

**Title: Sports and Society in Catalonia and Spain**

**Description:**

This course will examine various aspects of the relationship between sport and society in Spain, with a particular emphasis on sports with a long tradition in Catalonia. We will examine both the impact of sport on Spanish society and the influence of society on the practice of sport in Spain. The course begins with a consideration of general theoretical questions in the study of sport before moving on to an account of the historical development of sports in Spain in general and in Catalonia in particular. We also examine the reciprocal influences of sport violence, gender, race and ethnic and national identities in Spain.

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Total hours:** 45 hours

**Credits:** 3 credits

**Methodology:**

Lectures, field studies, class debates, group problem solving and analysis of audio-visual and press materials.

**Evaluation:**

Attendance to classes and field trips is mandatory; poor attendance will affect the final grade of the student as well as the everyday participation grade.

The final grade consists of four different parts: class participation, a midterm written exam, a final written exam, and a final project. The breakdown of grades is made up as follows:

20% Class participation (classroom interaction, field studies, journal, and attendance)

25% Midterm written exam

25% Final written exam

30% Final project (15% Written paper, 15% class presentation)

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are allowed THREE absences throughout the semester without penalty. Starting with the fourth absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

There are NO excused absences. If a student misses class because s/he is sick, that counts as one of the allowed absences. No excused absences and no excuses.

Quizzes, exams and participation points that are missed because of an absence cannot be recuperated.

**Class participation:**

Active class participation includes coming to class prepared, having read the material for that day, answering questions from the professor, asking questions and engaging in group activities. Students

are encouraged to express their opinions in class with the professor and the other students.

**Exams:**

Both the midterm and the final exams may contain a mix of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions aimed to test the students' full comprehension of facts and the ability to argue his/her opinions based on class material.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the semester students will be able to:

- 1 to recognise the role of sport in Spanish society;
- 2 analyse the historical development of sports in general, and Spanish and Catalan sports in particular, from a sociological perspective;
- 3 to assess the inter-related social, cultural, political and economic dimensions of contemporary sports;
- 4 to discuss and investigate controversial and conflictive issues in sports.

**Content**

<b>Session 1</b>
<u>Course presentation and description of the syllabus:</u> Introduction to the concept of sport and description of the factors contributing to its importance in society. Analysis of differences and similarities between European sports and sports in the U.S.

<b>Session 2</b>
<u>The origins and evolution of sport:</u> We will run through the history of sport from its earliest manifestations in ancient Egypt such as swimming, javelin and high jump or the former Persia with the practice of martial arts, and more.

<b>Session 3</b>
<u>The treatment of sport in Spanish media:</u> Clasification of sports broadcasts by the media in Spain, whether through press, radio or television. We will examine the impact that messages have based on who delivers them how it is delivered.

<b>Session 4</b>
<u>A new science: The psychology of sport:</u> How can psychology affect the people who participate in sports? How does it affect the psyche of those who watch and follow sports even if they don't participate? Is it really possible to be "in the zone."

<b>Session 5</b>
<u>Social function of sport:</u> Discussion of how sports can affect an entire populations' psyche from Roman times to today. Individual sports vs. group (team) sports.

<b>Session 6</b>
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**Football: a social phenomenon in Spain:**

Analysis of the greatest sport in the national media and history of Spain. We will go through the first football clubs, the major league soccer teams today in the country with an regional analysis of Spains' 17 autonomous regions.

**Session 7**

FC.Barcelona: history and relevance of a club.

A review and analysis of one of the most important European clubs, and its relevance in the Spanish and Catalan society. We cover questions such as why was F.C. Barça founded and how has its history reflected that of Catalonia.

**Session 8**

“La Masía” a project with sports benefits

“La Masía” is a football school located in the FC Barcelona installations. This school tries to create not just professional football players but persons as well, focusing on studies and personal values – it’s considered a social institution as much as a physical one.

**Session 9**

Basketball and its importance within Spanish sport:

Introduction to the history of a high-impact sport at national and analysis of its rules. We will discuss how basketball sits in Spanish society as a distant number two behind *fútbol*. We will review the trajectory of the Spanish basketball team and world scoring, and special mention to the Spanish player's career *Pau Gasol*.

**Session 10**

Tennis, a sport with growing success in Spanish society:

Introduction to the history of this sport and game features. We will go through the main Spanish players, with emphasis on women's tennis and analyse the role of Spanish tennis in the *Davis Cup* international tournament, *Roland Garros* and *Wimbledon*. Rafa Nadal as a national and international hero and his duel with the Swiss Roger Federer.

**Session 11**

Hooliganism. The radical supporters in Spanish sport

The term Hooliganism refers to unruly, aggressive and bullying behaviour associated with sports fans, particularly football supporters. The session will analyze this behaviour and its importance in Spanish sport.

