



Course Syllabus

HONR 300-TO-02-ST - Take Me Out to the Ballgame: The Narrative of Sport

Course Information

Course: HONR 300-TO-02-ST The Narrative of Sport

Number of Credits: 4

Delivery Mode: In Person, Blair 201

Course Schedule: Fall 2025, August 26 – December 4, T/Th, 12:30 – 2:00 PM

Faculty

Erin Hill, Blair 203; hille3@wittenberg.edu; 937.327.6420 (o)
Office Hours: M&W, 11:30 – 2:00; other times by appointment

Course Description

This course will examine the rhetoric and collective storytelling of sport – amateur, collegiate, and professional – on a global and local scale. Students will consider the personal, social, economic, historical, and political ramifications of these sport narratives. Course readings will come from a wide variety of genres, including nonfiction, fiction, and journalism. Attention will also be given to multimedia narratives including visual art, photography, documentary film, and podcasts. Writing Intensive.

Prerequisites: Admission to the university honors program.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, HONR 300S participants will be able to:

1. Identify and articulate the **historical context, development, and evolution** of sports writing in America.
2. Identify and articulate the **contributions of sports writers and athletes** to local, regional, and national **communities and social institutions**, both formal and informal.
3. Identify and analyze the **contributions of sports writers and athletes** to **social activism and social justice movements**.
4. Identify and analyze the **rhetorical effect of sports narratives**, both print and non-print.



5. Use technology to research, present, and lead conversations about **historical and current social, political, and economic contexts** of sports and sports writing.
6. Write for a variety of purposes using professional vocabulary and writing mechanics with minimal errors.

General Education Outcomes

This course supports students' achievement of the following general education outcomes:

L02-Students will write effectively, considering audience and purpose.

L10-Students will analyze problems, issues, or representations using knowledge, theories, and/or methods appropriate to the humanities.

Essential Questions

1. Who are platformed as the dominant storytellers about sports? How and why?
2. To what degree are athletes positioned and empowered to tell their own stories?
3. Where do overlaps exist between storytelling, activism, and social justice for athletes and fan communities?
4. To what degree do media sport narratives foster fanhood as a local, regional, and/or national social institution?
5. What effect(s) does that collective fanhood have on its communities?
6. Who/what has been historically excluded from sports narratives and why?
7. (Questions 7-10 will be generated collectively throughout the semester)
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



Required Textbooks and Materials

The Best American Sports Writing 2024. Jane McManus ed. Triumph Books.

Davidson, K.A. and Luther, J. (2020). *Loving Sports When They Don't Love You Back*:

Dilemmas of the Modern Fan. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Additional Course Materials will be posted to Moodle.

Methods of Instruction

This course will be practice-based and team-oriented. Full class discussion, student-led conversations, written work, reflection sessions, and an ongoing scaffolded independent research project will provide opportunity to demonstrate learning and thinking throughout the semester.

Course Assessments

Assessment	Point Total	Percentage of Final Grade	Course Outcomes	Gen Ed Outcomes
Intro Letter	10 pts	~1.6%	2, 6	2
Interview Series (3 + Reflection)	25 pts each, 100 total	~4.0% / ~16.1%	2, 5, 6	2, 10
Resource Review	10 pts	~1.6%	1-6	10
Discussion Preparation	5 pts each, 75 total	~1.0% / ~12.1%	1-3, 5	10
Discussion Contribution	10 pts each, 150 total	~1.6% / ~24.0%	1-4	10
Sports Narrative Analyses (3)	25 pts each 75 total	~4.0% / ~12.1%	1-5	2, 10
Creative Piece (Journalistic or Narrative) + Peer Review	25 pts	~4.0%	6	2
Independent Research Project (Scaffolded):	150 pts total	~24.0%	1-5	2, 10
+Research Project Proposal	10 points	~1.6%	5	2, 10
+Research Project Written Draft for Peer Review	20 points	~3.2%	1-5	2, 10
+Research Project Conversation	20 points	~3.2%	1-4	10
+Research Project Annotated References	20 points	~3.2%	5	2, 10
+Research Project Written Final Paper	50 points	~8.1%	1-5	2, 10
+Research Project Process Reflection	10 points	~1.6%	5	2
Exit Letter	25 pts	~4.0%		2, 10
Total	620 points	100%		



Grading Scale

The following grading scale will be used to compute the final course grade:

99-100 A+	88-89 B+	78-79 C+	68-69 D+
93-98 A	83-87 B	73-77 C	63-67 D
90-92 A-	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-
			59 ↓ F

Additional Meeting Times

While there are no outside required labs or meetings for this course, I am happy to help as needed during office hours or an appointment time that fits your schedule. Please see office hours schedule on p.1 of this document.

