexy Goddess': An Analysis of the Chinese Media." Markula, Pirkko, ed., *Olympic Women and the Media: International Perspectives*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. 70-86.

Books

Hartmann-Tews, Ilse and Gertrud Pfister. *Sport and Women: Social Issues in International Perspective*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Additional Resources

Films

Secrets of the Dead: Doping for Gold. Directed by Alison Rooper. London: 3BM Television, 2008.

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The Boxing Girls of Kabul. Directed by Ariel Nasr. Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 2012.
Too Fast To Be a Woman?: The Story of Caster Semanya. Directed by Max Ginnane. London: Rise Films, 2011.

Outline of Course Content

Topic 1 – Introduction

- The Western context
- *Sport and Women* chapters 1, 3, 5, and 10
- Questions to consider: How has the history of western countries such as England, France, and the United States influenced (or not) the development of sport in other countries, especially in terms of gender relations?

Topic 2 – South Africa

- Sexuality
- *Sport and Women* chapter 9, Levy, Orgeret
- *Too Fast to be a Woman?*
- Questions to Consider: How did sex verification testing evolve for sportswomen? What are the types of tests used, have they changed over time, and who gets to decide? When did this all begin and why does it continue? Are ALL sportswomen affected equally by the policy of sex verification?

Topic 3 – Afghanistan

- Olympic aspirations
- Hargreaves (Ch. 3), Kane, Saner, Ayub
- *The Boxing Girls of Kabul*
- Questions to Consider: How do Western notions of a veiled woman influence our concept (stereotype?) of the Muslim woman? Is the Muslim sportswoman an oxymoron? How long have Muslim sportswomen competed in organized sport, and are the obstacles they face unique to their religion and place? What kind of access to they have to positions of power to change sport in their countries, and how much change do they seek?

Topic 4 – China

- Sports schools
- *Sport and Women* chapter 15, Wu, Dong
- Questions to Consider: How have sports schools evolved to represent the history and values of China? How do sports schools advantage Chinese athletes over their competition. What are the disadvantages, and are these outweighed by the benefits of the system? What is the future of the system, and what are the athletes' perspectives?

Topic 5 – Italy

- The Palio and the pitch
- Taylor, Moro, Tobey, Capranica and Aversa
- Questions to Consider: How has the Palio influenced outsiders' views of sports in Siena and in Italy more broadly? What are the gendered aspects of the Palio and what kinds of

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connections can we make between this notable sporting event and other athletic competitions in Italy? What are the most important concerns facing Italian sportswomen, and how have these changed (or not) over time?

Topic 6 – Russia

- Homophobia
- Hargreaves (Ch. 5), Filipov, Lenskyj
- Questions to Consider: How is sexual diversity viewed throughout the globe, and how does it affect the access of LGBTQ+ athletes to participate? In what ways did the Sochi Olympic Games prompt consideration by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to honor diversity and be more inclusive? Has there been a commitment on behalf of all international sports organizations to creating an accepting environment for all LGBTQ+ athletes, coaches and administrators?

Topic 7 – East Germany

- Performance enhancing drugs
- *Sport and Women* chapter 4, Gerrard, Magdalinski
- *Doping for Gold*
- Questions to Consider: The use of Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs) dates back to the ancient Olympic Games. Did the ancient Greeks seek to regulate the use of PEDs? Has there been a sustained commitment to ban them from competition? Are some PEDs “better” than others? Given the extent of the usage, and the cost of testing, should PEDs be legalized?

Topic 8 – Brazil

- Media representations
- *Sport and Women* chapter 12, Knijnik and Souza, Rubio
- Questions to Consider: What are the dominant messages that the media conveys about sportswomen and how does this help/hinder female athletes’ quest for equality in sport? How do we view media success for sportswomen – column inches, the type of coverage, female sportswriters, female media moguls? What are the most pressing issues facing female athletes as they look to convey a message of empowerment? Have these changed over time?