

**UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
**School of Kinesiology**  
**Kinesiology 363: *Leisure, Sport, and Popular Culture***

*UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (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 in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.*

**INSTRUCTOR**

Brian Wilson (*he/him*)  
156D Auditorium Annex, 1924 West Mall  
[brian.wilson@ubc.ca](mailto:brian.wilson@ubc.ca)

**TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

Julia Lawrence (*she/her*) – [julia.lawrence@ubc.ca](mailto:julia.lawrence@ubc.ca)  
Jeanette Steinmann (*she/they*) – [jeanette.steinmann@ubc.ca](mailto:jeanette.steinmann@ubc.ca)

**LOCATIONS:** The three classrooms that we will use over the term will be:

- Buchanan A103*** (Main classroom where full class meetings occur and where we will meet at 4:15pm on Wednesdays to begin most classes – also the tutorial room for group led by Brian)
- Buchanan B309*** (tutorial room for group led by Julia)
- Buchanan D301*** (tutorial room for group led by Jeanette).

**DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

What messages circulate within and around sport and other forms of popular culture? How might these messages contribute to taken-for-granted understandings of the world around us and of our place within it – of the people we encounter, the environments we inhabit, the activities we are involved in (and not involved in), the things we purchase and desire, and our perceptions of ‘healthy’ and ‘unhealthy’ bodies? How do people respond to these messages – and how might we explain these responses? Why do we participate in some cultural activities and not others? What can the answers to these questions tell us about the cultures and structures of the societies we live in – about who is more and less privileged, and how inequalities are reinforced through, reflected in, and challenged on the ‘contested domains’ of sport, leisure and popular culture?

Those working within the field known as ‘cultural studies’ have been especially interested in these sorts of questions – as have many who study within the ‘sociology of sport’ research area. The broad goal of this course is to explore responses to the sorts questions posed above, and in doing so work our way through a series of key topics drawn from the intersecting fields of cultural studies and the sociology of sport. It is worth noting that scholars interested in exploring this intersection of cultural studies and the sociology of sport have proposed and promoted a relatively new sub-field known as ‘physical cultural studies’ that has gained traction over the past 15 years. The topics of this course fit well into this sub-field.

As a way of exploring the questions outlined above, the course has been divided into five short parts designed to explore different aspects of sport, leisure and popular. In the first part of the course, the concepts of culture and popular culture are introduced, along with a set of theories intended to provoke thinking about how and why particular forms of popular culture are constructed the way they are, why people engage with popular culture the way they do, and how learning about popular culture can help us understand the subtle and explicit ways that particular viewpoints and ideologies are privileged, and inequalities are perpetuated. In short, we will spend time thinking about why studying sport, leisure and popular culture ‘matters’, and how understanding popular culture from a sociological perspective can provide a foundation for inciting pro-social transformations within and across societies. Particular attention will be paid in this section to theories of media production and reception in the context of leisure and sport studies – since the ‘impacts of media’ will be an ongoing theme throughout the course. In this section we will also explore some methods for studying sport-related media, with particular attention to how these methods might relate to your class projects.

The second part of the course considers topics intended to enhance understandings of the interplay between agents of social control and cultures of resistance. We will be especially attentive here to

relationships between the social structures of our society (e.g., education systems, mass media, law enforcement, government) and the various cultures within our society (e.g., lifestyle cultures, risk cultures, consumer groups, social movement groups, 'alternative' media producers). Examined here will be:

- relationships between mainstream culture and alternative sport and leisure *subcultures and lifestyle cultures* (e.g., the historical development and commercialization of snowboarding)
- the common perception that we live in a 'risk society' (where people's increasing disconnect from class/family-based support systems and increasing knowledge of threats to health and well-being create uncertainty and anxiety) and the ways that risks are negotiated and engaged by individuals and/through sport/leisure cultures.
- relationships between 'the law' and '*deviant*' leisure/sport related activities, with a focus on how and why certain illegal or seemingly unethical activities (e.g., some forms of violence in sport; the use of some performance enhancers) are to a certain extent tolerated while others are criminalized.