Statement on the Expectation of Work/Time Commitment

For each credit hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction, students are expected to engage in two hours of out of class course related work each week for approximately fifteen weeks. This four-credit hour course requires approximately eight hours per week of out of class work.

Course Outline, Schedule, and Due Dates

(see printed copy of calendar distributed in class if that's easier for you)

***HONR300-TO-02-ST Fall 2025 Class Calendar, v1, 8.26.25**

***Subject to change; sufficient notice will be given when changes are made**

BOLD = Read it (by 12:30 PM that day)

**** = Do it (by the listed time)**

***This course calendar will likely be adjusted as needed throughout the semester. See Moodle for most up to date calendar.**

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
1	8/26 Intros: People, Preferences, Expectations (yours) Sports Stories (individual) Rigor & The Honors Seminar Design	8/28 Intro continued: Procedures, Policies, Expectations (ours) Sports Stories (collective) Essential Questions (ongoing) **Intro Letter posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM

2	<p>9/2</p> <p>Resource Review Intro & Expectations Thinking About Genre Clinton Yates’ “Williamsport, Pennsylvania: Home to History and Hardball” (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #1 + Charts test run</p>	<p>9/4</p> <p>Interview Q & A Intro & Expectations Brian Moritz’s “The History of Sports Journalism,” Parts 1-3 & Jemele Hill’s “America Didn’t Need Sports After All” (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #2 + Prep Tool</p>
3	<p>9/9</p> <p>**Resource Reviews #1 & 2: _____ Narrative Analysis Intro & Expectations Luther & Davidson: Intro + C1&2 (p.1-46) **Discussion Circle #3 + Prep Tool</p>	<p>9/11</p> <p>**Resource Reviews #3 & 4: _____ Mark Gozonsky’s “Gritty All Day Long” (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #4 + Prep Tool **Interview Q & A #1 posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM</p>
4	<p>9/16</p> <p>**Resource Reviews #5 & 6: _____ Research Project Intro & Expectations Luther & Davidson: C3&4 (p.47-82) **Discussion Circle #5 + Prep Tool</p>	<p>9/18</p> <p>**Resource Reviews #7 & 8: _____ Thomas Boswell’s “On the Joy of Sports,” Clint Smith’s “The Near-Holy Experience of Watching Euro 2020,” and Ross Gay’s “Have I Even Told You Yet About the Courts I’ve Loved” (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #6 + Prep Tool **Narrative Analysis #1 posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM</p>
5	<p>9/23</p> <p>**Resource Reviews #9 & 10: _____ Luther & Davidson: C5&6 (p.83-116) **Discussion Circle #7 + Prep Tool</p>	<p>9/25</p> <p>**Resource Reviews #11-13: _____ Drew Goins’ “Sports Used to Lead Social Progress: Carl Nassib Shows It’s Now the Other Way Around” (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #8 + Prep Tool</p>
6	<p>9/30</p> <p>Creative Piece Intro & Expectations Luther & Davidson: C7&8 (p.117-156) **Discussion Circle #9 + Prep Tool</p>	<p>10/2</p> <p>Zach Helfand’s “Invasion of the Robot Umpires” (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #10 + Prep Tool **Research Project proposal posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM</p>
7	<p>10/7</p> <p>**Research Project Proposal Conferences & Lab Day</p>	<p>10/9</p> <p>**Research Project Proposal Conferences & Lab Day **Interview Q & A #2 submitted to Moodle by 11:59 PM</p>

