ARCADIA UNIVERSITY
THE COLLEGE OF GLOBAL STUDIES

Arcadia in Barcelona

Arcadia University Center for Catalan, Spanish & Mediterranean Studies

BARC ISCS 310
Sport, Culture and Society in Europe: The Case of Spain

Credits: 3
Prerequisite: none

COURSE OUTLINE:

The main aim of this innovative course is to analyse the key role that sport plays within contemporary European culture with particular emphasis on the socio-political use of sport in Spain from the Francoist dictatorship through to today. The relations between politics, media and sport are considered as a useful combination for understanding wider social and political themes in Spain and Western Europe such as nationalism, violence and racism as well as universal issues such as internationalism, identity, or globalization.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Once the course is completed, students should be able to:

- defend the thesis that the study of sport and society is an academically viable route for understanding sociological aspects of Spanish and European popular culture
- to cross-examine the fundamental differences between the sports-media-culture matrix in Spain, Europe and the US
- to extrapolate from professional sporting activity, an analytic discourse regarding values and wider debates in contemporary society
- to analyse the role of sport in the construction of modern European countries, particularly Spain

INSTRUCTIONAL FORMAT:

Given the very nature of the subject matter, this course will adopt a hands-on approach according to which theoretical, instructor-led sessions will be complemented by case studies, open debates, field trips, guest speakers and constant cross-referencing between Europe and the US. Students will be expected to participate actively in every session. Interaction and genuine student input is absolutely necessary in this course given the constant US comparisons which serve to help understand the European case studies. All readings from the course textbook must be completed prior to each session.

ASSESSMENT:

25% Final Exam
25% Mid-Term Exam
20% Research Project (prior instructor approval)
10% Student class presentation
10% 2 spot quizzes (5% x 2) based on course reading
10% Class participation (assistance at all field trips + class readings + class debates…)

REQUIRED READING

JARVIE, Grant. Sport, Culture & Society. An Introduction. (Routledge, 2006)
ISBN: 0415306477 Cost: To Be Determined

COURSE CONTENT (Brief Outline)

1. SPORT AND CULTURE IN SPAIN

-Introduction to concept of sport. Role of sport in modern society
-Sport and culture in Spain before 1939. Birth of sportsmen as cult heroes.
-"Bread and Circus": Sport and the Francoist dictatorship 1939-1975
-Spain's hottest sports story: the rivalry Real Madrid v FC Barcelona
-FC Barcelona and nationalism
-1975-2010: The construction of postfrancoist Spain seen through sport:
-1982 World Cup; the 1992 Olympic Games
-Media construction of postmodern Spanish sports stars: case studies of the "new Spaniards": Pau Gasol, Rafael Nadal, Fernando Alonso…

2. MEDIA, SPORT AND CULTURE

-Short history of sports journalism in Europe: UK, France, Italy, Spain.
-European sports dailies: L'Equipe, Gazzetta dello Sport.
-Spain as Europe's biggest sports media consumer: Madrid (AS, MARCA) vs Barcelona (MUNDO DEPORTIVO, SPORT)
-Sports Radio in the US and Europe
-Sport and Television: politics and culture through the screen in the US and Europe
-Sport and the Web: digital sports culture

3. DEBATES WITHIN CONTEMPORARY SPORTS STUDIES

-Media, Sport, Race & Racism
-Sport and violence: fandom v hooliganism
-Sport and gender. The invisibility of the female athlete. Sexual stereotyping.
-The business of modern sport. Marketing, branding, merchandising, sponsoring. The sportstar-brand. The "Gillette Champions". USA vs Europe sports-business complex.

-La Corrida: the on-going Spanish debate. Is bullfighting sport? Culture? Art?

FIELD TRIPS

-El Camp Nou: behind the scenes look at FC BARCELONA (Europe's biggest soccer stadium)
-The Olympic and Sports Museum in Montjuic
-El Monumental: Barcelona's bullring
-Trip to sports media organizations
-Press / guest passes to sports events (when coinciding with course) such as Barcelona Tennis Open, Formula 1 motor racing circuit, FC Barcelona…)
-Sports forums, exhibitions yet to be announced