This is a tentative syllabus and should not be considered binding

History 298: Ancient Sports
Instructor: Nathanael Andrade

I. General Information:
Class Location and Times: TBD
Lecture Meeting: TBD
Office Hours: TBD
Office Location: 313 McKenzie
Office Telephone: x9045
Email: nandrade@uoregon.edu (Normally Checked Each Day)

II. Course Description: This course offers a world history of sports in ancient societies, and it analyzes how people in pre-modern Eurasia, Africa, Mesoamerica, North America, and Oceania enacted and experienced athletic cultures, with special emphasis on the Romans. Key topics of interest are the intersection between athletic practices and civic or imperial ideologies and the relationship between athletics and the politics of sexuality, gender, race/ethnicity, class, and multi-cultural interaction. The course also explores various analytical positions that scholars have taken regarding ancient sports, their broader social implications, and their impact on crowd behaviors, including those with roots in anthropology, sociology, and social psychology.

III. Course Outcomes: Students who take this course will be able to:

1. Reconstruct the world of ancient sports by analyzing primary sources, interpreting visual images, and arguing about the implications of these materials in short weekly assignments and essay exam questions.
2. Master the basic principles of historiography, including source criticism and analysis.
3. Amplify their reading and writing skills by mastering the structure and internal logic of expository writing.
4. Evaluate the main current academic topics that scholars have analyzed through the prism of athletics, including the significance of athletic spectacle for imperial ideology; the gendering of athletics; and social stratification within and through athletic spectacle.

IV. General Work Load

1. Weekly assignments (on average, 2.5 hours per week) will assess your comprehension of primary sources and lecture information. These will typically be 1-1.5 pages in length (12 New Times Roman, double-space, normal margins). The prompts for these will be posted on Blackboard at least a week in advance of their due dates. The assignments are due (submitted through Blackboard) by the first lecture of each week.
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2. *The midterm and final exams (on average, requiring 8 and 12 hours of study respectively)* will require students to generate an historical narrative that features an analysis of sports and their broader social implications in the ancient world. Your narrative will be based on an engagement with the primary source readings.

3. *Readings (on average, 5 hours per week)* will typically average 75 pages per week (between 50 and 100 pages). Most of the readings will come from one of the three texts assigned for purchase at the Duckstore (see below), but they will be supplemented by online translations of primary sources that are posted electronically on Blackboard.

4. *Discussion/Blog Comments (on average 1 hour per week)* will require students to contribute their perspective on material and topics covered in lecture. The comments are expected to be roughly a short paragraph in length and to be submitted through Blackboard. Two comments per week (one for each lecture) are expected.

**Readings Available for Purchase at the Duckstore.**


++Copies of the texts listed above are available on reserve at Knight Library.

**Readings from Blackboard:** Short readings will be posted on blackboard. These represent PDFs of texts from the internet. These constitute public domain texts or translations for which copyright owners permit educational, non-profit use.

**V. Assignments, Evaluation, Readings, and Grades:**

a. In-Class Midterm Exam and Final Exam: 45% (20 and 25)

b. Weekly Assignments: 35% **(1-1.5 pages in length, submitted through Blackboard by the first section of each week)**

c. Participation: 20%. An “A” reflects meaningful contributions to the online discussion/blog threads for the course. Each week, I will initiate two discussion or blog threads on Blackboard and announce them in lecture. The theme of the threads will be based on issues and material scrutinized in lecture, and students will be expected to make 2 substantive comments each week (one for each lecture).