The third part engages topics related to the ways that:

- leisure and sport *spaces* are constructed for mass consumption (e.g., sport stadiums and sports bars) and the ways that people use these spaces in intended and unintended ways (for pleasure and community/team-support; for hooligan violence)
- *bodies* are both disciplined and controlled (e.g., through the influences of mass media images that portray 'what is healthy and attractive'; through training regimens) and sites for pleasure and subversion (e.g., bodily pleasures/practices such as dancing, parkour, and Zumba fitness classes).

The fourth part of the course is usually a lecture or guest lecture (plus discussion) that acts as a capstone for the course – addressing, through the presentation of new research, a topic or topics that 'bring together' the various areas of the course.

In the fifth and final part of the course, a 'mini-conference' will take place. In the conference, class members will share their findings from original research projects that will have been prepared over the term, and discuss their relevance to class materials.

**READINGS:** Readings for this course can be accessed directly through the **Canvas site by clicking the 'Library Online Course Reserves tab'** on the menu of the left-hand side of the site. The URL for accessing the resources for this course directly through the library is :

<https://courses.library.ubc.ca/c.QWWRs5>

### **COURSE WEBSITE/BLOG**

Materials for the class (i.e., copies of lecture-slides, course outline, assignment/exam materials) will be made available through a course website/blog, that can be accessed through the Canvas site for this course. Assignments will be submitted through the Canvas site.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE AND WEEKLY AGENDA: CLASS FORMAT**

The format of the classes will vary from week to week. The usual format will include:

*Lecture* – ranging from 45 minutes to 1 hours

*Break* – 10 minutes

*Video* – ranging from 10 minutes to 45 mins

*Group Work, Discussion, Presentations* – 1 hour to 1.5 hours

### **CONTACTING AND MEETING WITH THE INSTRUCTOR (i.e., BRIAN) AND TAs**

**(JEANETTE AND JULIA):** After the second week of the course, all students will be assigned a TA (i.e., either Brian, Jeanette, or Julia), who can field questions related to all aspects of the course. For questions that are more pertinent to the instructor, I (Brian) am available by email and also available for meetings other times, by appointment and of course after class is a good time to chat as well. As above, you can contact your assigned TA by email with questions or to set up a meeting (once you find out who your TA is – see above regarding this!)

**Staying Home if Not Feeling Well:** Perhaps to state the obvious these days, please stay home if you aren't feeling well. Although tutorial participation is important, just send a note to let your tutorial leader to let them know if you are not feeling well and cannot attend. As above, absences for health-related reasons (and other recognized reasons – see <https://kin.educ.ubc.ca/undergraduate/bkin/academic-concession/> for a guide) are of course taken into account when calculating your participation/contributions grade end-of-term.

### **GRADING (see page 5 for more details)**

- 1. Class participation – 10%**
- 2. 'Study Proposal' Presentation in tutorial – 5% (or 0%)\***
- 3. Mid-Term: 15%** (in class, *November 1*)
- 4. Major Paper/Study and Final Presentation of Study: 35%**
- 5. Final exam: 35% (or 40%)\*** (held during exam period, essay format – details provided during term)

**\*OPTION:** You can choose to do a somewhat more 'formal'/structured presentation of your research idea in tutorial (12 minutes long; graded out of 5%, with more feedback intended to help you out for your final paper and presentation) – or, do an informal presentation of your research idea in tutorial (i.e., a more conversational ~5 minute outline of your research idea), and have your final examination worth 40% instead of 35%.

### **WEEK BY WEEK OUTLINE**

#### ***September 6 – Introduction to the course***

Introduction to course and discussion of course outline.

