

**PHI 4930: PHILOSOPHY OF SPORT
SYLLABUS (AKA YOUR COURSE PLAYBOOK!!)**

Prof: David W. Cheely

Spring Semester, 2012, Section 006

Tuesday/Thursday 3:30-4:45 PM, SOC 128

Course Objectives:

This course serves as both an introduction to and a comprehensive study of the philosophy of sport, particularly with regard to team sports. It is designed to examine the most significant questions that have arisen within the discipline of philosophy with regard to sport. In particular, we will focus upon various ethical issues that arise within the games that we play and we will focus upon the function of games in human life. Also, we will discuss the metaphysics of sport as well as certain aesthetic features of sport that help define and shape the way human beings express themselves in and through competition. This is a philosophy course, such that we will employ the methodologies of philosophy in order to examine sport as a theme of inquiry. It is my belief that sport functions as a reflection of who we are, thus to examine the manner in which we play is to examine the manner in which we exist. We will do this through the art of philosophic inquiry, not through bombastic conjectures or passionate homerism.

Required Text:

McNamee, Mike; The Ethics of Sports: A Reader; paperback, 1st edition; Routledge, 2010; ISBN-13: 978-0415478618

Additional Readings and Course Materials will be available as pdf files via Blackboard

Course Requirements:

There will be anywhere from 5-15 pages of reading assigned per class meeting. **All Readings must be completed PRIOR to class!!** One cannot hope to contribute anything positive to discussion if one has not read the material prior to class. Reading philosophical writing is difficult and time consuming – it is a good idea to underline main points in an argument and to make notes in the margin of your book. **Make a note of anything you do not understand so that we can go over it during class.** We will often read passages from the text during class and then discuss them, thus it is imperative that **you bring your book to each class meeting.**

Because this is an upper-level class, more writing will be assigned. Much of the scholarly work done in philosophy involves the written word; thus, it is imperative that an upper-level philosophy course produce students with good writing skills. We *will* improve your writing.

There will be two writing assignments of 6-8 pages in length based upon readings chosen by me. In these papers, you will be expected to follow as closely as is possible to the writing guidelines that are posted on Blackboard. I will provide you with further details through paper assignment handouts in advance. Paper assignments must be turned in on the day due through e-mail attachment in a standard word document format. I require digital submission of your work so that I can provide you with feedback through Word's 'track changes' function. Late papers will be penalized according to my discretion.

There will also be two exams during the course. The mid-term will consist of a section of multiple choice and short answer questions along with one essay question (*you will **not** need a bluebook*). The final exam will be structured similarly to the mid-term; however, there will be two essay questions on the final. The

essay questions for each respective exam will be arbitrarily chosen on the day of the exam from a group of 5 questions that you will receive in advance.

Attendance is required! Philosophy is an interactive discipline, as such, participation in class discussion/lecture is vital to *doing* philosophy. Part of your grade will be based upon class participation, which includes showing up to class ***on time***, and participating in class activities/discussion. There will be a sign-in sheet for each class day, so make sure you sign it each day. Missing class ***will*** adversely affect your grade. There is no such thing as an excused absence – ***all*** absences will be considered unexcused. I will give you two free absences before I deduct any points from your grade. I don't want to hear your finely crafted narratives about why you could not attend class. The only exception to this rule is for those with extenuating circumstances that result in a number of consecutive absences, in which case, I will discuss with you (in person) the reason for your absences and determine whether or not I will credit you for those missed classes.

I will also give 12 unscheduled “reading quizzes” throughout the semester – these will be very simple 2-question quizzes that you will easily get full credit on provided you show up and you have read for that day's class. These quizzes cannot be “made up.”