8	10/14 FALL BREAK – NO CLASS	10/16 Off-Site Lab **Narrative Analysis #2 posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM
9 Adv. Wk. 1	10/21 Luther & Davidson: C9&10 (p.157-194) **Discussion Circle #11 + Prep Tool	10/23 **Creative Piece Peer Review
10 Adv. Wk. 2	10/28 Guest Speaker	10/30 Reading (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #12 + Prep Tool
11	11/4 Luther & Davidson: C11&12 (p.195-226) **Discussion Circle #13 + Prep Tool	11/6 Reading (see Moodle) **Discussion Circle #14 + Prep Tool **Interview Q & A #3 + Reflection posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM
12	11/11 Luther & Davidson: C13&14 + Conclusion (p.227-270) **Discussion Circle #15 + Prep Tool	11/13 **Research Project Paper Draft Peer Review
13	11/18 **Research Project Conversations 1-3	11/20 **Research Project Conversations 4-6
14	11/25 **Research Project Conversations 7-9	11/27 No Class – Thanksgiving Break
15	12/2 **Research Project Conversations 10-12	12/4 **Research Project Conversation 13 Last Day of Class Course Evals **Narrative Analysis #3 posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM **Exit Letter posted to Moodle by 11:59 PM

**** Revised Final Paper with Annotated References + Research Project Reflection Due Monday, 12/8/25, by Midnight***

***Early submissions happily accepted**



Course Policies

Attendance, Participation, Punctuality, and Presence

Our time is short and our work is important, as is your perspective and participation. Attendance will be documented for each class. Missing class **without letting me know ahead of time** will be considered an unexcused absence.

Participation and **Professionalism**: I look forward to your participation in class. "Professionalism" includes being prepared for class by reading the assigned material in order to fully participate in discussions, group work, and peer interactions. I trust interactions will be respectful, we will be open-minded to other points of view, and when we disagree, we will do so in civil, mature ways. Should we need to engage in online discussions and chats, please be especially thoughtful about how written words might be interpreted without facial expressions, gestures, and other non-verbal cues.

Punctuality is a professional responsibility expected and required in all fields. Ultimately, punctuality is a gesture of respect to the peers, students, and educators you work with. It is acknowledging that others' time is as important as yours. It's being fully **present** and paying attention as a form of respect and generosity.

Presence also extends to considerate use of our devices. If life circumstances dictate that you must be available to respond to text messages or take a call, please let me know before class begins, and please step out to do so. **Otherwise, I expect devices to remain away and out of sight.**

Writing Assignments

Unless otherwise stated, written assignments should be typed (Times New Roman, 10-12 pt. font, double spaced, in MLA format) and submitted via Word document to Moodle. Displaying a willingness to revise work as needed, collaborate in peer evaluations, and/or (virtually) visit the Writing Center beyond what is required are recommended.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free resource on campus for any writer working on any piece of writing at any stage of the writing process. You can talk with an advisor to brainstorm ideas, clarify arguments, develop evidence, polish prose, or double check citations. All writers need readers, and the Writing Center advisors are trained readers from a variety of disciplines. Visit the Center's [website](#) for more information. The Writing Center is located in the Thomas Library, and they offer virtual appointments as well.



Late Assignments

Life happens; keep me in the loop. **Communicate with me before you need an extension** and there will be no grade penalty. Without prior communication, assignments turned in after the established due date/time will receive a 10% grade deduction per day (100-point assignment would be reduced by 10 points per day; 70-point assignment would be reduced by 7 points per day, and so on).

Late work will receive significantly less feedback than work submitted on time.

Late work more than two weeks past the original due date will not be accepted.

Late work will not be accepted after the last day of class (12/5/25).

Chronically late submissions, tardy arrivals to class, device distraction, and/or frequent absences without communication will have an impact on your departmental dispositions.

Wittenberg Policy on Incompletes (per Registrar)

"The mark 'I' (Incomplete) is given only at the end of a semester in which course work has not been completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the control of the student. The mark of I must be removed no later than the end of the eighth week of the next semester or it automatically becomes an F or NC (No Credit). An Incomplete makes a student ineligible for Dean's List. Incompletes are only to be assigned if the student has completed the majority of the course work, and if the remaining course work has not been completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the control of the student. Students who have stopped participating and have not contacted faculty should be given whatever grade they have earned at this time."

