

Sports Ventures and Social Impact, LGST 299: Syllabus

Spring 2010

Wednesdays 3-6

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Office hours M & W, 1-2:30 and by appointment

*“Some see private enterprise as a predatory target to be shot, others as a cow to be milked, but few are those who see it as a sturdy horse pulling the wagon.”- Winston Churchill*

*“The time is always right to do what is right.” - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

The concept of social responsibility in business may be more dominant in sports than any other business sector. From the impact of hosting global sporting events, building stadiums and arenas to midnight basketball programs designed to keep kids out of trouble, sports is involved at many levels. This course will focus primarily on the concept of sport and social impact and explore how this concept has evolved over the past few years since the United Nations declared 2005 International Year of Sport and Physical Education. Students will be required to develop or fully critique existing sport and social impact programs, write critical biographies of related activists or select other related topics. Student presentations of those projects will be a major part of the student grade. The course will feature guest speakers from entities as diverse as Peace Players International, FC Harlem, Right to Play, Grassroot Soccer and the Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative. The broad question throughout the course will be: How can sports be used to have a positive impact on society? Students will focus on sport broadly in search of the great idea, great delivery and what has sustainable impact.

Format: Discussion, interactive projects, presentations, and guest speakers.

## Readings

### *Required*

Roger Levermore and Aaron Beacom, Sport and International Development (2009)

C.L.R James, Beyond a Boundary (1963)

John Carlin, Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game that Made the Nation (2008)

“Bulk Pack (BP)” (on study.net) of Readings

## *Recommended*

Franklin Foer, How Soccer Explains the World (2004)

Warren St. John, Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, An American Town (2009)

Kenneth L. Shropshire, Being Sugar Ray: America's Greatest Boxer and First Celebrity Athlete (2007)

## **Grading**

### *Approximate values:*

Essays: 25% (You must complete and 5 of the assigned essays. Even if you do not write a given essay you must come to class prepared to discuss the topic and your viewpoint. 5 points each)

Research Assignments: 10%

Research Project: 35%

Midterm: 20%

Class Participation: 10%

## **Schedule**

All readings and assignments must be completed for discussion in the class assigned.

CLASS 1, January 13

*Introduction: How is sport and social impact defined?*

Readings: Levermore, xiii-26; Russell, "Metal Futures," FT.com (BP); visit: [grassrootsoccer.org](http://grassrootsoccer.org);  
Robinson, I Never Had it Made, Introduction and excerpts (BP); Gregory, "On the Field and Off the Streets," Philadelphia Inquirer (BP)

Guest: Brendan Tuohey, Executive Director, PeacePlayers International

CLASS 2, January 20

*Youth sports programs: How can sports best be used to have social impact on children?*

Readings: Levermore, Ch.8; Introduction and "Want Value for Education Dollars? Try Music," in Gerdy, Sports in School: The Future of an Institution (BP); "Dorsey High's Football Program is About More than Athletes," L.A. Times (BP)

Visit: Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy: <http://www.agassiprep.org/>; Carver Academy: <http://www.thecarveracademy.org/>; NFL Play 60: <http://www.nflrush.com/play60/parents/>; San Diego Padres FriarFit: <http://sandiego.padres.mlb.com/sd/community/friarfit.jsp>

Essay #1: What does the phrase "the power of sports" mean to you? (2-3 pages).

Guests: Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative

CLASS 3, January 27

*Global Events: What is the role of mega-sporting events in delivering or hindering social impact?*

Readings: Levermore, Chapter 4; Lenskyj, The Best Olympics Ever? (selected pages), (BP); John Carlin, Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game that Made the Nation; Colchester, "A French City Cheers the London Olympics," Wall Street Journal (BP); Financial Times section on "The Business African Football: South Africa" (BP)

Essay #2: Was Obama wise to go to Copenhagen in support of the Chicago Olympic bid? (2-3 pages).