Tentative Class Schedule:

The bulk of this course is designed and structured around a group of key topics within the ethics of sports that are still hotly debated. For this reason, students who have taken an introduction to ethics course will have a distinct advantage; however, a familiarity with the philosophical roots of the various ethical theories is not necessary to perform well in this course. In short, if you know nothing of Kant, you will be fine, as I will teach you all the Kant necessary for the course. Also, this course does not pre-suppose any particular knowledge of sport or sports history, though such knowledge will be helpful in discussion. In short, if you know nothing about Michael Vick, you will be fine, as I will fill you in on the relevant aspects of the careers of the various athletes, including Vick, whom we will discuss, *as we discuss them* during the course. In addition to our focus on the ethics of sports, we will also discuss the metaphysics of sport at the start of the semester and the aesthetics of sport at the end of the semester.

1 January 10 Course Introduction

The Metaphysics of Sport

2 January 12 “Construction of a definition” – Bernard Suits (pp. 17-28)

3 January 17 “Nature and significance of play as a cultural phenomenon” – Johan Huizinga (pp. 29-32), Excerpt from *Truth and Method* – Hans-Georg Gadamer
(Blackboard)

4 January 19 “Sport: an Historical Phenomenology” – Anthony Skillen (pp. 77-92)

Sports Ethics: Fair Play

5 January 24 “The ends of the sports contest” – William Fraleigh (pp. 106-115)

6 January 26 “Fairness in sport: an ideal and its consequences” – Sigmund Loland (pp. 116-124)

7 January 31 “The “hand of God”?” – Claudio Tamburrini (pp. 132-144)

- 8 February 2 “In the zone: Heidegger and sport” – Paul Standish (**Blackboard**)
- 9 February 7 “On sportsmanship and “running up the score” – Nicholas Dixon (**Blackboard**),
Handout for 1st Paper Assignment

Sports Ethics: The Ethics of Enhancement

- 10 February 9 “The athletes’ viewpoint” – Verner Møller (pp. 160-168)
- 11 February 14 “Bionic athletes” – Michael Sandel (pp. 208-213)
- 12 February 16 “Whose Prometheus? Transhumanism, biotechnology and the moral topography of sports medicine” – Mike McNamee (pp. 214-224),
- 13 February 21 “Drug testing of college athletes: the issues” – Albrecht, Anderson, and McKeag (**Blackboard**), *1st Paper Due*
- 14 February 23 Review for Mid-Term
- 15 February 28 ***Mid-Term Exam***

Sports Ethics: Equality and Difference

- 16 March 1 “Title IX and gender equality” – Jan Boxill (**Blackboard**)
- 17 March 6 “On the definition of ‘woman’ in the sport context” – Angela Schneider (pp. 264-275)
- 18 March 8 “Sport and Stereotype: from role model to Muhammad Ali” – Mike Marqusee (**Blackboard**)
- 19 March 13 **No Class – Spring Break**
- 20 March 15 **No Class – Spring Break**

Sports Ethics: Moral Growth and Development

- 21 March 20 “What moral educational significance has physical education? A question in need of disambiguation” – David Carr (pp. 306-315)
- 22 March 22 “Sport, ethos and education” – Jim Parry (pp. 316-326)
- 23 March 27 “Athletic virtue: between East and West” – Heather Reid (pp. 340-346)
- 24 March 29 “Get the Message?” – Rick Reilly (**Blackboard**)

Sports Ethics: Commercialism and Corruption

- 25 April 3 “The moral case against contemporary American sports” – William Morgan (pp. 382-403)
- 26 April 5 “Moral philosophy out on the track: what might be done?” – Walsh and Giulianotti (pp. 404-412)
- 27 April 10 “Sport and the systematic infliction of pain: a case study of state-sponsored mandatory doping in East Germany” – Giseler Spitzer (pp. 413-425)

28	April 12	Excerpt from <i>Leftist Theories of Sport: A Critique and Reconstruction</i> – William Morgan (Blackboard), <i>Handout for 2nd paper</i>
<i>The Aesthetics of Sport</i>		
29	April 17	“Kant goes skydiving; understanding the extreme by way of the sublime” – Jesús Ilundáin-Agurruza (pp. 467-480)
30	April 19	“Sacred Places” – Raimond Gaita (pp. 493-500)
31	April 24	“Sport is not Art” – David Best (Blackboard), <i>2nd paper due</i>
32	April 26	Review for Final Exam
33	May 3	<i>Final Exam (Same Room 3-5 pm)</i>

Grading:

Grades will be determined based upon a 500 point scale.

