UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA – SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY

KIN 364 – The Modern Olympics: Power, Politics and Performance

(previously KIN 383)

Tues / Thurs 2:00 to 3:30pm (Term 2, winter 2020)  January 12- April 13, 2021.

Location: online  CANVAS AND ZOOM

Instructor
Dr Patricia Vertinsky  patricia.vertinsky@ubc.ca


TA’s
Aishwarya Ramachandran  aishwarya.ramachandran@ubc.ca

Office Hours: By appointment using email and zoom. To be discussed in class.

Kimberley Ekstrand  kimberley.ekstrand@ubc.ca

Course Description

This course examines the Modern Olympic Games as they have emerged over the past century to become one of the most pervasive sporting festivals and mega events in the world. Olympic sport is a global, transnational and transcultural phenomenon well worth exploring from multiple perspectives and the Olympic Games are a fascinating target for analysis. Especially for kinesiology students they offer a glimpse into a world of contest and struggle by top level athletes, political intrigue and international contest around sport management, and medical, environmental and technological issues around sport participation.

During the semester, we will examine international competition and conflicts, organizational power struggles, gender, race and disability debates around access and eligibility including special attention to indigenous athletes and opportunities. We will discuss sites of corruption, Olympic symbols, and athletes’ successes as well as struggles, sex-testing, drugs and performance enhancement associated with various summer and winter Olympic Games.

In particular this year, we will pay special attention to the fortunes of the Olympics in the time of COVID-19 and see how pandemics have altered the lives of Olympic athletes, Olympic destination cities and the shifting contours of international sporting competition.
We will thus examine and assess the legacies of past Olympics while exploring new avenues for international sport and the promotion of new sports to enter the Olympic arena in the future. What can we learn from past Olympics and what will the Olympics of the future look like?

The course will take place online using Canvas and Zoom technologies. It will include a range of lectures, films, videos, visiting experts, student discussions, projects, and group and individual assignments. We will work carefully to manage the online course content and organization such that students can participate as fully as possible with the instructor, the TAs and each other. About 30% of the modules will be asynchronous.

Throughout the semester we will reflect critically upon past, current and future issues affecting the global role of the Olympics and its wide-ranging effects upon sport, culture, ethics, organizational politics, health and medicine, and the environment.

We hope that students can take away a deep understanding of the politics and management of the Olympic movement, the entanglement of issues around nationalism and global sport, a view into the complex issues pertaining to doping, performance enhancement and sex testing, sensitivity toward shifting race relations in elite sport, a better understanding of indigenous access and opportunity related to Olympic sport, and emerging issues as the Olympics move into the third decade of the 21st century.

Where and when will the next Olympics be? What sports will be on the agenda? Who will be eligible to participate? Who will protest and who will pay the costs of mounting an Olympics? What is the future of the Olympic Games?

**Land Acknowledgement**

UBC’s Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people who for millennia have passed on their culture, history and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

**University Policies**

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on [the UBC Senate website](#).

**Format and Procedures**
This class consists of two 80-minute classes per week which will all be held online. Classes include short lectures or talks, small and large group discussions, quizzes, guest presentations, media clips and tutorials.

Since this course places special emphasis on participation and discussion, attendance is very helpful for participating in group discussions, answering quizzes and generally engaging with the subject matter. We realize that international students in some time zones have difficulty participating in all classes and we have adjusted the subject matter accordingly, though attendance is highly recommended whenever possible.

We will start most classes with a brief informal discussion followed by a lecture / or pre-recorded lecture on the subject of the class. Students will then be able to engage in large and/or small group discussions and related projects led by the instructor and the TAs. Students are expected to read the assigned articles, listen to the lectures and/or watch the class ppts; carefully take notes, and where possible be ready to engage in conversation and feedback with peers and instructors.

EVALUATION
The course evaluation will consist of 4 specific categories:

Assessment #1  ATTENDANCE AND IN-CLASS QUIZZES – 10%
Throughout the semester, students should come to each synchronous class prepared to listen to and discuss lectures and the module’s readings. Opportunities for discussion will be provided in small and large groups, using padlet and/or other kinds of group discussions. Short quizzes will be given in randomly selected synchronous modules.