**Session 12**

Athletics, the practice of an individual sport:

Introduction to the history of athletics (track and field)and its inclusion in the Spanish sports scene. We will make a classification and description of the different forms of the sport: sprinting, long runs middle distance, hurdles races, relay races, athletic jump, long jump, high jump, etc ... In-class debate of the difference between individual (individualistic) and team (collectivist) sports.

**Session 13**

Cycling, a sport deeply rooted in Spain:

Introduction to the history of cycling and its inclusion in the Spanish sports scene. There will be a classification and description of the different forms of the sport: road cycling, track cycling, and mountain biking and trial. In addition, we will look at the history of the Spanish Cycle Tour. We will analyse how a sport's popularity grows with the emergence of a "national hero" or an outstanding national athlete.

**Session 14**

Barça vs. Madrid. A rivalry beyond the sport

FC Barcelona and Real Madrid are, from the early years of the Spanish Football league, the most important and richest teams. Moreover, they are the two most important cities in the country and represent two different cultures. We will see why Barça is *mes que un club* and why the Barça-Madrid rivalry reaches well beyond the sport.

**Session 15**

Barcelona and the Olympic Spirit: XXV Olympic Games in Barcelona in 1992:

Barcelona's fight to host the Olympics and then the city's preparation for them. Around the major sporting events were held in facilities capital Barcelona and its province between July 25 and August 9, 1992, also including some competitions in other cities like Lerida and Gerona. Discussion of how the Olympics transformed the city.

**Session 16**

IX Paralympic Games in Barcelona 1992:

Closure of the Olympic Games on August 9 and the beginning of the ninth edition of the Paralympic Games that took place in Barcelona from 3 to 14 September and attended by 83 countries. We will go through the fifteen sports included in this competition: athletics, wheelchair basketball, football, judo, swimming, wheelchair tennis etc ...

**Session 17**

Visit the Olympic Museum and Sports:

We will try to explain to visitors the history of the Olympics and an overview of the sport. We will pay special attention to medals, sculptures, posters and paintings, placed in the room dedicated to *Juan Antonio Samaranch*, the main promoter of these games.

**Session 18**

Football World Cup. History and social relevance

The Football World Cup is probably the most prestigious tournament in the world and an event that paralyzes countries for some hours, days and weeks. The session will review a short history of this tournament and its social relevance internationally. Debate about why it hasn't caught on in the U.S. as it has in other nations.

**Session 19**

Trekking - a sport to enjoy nature:

Discussion about how Catalonia specifically has used trekking to build cohesion in its society. Explanation about skills, knowledge and abilities required to practice this sport. Introduction to other sports closely related to it like hiking, expeditions, mountain, climbing.

**Session 20**

Women and sports: a journey through the history.

Brief historical review in which we will discuss the representation of women in the world of sport, from ancient Rome to nowadays. Presentation of the most famous women athletes on the national scene.

**Session 21**

“La Corrida”, Bull fighting - a highly controversial sport

Bull fighting is a deeply rooted tradition in Spain that moves a huge amount of money and emotions. Despite that, it’s a controversial tradition that divides the Spanish society and opens a new question about the meaning of the Spanish traditions.

**Session 22**

The Basque Ball, a traditional sport of the Basque Country

Presentation of the foundations and rules of this original sport of the Basque Country and whose practice extends to other Spanish regions such as Navarra, La Rioja and the French Basque Country. We will also explain the different procedures and specialties.

**Session 23**

Castells, (human towers) a traditional practice in Catalonia

Presentation of a long tradition in Catalonia that involves a large group of men and women of all ages and it consists in building human towers of different heights and structures. Its character of competition and constant physical training required by its participants have led to consider Castells as a sport and recently awarded a world patrimony status by Unesco.

**Session 24**

Student presentations.

**Session 25**

Review.

**Session 26**

FINAL EXAM

**Required Readings:**

Burns, Jimmy. *Barça: A People’s Passion*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC; New edition (23 Mar 2000)

Foer, Franklin, *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*. Harper Publishing, 2005.

John Hooper, *The New Spaniards*, 2d. ed. (London: Penguin, 2006).

“The Origins and Evolution of Sport.” Tufts University.

The treatment of Sport in Spanish Media.

A New Science: The Psychology of Sport.

Social Function of Sport; Sport and Social Inclusion

*Fair Play: Its origins and meanings in Sport and Society*; Roland Renson

*Hooliganism. The radical supporters of a Spanish Sport*

Barça v. Madrid: The rivalry beyond El clásico. Mark Carter

Barcelona and Olympic Spirit: XXVth Olympic Games in Barcelona.

*Women in Sport, A journey through history*. Bobby Gee.

Film: La Pelota Vasca: The Basque Ball

Castellers, A Traditional Practice in Catalunya

F.C. Barcelona: history and relevance of the club. [www.fcbarcelona.com](http://www.fcbarcelona.com),