Papers (2)	80 points each	160 total points
Mid Term Exam		100 total points
Final Exam		150 total points
Class Participation/Attendance/Quizzes		50 total points*
Reading Quizzes	4 points each	40 total points**

* I reserve the right to adjust final grades by 1/3 up or 1/3 down, *after* points are tallied for perfect attendance, or poor attendance, respectively.

** There will be 12 quizzes, thus it is possible to earn 48 of the 40 total points ‘possible’. Basically, you will receive a ‘free pass’ on 2 quizzes before you start losing points. The quiz questions will be extremely simple questions designed to gauge whether or not you read the assigned reading for the day.

Blackboard:

This course will use Blackboard for several purposes. Many of the readings are *only* located on Blackboard (this was done to save you textbook costs); for these readings, please print them off and bring them to class with you for the day noted on this syllabus. Blackboard will also contain my ***grading rubric*** for papers, advice for writing philosophy papers, my ***structural guidelines*** that are specifically designed for the 2 papers you will write in this class, my ***lecture notes*** (you are *not required* to take notes in class – I am more interested in hearing you speak, rather than watching you scribble; however, you are welcome to take notes, or to tape lectures, in order to facilitate your learning of the material). I will also post new information, such as syllabus changes and e-mail announcements, on Blackboard; so, it is important that you get into the habit of checking our class site on Blackboard on a regular basis.

Cell Phones:

Turn them off!!! If you have a good ring tone, then I will be less annoyed; however, I may answer your phone call and attempt to embarrass you in front of your peers.

Contact Information:

David W. Cheely

Office: FAO 225. Office Hours: *Tuesday and Thursday* 2:00-3:00 PM and by appointment. Phone (for emergency use only please): 810-429-5457 (cell). E-Mail (I welcome any and all e-mail correspondence – you are my students, thus you are allowed to bother me with pretty much anything that is course-related): dcheely@mail.usf.edu.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Students with Disabilities Services in order to receive academic accommodations. SDS encourages students to notify instructors of accommodation needs at least 5 business days prior to needing the accommodation. A letter from SDS must accompany this request.

Plagiarism:

I will discuss the proper citation methods for this class before assigning the first paper. *If you are caught intentionally plagiarizing on your paper, or cheating on your exam(s), you will receive and F in this course.* Non-intentional plagiarism will result in significant grading penalties, depending upon the circumstances. The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows instructors to submit student assignments to be checked for plagiarism. I reserve the right to submit assignments to this detection system. Assignments are compared automatically with a huge database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. I receive a report showing exactly how a student's paper was plagiarized.

More Scary Stuff (in the event of a Swine Flu outbreak, a Mad Cow Epidemic, or Global Thermal Nuclear War!):

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Blackboard, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It's the responsibility of the student to monitor Blackboard site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, College, and department websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.

Concluding Remarks:

Because this course involves ethical debates within sport, the topics we will examine tend to involve strong emotional and intellectual attachments. It is often very difficult to discuss PED's or Title IX in a calm, congenial manner; however, I ask that each of you come to class with an open, tolerant mind, so that our class can retain a permissive, rather than a dismissive, environment. Your peers will disagree with you. You will need to learn to be tolerant and respectful of your peers' beliefs and opinions, otherwise communication will break down and no philosophical ground will be gained.

USF' philosophy department website is located at the following address:

<http://www.cas.usf.edu/philosophy/>

There are several links on this site that can help you with philosophy-related issues, as well as links to the philosophy undergraduate program, including Dr. Doug Jesseph, the undergraduate program advisor for philosophy. I encourage all with an interest in philosophy to join the undergraduate philosophy club for the chance to discuss philosophy in a social setting with your peers.