#### ***September 13 – Sport, Leisure, and the Sociological Imagination***

Szeman, I. & O'Brien, S. (2017). Introducing Popular Culture (Chapter 1, pages 1-12 – to the end of Close Up/Box entitled 'Cultural Studies'). In I. Szeman & S. O'Brien & (Authors), *Popular Culture: A User's Guide* (International Edition). Oxford, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

Wilson, B. (2012). Theory, Sport and Peace: Tools and Lenses for Seeing Sport in Context (Chapter 2). In B. Wilson (Author), *Sport & Peace: A Sociological Perspective*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford.

#### ***Recommended Reading (especially for those who have not taken KIN 160 or equivalent)***

Scherer, J., Wilson, B. & Crossman, J. (2020). Sport and Physical Culture in Canadian Society. In J. Scherer & B. Wilson (Eds.), *Sport and Physical Culture in Canadian Society* (pp. 1-24). Toronto: Pearson Press.

#### ***September 20 – Sport Media and Promotional Culture (and study proposal presentations)***

Cooky, C., Council, L. D., Mears, M. A., & Messner, M. A. (2021). One and done: The long eclipse of women's televised sports, 1989–2019. *Communication & Sport*. doi:10.1177/21674795211003524

Jackson, S. (2013). Reflections on communication and sport: On advertising and promotional culture. *Communication & Sport*, 1(1-2), 100-112.

Hayes, M. (2022). Social media and athlete mental health and well-being. In J. Sanderson (Ed.), *Sport, Social Media, and Digital Technology* (Vol. 15, pp. 223-240). Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing Limited.

#### ***Supplementary***

Bruce, T. & Hardin, M. (2014). Reclaiming our voices: Sportswomen and social media. In A. Billings & M. Hardin (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of sport and new media* (pp. 311-319). New York: Routledge.

Norman, M. (2014). Online community or electronic tribe? Exploring the social characteristics and spatial production of an Internet hockey fan culture. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 38(5), 395-414.

### **September 27 – Sport Media, Methods and Social Inequality (and study proposal presentations)**

- Millington, B., & Wilson, B. (2016). Media research: From text to context. In B. Smith, & A. C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 152–163). New York: Routledge.
- Eagleman, A. & Martin, T. (2013). Race portrayals in sport communication. In P. Pederson (Ed.), *Routledge handbook of sport communication* (pp. 369-77). New York: Routledge.
- Bundon, A., & Clarke, L. H. (2017). Unless you go online you're on your own: Blogging as a bridge in para-sport. In A. Bundon (Ed.), *Digital qualitative research in sport and physical activity* (pp. 125-140). Routledge.

#### **Supplementary**

- Razack, S., & Joseph, J. (2021). Misogynoir in women's sport media: Race, nation, and diaspora in the representation of Naomi Osaka. *Media, Culture & Society*, 43(2), 291-308.
- Chen, C., Mason, D. S., & Misener, L. (2018). Exploring media coverage of the 2017 World Indigenous Nations Games and North American Indigenous Games: a critical discourse analysis. *Event Management*, 22(6), 1009-1025.
- Antunovic, D., & Bundon, A. (2022). Media coverage of the Paralympics: Recommendations for sport journalism practice and education. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 15(1), 1-9.
- Kilvington, D., & Price, J. (2019). Tackling social media abuse? Critically assessing English football's response to online racism. *Communication & Sport*, 7(1), 64-79.
- Ahmad, N., & Thorpe, H. (2020). Muslim sportswomen as digital space invaders: Hashtag politics and everyday visibilities. *Communication & Sport*, 8(4-5), 668-691.
- Wilson, B. (2005). Race, representation, and the promotional culture of the NBA: The Canadian Case. In S. Jackson & D. Andrews (Eds.), *Sport, culture, and advertising: Identities, commodities and the politics of representation* (pp. 100-118). New York: Routledge.