Assessment #2  REFLECTIONS ON READINGS-  30%
Students will write x2 reflections during the semester on specified dates, each weighted at 15%. A reflection should engage with a specific module and its lecture, associated reading/s and materials and class and group discussions (where appropriate) at a deeper level than just a summary of the material provided. In your reflection you might want to pull out a key idea, theme or concept that is of particular interest to you and your own background in focusing upon the module’s content and materials provided. Each reflection should be approximately 500 words (2 pages double spaced) and include your name, module title, and any outside references or materials used.
Reflection # 1 should be selected from any 1 of Modules 3,4,7,8, or 9 and turned in before Thursday Feb 11.
Reflection #2 should be selected from any 1 of Modules 11,12,14, 16, or 20 and turned in before March 30.
Due date – 1. End of Thursday, Feb 11, 2021.
2. End of Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Assessment #3  MIDTERM PROJECT – INCLUSIVITY AND THE OLYMPIC ATHLETE – 30%
Each student will be asked to select a lesser known and potentially interesting Olympic athlete (since the beginning of the modern Olympics in 1896 until now). This window of time allows
you to investigate a situation from long ago, or more recently, and use the class discussions we have had so far to give you a variety of ideas on what to include in your project. First provide a picture (if possible) and seek out interesting information about that athlete who either competed at an Olympics or was stopped from competing for various reason), his or her personal experiences or misfortunes, performance issues, sporting interests, background and training. You can use a wide range of materials, including class readings, related readings, on line sources, web sites – (be creative but be careful to use reliable sources!). You are expected to write a brief summary about the athlete you have selected, why you found this athlete to be particularly interesting and worthy of investigation, what this tells us – for example - about inclusivity ( or lack of ) in the Olympic organization; shifting national priorities; possible discrimination around race, gender, and ability; financial and/or training opportunities or problems; personal troubles or triumphs; and physical/athletic potential achieved or denied. The student should confirm who they are writing about with the TAs ahead of time (on or before Feb 9). The report should be about 4 pages long (approx. 1000 words, double spaced), not including pictures and references) . It should include a title, and appropriate citations in APA format.

Due date: end of Tuesday Feb 23 following reading week.

Assessment #4  FINAL - IN CLASS OPEN BOOK -WRITTEN EXAM 30%

The final exam will focus upon all the themes covered in class throughout the semester. It will be an open book exam, written on the last day of class from 2.05pm to 3.30pm and will consist of selecting 3 out of 6 questions covering material from the whole semester. Students will submit their written exam to Canvas by 3.30pm on this day. Questions about and the specific structure and requirements of the exam will be fully discussed throughout the semester including potential special arrangements for students in difficult time zones.

Due date:  April 8, 2021 at 3.30pm.

Course requirements

Third year standing or with the permission of the instructor (please send an email to patricia.vertinsky@ubc.ca to request special permission).

Policies and Expectations

Regular attendance online is helpful whenever possible for participating in our course activities. Students who are unavoidably absent because of disability or illness should report to their instructor or TA’s and where necessary submit supportive documentation to the Undergraduate advising office. Students also have the right to request academic concessions from the Undergraduate advising office.

We care about our students’ health and wellbeing and are open to listen to particular difficulties concerning health, access, and life in general.
Please see the special section on our course canvas about student health and wellbeing during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Students whose attendance or performance in this course may be severely affected by medical, emotional or other disabilities should consult with the instructor early in the term to discuss any special accommodations that might be needed in order to complete course requirements. Supportive documentation from either the disability resource center or a physician must be submitted to the Undergraduate advising office.

Learning objectives
At the end of this course students should have a good understanding of the modern Olympics from 1896 through to the present.

1. They should have obtained a deeper view of the nature of international competition and conflict around sporting performance; struggles related to gender and racial politics in international sports; understand some of the reasons for sites of corruption in Olympic management and leadership; recall the legacies of past Olympics and evaluate IOC promises for the future with new sports and new arenas.

2. Students should be able to discuss the material covered in this course as background to a deeper understanding of the shifting contours of international sporting competition at the modern Olympics.

Learning analytics
Learning analytics include the collection and analysis of data about learners to improve teaching and learning. this course will be using Canvas learning technology which will enable the instructor to capture data about your activity and provide information that can be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Copyright
All materials in this course (handouts, lecture slides, power-points, assessments, course readings etc are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor or licensed to be used in the course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline. The instructor does not permit students to record her classes.

Readings and Resources
All required readings are available on Library Course Reserve (available through Canvas) or from the TA’s when necessary. On Canvas there is also a variety of selected additional and optional readings and resources that are suggested for students to engage with according to their own research interests and background. Direct link to course reserve:
https://courses.library.ubc.ca/c.qs2nQk

COURSE SCHEDULE (Topics and readings)

WEEK 1:

Module 1. Tues Jan12, 2021. INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE
Introduction of instructor and TA’s and outline rules of engagement on-line using Zoom and Canvas. Review scope of course, learning objectives, requirements and evaluation procedures. Student questions and answers regarding assessments, procedures and evaluations.


