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ENGL151-13, First Year Writing Seminar: Sports and Society, Spring 2013

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FYWS 151: Sports and Society (013)

Spring 2013

Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:15

Room: Palmer 211

Instructor: Dr. Keith Corson

Email: corsonk@rhodes.edu

Office: Palmer 309A

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30-4:30, Thursdays 3:30-5:30, or by appointment

Communication

I strongly encourage students to utilize office hours to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your writing, the course material, or any other related topics. Email should be reserved for brief questions or to inform me of absences in advance. Questions about grading will not be answered via email. If you have any concerns about your grade please utilize office hours. Please allow 24-48 hours for email responses.

Course Description

Few enterprises are as prone to cliché as professional sports, where postgame interviews largely function as exercises in banality. (Is it really possible to give 110% or to do anything other than play one game at a time?) One of the most persistent clichés regarding professional athletes is that they are “lucky enough to get paid to play a child’s game.” Problematic on a number of levels, this understanding tends to obscure the fact that sports have been responsible for transforming everything from mass media and fashion to academia and urban development. This course will move beyond simplistic rhetoric by critically engaging the contradictions and complexities of our cultural engagement with amateur and professional athletics. Locating a growing divide between spectator and participant, the writing exercises in this course will challenge students to think critically about the ways in which social values are articulated through the fan’s gaze. Using a diverse set of readings as a point of entry we will explore aspects of race, gender, class, nation, labor, and the business of sports.

Required Material

Robert E. Wsahington and David Karen. (eds.) *Sport, Power, and Society: Institutions and Practices: A Reader*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2010. ISBN: 9780813344874

Guide to Effective Paper Writing. Rhodes College Writing Center

Additional readings will be available via email attachment.

Goals

As per the guidelines for all first-year writing seminars at Rhodes, by the end of the semester students should be able to:

1. Determine important questions about a topic or a text on their own.
2. Analyze a writing task and develop a strategy to fulfill it, considering the rhetorical situation and the audience.
3. Assess fairly the arguments of others and develop a critical/analytical response to a written text.
4. Plan and organize a coherent, well-supported argument with a clear thesis.
5. Support the thesis with unified paragraphs that are clearly related and substantially developed. Develop a polished, rational, evidenced argument.
6. Distinguish between kinds of evidence and select evidence that is relevant, sufficiently detailed, and substantial.
7. Summarize, extrapolate, and synthesize material from a variety of sources, giving adequate and accurate documentation.
8. Demonstrate sensitivity to tone, diction, syntax, and figurative language.
9. Express complex ideas in clear and effective prose that has been carefully edited and proofread.
10. Assess their own drafts (drawing on audience feedback when appropriate) and reconceive, restructure, or significantly modify their own arguments.

Assignments/Grades

Grading:

93-100% A	73-76% C
90-92% A-	70-72% C-
87-89% B+	67-69% D+
83-86% B	63-66% D
80-82% B-	60-62% D-
77-79% C+	0-59% F

“Incomplete” grades are reserved for serious emergencies only and must be formally applied for and approved by the instructor beforehand.

Grade Breakdown

Attendance/Participation.....	10%
Daily Writing.....	20%
Papers 1-4.....	70%

Attendance/Participation

Attendance and participation are required elements of this course. Students are expected to arrive on time, stay for the entire class period, and actively engage in the discussion and activities. All absences that are not properly documented or approved by the instructor in advance will be considered unexcused. Being late to the class or leaving early will count as ½ of an absence. A fourth unexcused absence will result in the drop of a full letter grade (e.g. an A- becomes a B-), with each additional absence resulting in the drop of an additional letter in the final semester grade. Students with perfect

attendance (including no late arrivals or early exits) will have 3% added to their final semester grade.

Short responses

At the end of each class you will be given a prompt for a brief writing assignment (between 50 and 300 words). These responses will vary in form and intent. For example, one day's response may focus on the content of an assigned reading, while another may ask the student to perform an exercise using research tools. Short responses are due at the end of every seminar meeting in hard copy. Students may abstain from submitting any three (3) responses of their choosing, but keep in mind that there will be no make up opportunities (including responses missed for documented absences), so choose your days off wisely. Late responses will not be accepted.

Papers 1-4

The primary assignments in this course will consist of four separate papers. Below are brief descriptions to give you a rough idea of what you can expect. I will provide individual handouts with a detailed overview of the scope, subject, and approach for each assignment, so be sure to get a copy if for some reason you miss class on the day they are distributed. Also keep in mind that papers are expected to be original material written exclusively for this course. Papers written for other courses may not be submitted for credit. The exact grade breakdown for each paper – including drafts, workshop responses, presentations, and revised final paper – will be included with each assignment handout.

Paper 1 (10%)

Topic: College Athletics

1,000-1,250 words

Paper 2 (15%)

Topic: *ESPN 30 for 30*: Rhetorical Strategies in Sports Documentaries

1,250-1,500 words

Paper 3 (15%)

Topic: Spectatorship, Fandom, and the Consumption of Sports

1,500-2,000 words

Paper 4 (30%)

Open Topic Research Paper

3,000-3,500 words

*This paper will also require a formal in-class presentation, which will be factored into your grade.

*Absolutely no late papers accepted for the final revised draft

Late Papers

Because the approach to these papers is cumulative, with each step essential to the next in the writing process, late papers will be accepted with appropriate penalties. If for some

reason you cannot hand in a paper on time you may submit the paper late, with each late day resulting in the subtraction of 1% from your total semester grade (i.e. a first draft or revised paper that is three days late will lead to a deduction of 3% from your final semester grade). Please be advised that technological issues such as computer crashes, loss of electricity, or printer problems are not acceptable excuses for late work. Be sure to plan ahead to ensure yourself every opportunity to succeed in the course.