### **October 4 – Resistance Through Rituals?: Subcultures, Leisure, and Sport (and study proposal presentations)**

- Atkinson, M. & Young, K. (2008). Youth tribes in sport (Chapter 3). In M. Atkinson & K. Young (Eds.), *Deviance and social control in sport* (pp. 51-66). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Press.
- Wheaton, B., & Thorpe, H. (2018). Action sports, the Olympic Games, and the opportunities and challenges for gender equity: The cases of surfing and skateboarding. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 42(5), 315-342.
- Heino, R. (2000). New sports: What is so punk about snowboarding? *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 24(1), 176-191.

#### **Supplementary**

- MacKay, S., & Dallaire, C. (2013). Skirtboarder net-a-narratives: Young women creating their own skateboarding (re) presentations. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 48(2), 171-195.
- Thorpe, H. (2017). Action sports, social media, and new technologies: Towards a research agenda. *Communication & Sport*, 5(5), 554–578
- Paechter, C., Stoodley, L., Keenan, M., & Lawton, C. (2023, January). What's it like to be a girl skateboarder? Identity, participation and exclusion for young women in skateboarding spaces and communities. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 96, p. 102675). Pergamon. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2023.102675>
- O'Brien, S. & Szeman, I. (2014). Subcultures and countercultures (Chapter 8). In S. O'Brien & I. Szeman (Authors), *Popular Culture: A User's Guide* (3rd Edition). Toronto: Nelson.
- Wheaton, B. & Tomlinson, A. (2001). The changing gender order in sport?: The case of windsurfing subcultures. In A. Yiannakis & M. Melnick (Eds.), *Contemporary issues in sociology of sport* (pp. 427-441). Windsor, ON: Human Kinetics Press.

### **October 11 – Risk, Deviance, and Moral Panics (and study proposal presentations)**

- Atkinson, M. and Young, K. (2008). Body pathologies in sport. In M. Atkinson & K. Young (Eds.) *Deviance and social control in sport* (pp. 101-117). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Dean, N. A., & Bundon, A. (2020). 'You're only falling into water!': Exploring surfers' understandings of concussion in Canadian surf culture. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 12(4), 579-596.
- Falls, D., & Wilson, B. (2013). 'Reflexive modernity' and the transition experiences of university athletes. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 48(5), 572-593.

#### **Supplementary**

- Langseth, T., & Salvesen, Ø. (2018). Rock climbing, risk, and recognition. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 1793.
- Ankers, E. (2023). Experiences and perceptions of motherhood and climbing. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 1-17.
- Palmer, C. (2004). Death, danger and the selling of risk in adventure sports. In B. Wheaton (Ed.), *Understanding lifestyle sports: Consumption, identity and different* (55-69). New York: Routledge.
- Laurendeau, J. (2006). "He didn't go in doing a skydive": Sustaining the illusion of control in edgework activity. *Sociological Perspectives*, 49(4), 583-605.
- Pike, E. (2011). The active aging agenda, old folk devils and a new moral panic. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 28(2), 209-225.
- Dallaire, C., Lemyre, L., Krewski, D., & Gibbs, L. B. (2012). The gap between knowing and doing: how Canadians understand physical activity as a health risk management strategy. *Sociology of sport journal*, 29(3), 325-347.
- Furlong, A & Cartmel, F. (1997). The risk society. In *Young people and social change* (chapter 1). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

### **October 18 – Leisure/Sport Spaces, Regulation, and Subversion (and study proposal presentations)**

- Giulianotti, R. (2015). Sporting places and spaces: Fields of affection, commerce and fantasy. In R. Giulianotti (Author), *Sport: A critical sociology* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (pp. 135-155). Malden, MA: Polity.
- Steinmann, J., & Wilson, B. (2023). The underground bicycle economy: an exploration of social supports and economic resources that Vancouver's homeless and variably-housed cyclists utilize. *Mobilities*, 18(2), 202-217.
- Geyh, P. (Jul. 2006). Urban free flow: A poetics of Parkour. *M/C Journal: A Journal of Media Culture*, 9(3), <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0607/06-geyh.php>.