**Video:** The Real Olympics: A History of the Ancient and Modern Games.

---

**WEEK 2:**

**Module 3. Tues, Jan 19, 2021. THE ANTHROPOLOGY GAMES AND SCIENTIFIC RACISM**


---


*They Came for the Children.* The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

---

**WEEK 3:**


*Chariots of Fire* is among the best movies concerning the modern Olympics. Two men, Harold Abrahams and Eric Liddell race for the gold in the 1924 Olympics. One runs for his faith, the other participates to leave anti – Semitic prejudice behind.
Students will watch the movie with the aim of understanding the roles of social class, masculinity (muscular Christianity), amateurism and anti-Semitism in the early years of the modern Olympic games.

**Video:** Chariots of Fire.

**Module 6. Thursday Jan 28, 2021. CLASS ANALYSIS OF CHARIOTS OF FIRE**

Small group ‘tutorial’ discussions around the issues of amateurism, masculinity (muscular Christianity) and anti-Semitism as manifested in Olympic issues across the 20th and into the 21st century.


---

**WEEK 4:**


Arnd Krüger, “Once the Olympics are through, we'll beat up the Jew: German Jewish Sport 1898-1938 and the Anti-Semitic Discourse,” *Journal of Sport History* 26, no.2 (1999): 353-375.


**Class Reading:** Kay Schiller and Christopher Young, “Introduction,” in *The 1972 Munich Olympics and the Making of Modern Germany* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 2011), 1-23.

**Video:** Munich

---

**WEEK 5:**


Small and large class tutorial/ discussions around former and current athlete activism and its effects upon the Olympics and sport more generally.

**Class Readings:**


---

**WEEK 6 READING WEEK FEB 15-19**

**WEEK 7:**


**Module 12. Thurs Feb 25, 2021. WOMEN DON’T HAVE THE SPEED OR STAMINA: FEMALE OLYMPIANS LONG FIGHT FOR THE MARATHON**

WEEK 8:


Video: Miracle on Ice.


WEEK 9:


Bruce Kidd, Reflections of a Canadian runner at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHt0eAdCCns NFB.CA 1964 Olympics in Japan


Lindsay Pieper, “Opening Pandora’s Box?: Transgender Athletes and the Fight for Inclusion,” Sport in American History (October 9, 2014), retrieved
WEEK 10:

**Modul 17. Tues Mar 16, 2021. EXAMINING THE ONGOING RESILIENCE OF SEX TESTING**

Class readings: Lindsay Parks Pieper, “‘Preserving la difference’: The Elusiveness of Sex-Segregated Sport,” *Sport in Society* 19, no.8-9 (2016): 1138-1155


**Video:** *Sports on Fire: Sex Testing,*


WEEK 11:


**Video:** Sochi Pride

**Module 20. Thurs March 25,2021. LEGACIES: WHITE ELEPHANTS AND A LOT OF DEBTS**

---

**WEEK 12  INTRODUCING NEW SPORTS TO THE OLYMPICS:**

**Module 21 Tues Mar 30, 2021. HIP HOP, SKATE BOARDING, BREAK DANCING AND WHAT ELSE?**


---

**WEEK 13  TROUBLES IN UTOPIA: ABUSE, PANDEMICS AND THE FUTURE OF THE OLYMPIC ATHLETE.**

**Module 23  Tues April 6, 2021. THE PROBLEMS OF COACH ABUSE AND THE EFFECTS OF COVID 19 ON THE OLYMPIC ATHLETE’S FUTURE.**

**Class Readings**: Peter Donnelly, We are the Games: The Covid 19 pandemic and athletes’ voices,” *Sociologia del Deporte*, 1,1, 2020, 311-326.


‘Athlete A’ on Netflix – see trailer [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzeP0DKSqdQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzeP0DKSqdQ)

Simone Biles, Olympic gymnast- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9d-Z7V5kZvQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9d-Z7V5kZvQ)
Module 24  Thurs April 8  CONCLUDING DISCUSSIONS, ASSISTANCE AND TIPS IN PREPARATION FOR FINAL EXAM.

WEEK 14:  Module 25  Tues April 13, 2021.  FINAL IN CLASS WRITTEN EXAM, 2 – 3.30pm. – OPEN BOOK  1.5 HOURS.