Guest: Derrick Heggans, A U.S. High School Basketball National Championship

NO CLASS, February 3

CLASS 4, February 10

*Sports and Radical Societal Change: What sports related events illustrate the role sports can play on social issues?*

Readings: Beyond a Boundary (all); Shropshire, In Black and White, (selected pages) (BP); Ariel Levy, "Either/Or: Sports Sex and the case of Caster Semenya." *The New Yorker* (BP)

Essay #3: Compare athlete activism today with that of the 1960s. (2-3 pages)

Video: "Fields of Fire: Sports in the 1960s"

CLASS 5, February 17

*Stadiums and Arenas: Are public investments in sports facilities appropriate?*

Readings: Shropshire, The Sports Franchise Game Chapters 1-2 (BP); Marc Edelman, "Sports and the City: How to Curb Professional Sports Teams' Demands for Public Stadiums."

Research Assignment #1: Visit youth sports or other sport and social impact organization website.

Choose three and prepare a brief (10 minutes total) presentation on the ones you find most interesting. Don't be concerned about how large or well known they are. The goal is to get a broader view of the types of programs that currently exist in the marketplace. Highlight: an overview of what their goal is, how they seek to achieve that goal, and your critique of it. Highlight particularly anything that you think is truly unique about what they are seeking to accomplish. Come prepared to present. Students will be called on to present their findings over the next several weeks.

CLASS 6, February 24

MIDTERM EXAM

CLASS 7, March 3

*Can sport be used successfully for a transformation to societal excellence?*

"The Richest Tribe in Africa: Africa's North West Province, 1965-1999;"(BP) "RBN Annual Review"(BP)

Visit: University of Technology, Jamaica: <http://www.utech.edu.jm/Sports/aboutus.htm>  
and Royal Bafokeng Holdings: [http://www.bafokengholdings.com/b/inv\\_spo.asp](http://www.bafokengholdings.com/b/inv_spo.asp)  
Videos: "Hoop Dreams" and "Sports across the nation"

SPRING BREAK March 5-15

NO CLASS March 17

CLASS 8, March 24

*Case Study: Jim Ellis, PDR*

Video: "Pride"

Readings: Phil Hoose, "A New Pool of Talent," *New York Times Magazine*, April 29, 1990 (BP)

Research Assignment #2: What team, league or individual broad based fitness programs can you find that have programs similar to those in CLASS 2? Just come prepared to discuss examples you have found.

Essay #4: Does Kgosì have the right idea? If yes, why, if not, what should he be doing? (3-5 pages).

CLASS 9, March 31

*The Role of Celebrity: how should athletes use celebrity to have a social impact?*

Readings: Shropshire, *Being Sugar Ray* (BP); Boyd, "Mo' Money, Mo' Problems" in *Basketball Jones*, (BP)

Visit: The Admiral Capital Group, <http://www.admiralcapitalgroup.com/>

Essay #5: Is there an athlete celebrity obligation to have a social impact? Provide an illustration of who is having an impact? Who should be? Why?

Guest Speaker: Dan Basichis (tentative)

CLASS 10, April 7

*Social Impact and Sports Manufacturing*

Readings: "Sole Mates, Looking for 'Profit with a Purpose' from Socially Conscious Footwear Companies," *Knowledge@Wharton* (BP); DeTienne & Lewis, "The Pragmatic and Ethical Barriers to Corporate Social Responsibility disclosure: The Nike Case, *Journal of Business Ethics*," (BP)

*Research Project Presentations*

CLASS 11, April 14

*Research Project Presentations*

CLASS 12, April 21

## *Research Project Presentations*

Essay #6: Power of Sport Redux. Revisit and revise your first essay. (3-5 pages)

*Conclusion*

Readings: Levermore, Chapter 11

Recommended: How Soccer Explains the World

Final Semester Projects Due

### **Semester Projects**

Either:

- 1) Develop an impactful sports program;
- 2) Critique and improve an existing program;
- 3) A critical biography on the sports and social impact life aspects of either:
  - a. Arthur Ashe;
  - b. Jim Brown;
  - c. Dennis Brutus;
  - d. Billie Jean King;
  - e. Richard Lapchick; or,
  - f. Another approved person of your choice
- 4) Write a research paper covering any related approved topic in depth

Final projects should be approximately 10 pages, double spaced. Use whatever style manual you choose for footnotes and other references. The method must be such that the reader can find the reference. You should be equally strong in both your descriptions and your own viewpoint, solutions and/or innovations.

*“Do not go where a path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”- Ralph Waldo Emerson*