#### **Supplementary**

- Friedman, M. T. (2023). *Mallparks: Baseball Stadiums and the Culture of Consumption*. Cornell University Press.
- Belanger, A. (2000). Sport venues and the spectacularization of urban spaces in North America: The case of the Molson Centre in Montreal. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 35(3), 378-397.
- Wenner, L. (1998). In search of the sports bar: Masculinity, alcohol, sports, and the mediation of public space. In G. Rail (Ed.), *Sport and postmodern times* (pp. 301-332). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

### **October 25<sup>th</sup> – Moving Bodies, Resisting Bodies, Disciplined Bodies (and study proposal presentations)**

- Lupton, D. (2013). Quantifying the body: Monitoring and measuring health in the age of mHealth technologies. *Critical Public Health*, 23(4), 393-403.
- Couture, J. (2020). Reflections from the 'Strava-sphere': Kudos, community, and (self-) surveillance on a social network for athletes. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 1-17.
- Nieri, T. & Hughes, E. (2016). All About Having Fun: Women's Experience of Zumba Fitness. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 33(2), 135-145.

#### **Supplementary**

- Kirk, D. (2002). The social construction of the body in physical education and sport. In A. Laker (Ed.), *The sociology of sport and physical education: An introductory reader* (pp. 79-91). New York: Routledge.
- Millington, B., & Wilson, B. (2010). Context masculinities: Media consumption, physical education, and youth identities. *American Behavioural Scientist*, 53(11), 1669-1688.

### **November 1 – MID-TERM EXAM**

#### **November 8 – Special Event – Reflections on Graduate Student Experiences and Research on Leisure, Sport and Popular Culture (and 'possibly' study proposal presentations)**

Guest Presentations by UBC Kinesiology Ph.D. students in the sociocultural stream, Nik Dean and Jeanette Steinmann! See readings for this course by Nik and Jeanette from October 11 & 18.

### **November 15 – Midterm Break**

#### **Mini-Conference: Presentation of Your Original Research Projects**

**November 22 – Class Presentation of Your Original Research Projects**

**November 29 – Class Presentation of Your Original Research Projects**

**December 6 – Class Presentation of Original Research Projects and Review for Exam**

**December 8: FINAL REPORT DUE BY 4PM, SUBMITTED THROUGH CANVAS**

## EVALUATION PROCEDURES

**Class participation (10%):** You will be expected to actively participate in class discussions about various topics and readings. Your feedback on your classmates' presentations and projects is important here as well. Class attendance is crucial for attaining maximum marks. You will be asked to reflect on your participation over the term and justify a proposed grade through an end-of-term submission (**DUE DECEMBER 8TH THOUGH CANVAS**). Here is the rubric for this part of the course:

A+ (9-10) far exceeds standard expectations – rich and detailed feedback to presenters each week that shows knowledge of assignment requirements and potential links between class materials and presentation; active class participation and engagement with discussions questions and course materials – and efforts to creatively connect with ideas and resources beyond course materials too.

A and A- (8-8.75) – exceeds expectations – most classes meets the expectations noted for A+, with other days still meeting expectations.

B (7-7.75) – meets most or all expectations – Appears at times a bit rushed or like feedback and participation was 'just something that had to be done for the grade', but in most cases a solid effort and good engagement and supportive of classmates.

C (6-6.75) – meets some expectations, more superficial or minimal feedback offered to presenters, little evidence of engagement with class materials. Appears often to be 'just something that had to be done for the grade'.

D (5-5.75) – meets few expectations, missed several tutorial meetings and little evidence of engagement with course materials.