Formatting for Hard Copies

To ensure clarity and a sense of uniformity which foregrounds your writing and ideas I have instituted ten aspects of formatting for all papers and responses handed in via hard copy. Each guideline carries with it a 5% grade deduction if it is not followed, so be sure to take extra care and format your paper correctly. Papers **MUST** meet the following guidelines:

1. Typewritten
2. Printed legibly in **BLACK** ink
3. Stapled in the upper left corner if over one page
4. Double-spaced, with no additional spacing between paragraphs
5. Standard margins
6. Times New Roman font
7. 12 point font size
8. Title on first page (**NO** cover page)
9. Include page numbers throughout
10. The first page must include the student's name, course number, instructor's name, and date at the top of the page.

Rhodes Honor System

Please keep in mind the pledge that you signed upon entering the Rhodes community and apply these guidelines in and out of the classroom. The Honor System agreement reads as follows:

- Honor Code: "As a member of the Rhodes community, I pledge I will not lie, cheat, or steal, and that I will report any such violation that I may witness."
- Social Regulations: "As a member of the Rhodes community, I pledge to respect my fellow students, faculty, staff and their property. I will treat others as I would be treated and their property as I would my own."
- Rhodes Commitment to Diversity: "As a member of the Rhodes community, I pledge to help create a community where diversity is valued and welcomed. To this end I will not engage in, nor will I tolerate, harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, color, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and national or ethnic origin."

Note on Plagiarism

Not all forms of academic dishonesty are intentional, so keep in mind that plagiarism is not solely a matter of intent. Using the ideas of others without properly crediting the source is considered plagiarism. We will be working with the ideas of a number of authors, scholars, cultural critics, and filmmakers (etc.) in this course. Part of your responsibility as a scholar is to properly cite the ideas of others. Plagiarism is a form of

academic dishonesty and may lead to serious repercussions, including a failing grade for the course. Please refer to the student handbook for the university's policies relating to academic integrity. If you have any questions about how to cite the work of others, or are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, please be sure to talk with the instructor or seek guidance from a reputable source (Writing Fellows, Rhodes' *Guide to Effective Paper Writing*, MLA Handbook, etc.).

Writing Center

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the Writing Center at Rhodes, which is located in Room 122 in Barrett Library. For further information you can call the Writing Center directly at (901) 843-3393 or visit their webpage at <http://www.rhodes.edu/writingcenter/>

Learning Accommodations

Students with documented disabilities, learning differences, observation of religious holidays, or any special needs should talk to the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary accommodations.

Class Schedule

Please be advised that while the following schedule is intended to remain intact, the dates, quantity, and order of assignments and readings may be changed at the instructor's discretion. Additional short readings will be assigned throughout the semester.

Sport, Power, and Society is abbreviated below as *SPS*

All other readings will be provided by the instructor via email

1. Thursday 1/10

Introduction.

2. Tuesday 1/15

Readings due: *SPS*. (xiii-xx)

- Taylor Branch. "The Shame of College Sports." *Atlantic*. October 2011.

3. Thursday 1/17

Readings due: *SPS*. (139-157)

First Draft Paper 1 Due

4. Tuesday 1/22

Readings due: *SPS*. (158-175)

Workshop

5. Thursday 1/24

Readings due: *SPS*. (176-199)

Workshop

6. Tuesday 1/29

Readings due: *SPS*. (200-208)

7. Thursday 1/31

Readings due:

Revised Paper 1 Due

8. Tuesday 2/5

Readings due: *SPS*. (1-19)

9. Thursday 2/7

Readings due: *SPS*. (20-33)

10. Tuesday 2/12

Readings due: *SPS*. (34-47)

First Draft Paper 2 Due

11. Thursday 2/14
Readings due: *SPS.* (277-293)
Small Group Peer Editing

12. Tuesday 2/19
Readings due: *SPS.* (294-312)

13. Thursday 2/21
Readings due: *SPS.* (313-342)
Revised Paper 2 Due

14. Tuesday 2/26
Readings due: TBA

15. Thursday 2/28
Readings due: TBA

16. Tuesday 3/5
Readings due: *SPS.* (47-94)

17. Thursday 3/7
Readings due: *SPS.* (95-129)

Tuesday 3/12
SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES

Thursday 3/14
SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES

18. Tuesday 3/19
Readings due: *SPS.* (130-138)
Workshop

19. Thursday 3/21
Readings due: *SPS.* (209-236)
Workshop

20. Tuesday 3/26
Readings due: *SPS.* (237-262)

21. Thursday 3/28
Readings due: *SPS.* (263-276)
Revised Paper 3 Due

22. Tuesday 4/2
Readings due: *SPS.* (343-361)
Paper 4 Proposal Due
23. Thursday 4/4
Readings due: *SPS.* (364-392)
24. Tuesday 4/9
Readings due: *SPS.* (393-421)
25. Thursday 4/11
Readings due: *SPS.* (422-448)
First Draft Paper 4 Due
26. Tuesday 4/16
Readings due: TBA
Small Group Peer Editing
27. Thursday 4/18
Readings due: TBA
Presentations
28. Tuesday 4/23
Readings due: TBA
Presentations
29. Thursday 4/25
Readings due: TBA
Presentations
30. Tuesday 4/30
Revised Paper 4 Due