Guidelines for Success

Moodle

Course materials such as handouts, daily power points, and useful links will be posted to Moodle each day after class. You are encouraged to access these materials as needed, especially if you are absent for any reason.

All grades will be entered on Moodle; please monitor your progress and let me know if you have questions or concerns. I do not discuss specific or individual grade issues during class time, but I am happy to talk with you during my office hours or at another time that is convenient; email me to make an appointment.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for Microsoft Office Suite, Moodle access, or printing capabilities should be resolved by visiting The Solution Center in Thomas Library or by emailing solution@wittenberg.edu



Communication (E-mail Procedures)

If you have questions about assignments or class procedures that are not answered by consulting our course materials or your peers, please reach out. My email work hours are generally 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM (M-F), and I will do my very best to respond to your message within 24 hours on business days. Emails should begin with a professional greeting and end with a professional closing, both of which include our **names** (mine and yours); thanks for your attention to this professional habit.

Diversity

I fully concur with the Education Department's commitment to promoting equitable and fair learning opportunities for all. We want to promote a positive learning environment based upon open communication and mutual respect. Any suggestions about how to further develop such an environment will be appreciated.

Title IX Statement

Wittenberg University policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, genetic information, disability and protected veteran status. Discrimination includes any form of unequal treatment such as denial of opportunities, harassment, and violence. Sex-based violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, dating/interpersonal violence, and sexual exploitation. If you experience discrimination, you are encouraged (but not required) to report the incident to a Title IX Coordinator, Dean of Students or Director of Human Resources. Learn more about your rights and options at <https://www.wittenberg.edu/student-life/student-development/title-ix-campus-notification>. You also may make an anonymous report online.

<https://www.wittenberg.edu/student-life/student-development/reporting-incidents-campus>

The Title IX Coordinator will seek to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the individuals involved in any report of alleged sexual misconduct or relationship violence to the extent possible and allowed by law. The Title IX Coordinator cannot guarantee confidentiality, however, and must evaluate any request for confidentiality in the context of the University's responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment. The following resources and support services offer confidential support:

Counseling Center: 937-327-7811

Health Center: 937-327-7811

University Pastors: 937-327-7411

Project Woman: 937-328-5308

24-Hour Rape Crisis Line: 1-800-634-9893

Womyn's Center: 937 327-7417



An Advocate is available to help the student consider her/his options, facilitate appropriate intervention, and provide information, support, and referral. The Advocate will accompany the student, if she/he desires, to medical treatment, to meet with university officials, and/or to meet with law enforcement authorities and legal representatives; will stress that academic assistance and other accommodations are available; and will ensure that follow-up contacts are made as appropriate.

Ethics and Integrity

The Honor Code applies to this class. You are expected to do your own original work. This includes refraining from using any AI (unless instructor directed) or self-plagiarism (submitting your own recycled work from any previous class, inside or outside the education department, at Witt or any other educational institution). I will do my own original work as well, including but not limited to lesson plans, feedback on your work, and recommendation letters. If confirmed by the instructor, academic dishonesty in connection with any course assignment will result in a failing grade for that assignment; and, in conjunction with department and honor council deliberation, failure for the course.

Accessibility and Providing Equal Access

Your learning in this course is important to me. I invite you to talk with me about ways to ensure your full participation in and access to this course. Please be aware that Wittenberg is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability, you need to [register with Accessibility Services](#) to receive academic accommodations. After you complete the registration process with Accessibility Services, please provide me with your academic accommodation memo so we may arrange a time to talk about your learning needs. Notification at the start of the term is essential to ensure timely facilitation of services as accommodations are not retroactive. If you have questions or would like more information about services for students with disabilities, please contact the Accessibility Services.

Accessibility Services

Location: COMPASS, Thomas Library

Email: accessibilityservices@wittenberg.edu

Phone: 937-327-7870

Syllabus Change Statement

Course instructors reserve the right to adjust this syllabus and content to meet the needs of students and to address course outcomes. In the event of substantive changes, students will be notified via an announcement in class or in Moodle.