F (below 5) – fails to meet most expectations

**Presentation of Proposed Research Project (5%) – (or 0%)\*:** In groups of 1-4, you will be asked to: (a) identify a socially-relevant (and course-relevant) study topic you are interested in doing your major research project on for the class; (b) indicate why you think this topic is important (e.g., how it contributes to the literature, why it has social relevance); (c) provide an overview of literature that you consider to be most relevant to or topic; (d) identify one or two studies that you think would be particular useful guides for your study and indicate what parts of these studies you think will be most useful for you as you conduct your own study (focusing especially on the use of theory by the authors of the studies and the types of research methods used by the authors; (e) tell the class what you propose to do for your study, and how your study relates to existing literature (i.e., what makes it different from and similar to previous studies you looked at – does it 're-test' an idea that has been proposed before, and or does it offer sometime quite novel in your view). This first presentation is a 'research proposal' for a study will be doing over the term. You will be presenting the final version of the study during the final 3 weeks of the course. More details on this project will be provided during second week of the class.

\***OPTION:** You can choose to do a somewhat more 'formal'/structured presentation of your research idea in tutorial (12 minutes long; graded out of 5%, with more feedback intended to help you out for your final paper and presentation) – or, do an informal presentation of your research idea in tutorial (i.e., a more conversational ~5 minute outline of your of your research idea), and have your final examination worth 40% instead of 35%.

**Major research project/essay and final presentation of project/essay at end-of-term conference (35%):** The details of the major research project/essay will be handed out during week 2 of the class. The expectations for the essay will also be clarified at this time. Part of your grade will be based on the presentation of your project that will take place during an end-of-term mini-conference. You will present during the conference on the final three weeks of the course. You will be notified of your presentation slot at least two weeks before the conference. **DUE DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> THOUGH CANVAS.**

**Examinations (midterm 15%; final 35% -- or 40% if you choose to do the 'informal' in-class proposal presentation):** There will be two examinations in this class – a midterm and a final. On the mid-term, you will be required to answer one or more essay questions based on lectures, videos, readings, and discussions up until and including the October 11 class (i.e., the 'Risk, Deviance, and Moral Panics' class). The final examination will include a series of short and long essay questions, and will be based on the entire term's work (i.e., lectures, videos, readings, and discussions), although there will be an

emphasis on work that was not covered during the mid-term. The final examination will be held during the end-of-term examination period. Expectations for these examinations will be clarified in class.

## OTHER TOPICS

1. Late 'final report' assignments will be accepted with a penalty of 2 marks per day (out of the 30 marks available for the assignment).

2. Students whose academic performance is severely affected by medical, emotional, or other problems should consult with their instructors early in the term to discuss special arrangements. Supporting documentation from either the Centre for Accessibility or a physician must be submitted to the Undergraduate Advising Office. See also <https://kin.educ.ubc.ca/undergraduate/bkin/academic-concession/>.

3. You will be provided an opportunity near the end of the term to complete the course teaching evaluation (SCETs). I encourage you to complete this – as it informs revisions to the course for future years, as well as decisions to continue with aspects of the course that seem to be effective.

4. 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, at <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>.

5. **Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to follow UBC policies for academic integrity and academic misconduct, which includes practices around plagiarism, referencing and citation, and copyright. For more see, UBC's [Learning Commons Academic Integrity resources](#).

6. **Accessibility:** If you have any challenges accessing materials that will impact your success in this course, UBC's Centre for Accessibility can support your needs by providing appropriate accommodations to support you.

- Web: [UBC's Centre for Accessibility website](#)
- Email: [accessibility@ubc.ca](mailto:accessibility@ubc.ca)

7. **Learning Analytics:** Some of the learning technologies used for this course collect data to support the improvement of teaching and learning. This includes the collection of data related to overall class progress to provide personalized feedback, engagement in discussion forums to support the fostering of community within the course, and how resources are being accessed to support improvements to the course design. To learn more about learning analytics at the Faculty of Education and at UBC, see the [What is Learning Analytics?](#) page.