**The criteria for determining grades** for performance on exams, weekly assignments, and weekly comments are outlined in the grade rubric located in **Section VIII.** The section also outlines the expectations for receiving an A+. 
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**VI. Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1: Introductory Material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/5. Introduction: What are Ancient Sports?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/7. Athletics of the Ancient Near East</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading: Craig, 147-175; <em>Gilgamesh</em> Tablets 1-2 (Blackboard, 11 pages); Genesis 32:22-32 (Blackboard, 1 page)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2: Athletics in the Mediterranean Tradition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/12. Athletics in the Bronze Age Mediterranean and Homeric Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading: Miller, 1-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/14. The Formation of Greek Athletic Competition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading: Miller, 23-62</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 3: Classical Greek Athletics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/19. No Class MLK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greek Athletics and Ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading: Miller, 63-153</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/21. Hellenistic Greek Athletics, Imperialism, and Ethnic Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading: Miller 153-60, 165-200; 2 Macc. 4-6 (Blackboard, 4 pages)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading: Miller, 105-53</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4: Hellenistic Athletic Culture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/26 In-Class Film</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/28. <strong>In-Class Midterm Exam</strong></td>
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<th>Week 5: Roman Sports and Imperial Politics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/2. Roman Games as a Political Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading: Futrell, 1-52; Miller 160-65</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/4. Roman Athletic Spectacle as Social Microcosm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading: Futrell, 52-103</td>
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**Week 6: Roman Sports, Audience, and Venue**

2/9. Athletes, Crowds, and Encounters  
Reading: Futrell, 53-120; Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 15.267-83 and 16.136-41 (Blackboard, 3 pages); Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 31.131 (Blackboard, 1 page); and Lucian, *Friendship* 57-60 (Blackboard, 2 pages)

2/11. Athletes, their Social Backgrounds, and their Social Status  
Readings: Futrell, 120-59

**Week 7: Sports, Morality, and Ethics in Ancient World Societies**

2/16. Christians, Athletics, and Morality in the Roman Empire  
Reading: Futrell, 160-172; Tertullian, *against Spectacles* (Blackboard, 18 pages); Tatian, *against the Greeks*, 22-24 (2 pages)

2/18. Morality and Ethics in the Sports of Asia  
Reading: Craig, 39-78

**Week 8: Sports and Death in Ancient World Societies**

2/23. Christians, Athletics, and Martyrdom in the Roman Empire  
Reading: Futrell, 172-85; *Passion of Perpetua* (all; Blackboard, 8 pages); *Passion of the Scillitan Martyrs* (all; Blackboard, 2 pages)

2/25. Death and the Ballgame in Mesoamerica  
Reading: Craig, 115-46; Popul Vuh (excerpt on Blackboard, 9 pages); *NEH Summer Institute for School Teachers, Oaxaca 2014*  
[http://blogs.uoregon.edu/mesoinstitute/about/curriculum-unit-development/archaeology/ball-game](http://blogs.uoregon.edu/mesoinstitute/about/curriculum-unit-development/archaeology/ball-game) (reading approximates to 5 pages)

**Week 9: Sports, Unstable Subjects, and Political Action in the later Roman Empire**

3/2. Captive Audiences in later Roman Athletics  
Reading: Futrell, 186-88; John Chrysostom, *Against Games* and *Our Father is Working Still* 1 (Blackboard, 6 pages); Augustine, *Confessions* 3.2.2-5 and 6.7.11-6.8.13 (4 pages), *City of God* 1.32-35 (Blackboard, 3 pages)

3/4. Hooliganism and Political Insurgency in the later Roman Empire  
Reading: Futrell, 189-221; Procopius, *Secret History* 7 (Blackboard, 3 pages); Strategios, *Capture of Jerusalem* (Blackboard, 2 pages)
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Week 10: Pre-Modern Sports (?), Colonial Gazes, and Interpretative Problems

Reading: Craig, 1-38

3/11. North American and Oceanic Sports: Ancient and Modern Continuities?
Reading: Craig, 175-254

Final Exam (date/time set by the Office of the Registrar)

VII. Course Policies

*Academic Integrity:* No academic misconduct will be tolerated, and it will have severe consequences. If you have questions regarding what constitutes academic misconduct or the policies of the University of Oregon in regards to it, please see me or refer to the following links:

http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html
http://tep.uoregon.edu/resources/faqs/preparingtoteach/forms_academicdishonesty.html

*Equal Opportunity:* The University of Oregon affirms and actively promotes the right of all individuals to equal opportunity in education and employment at this institution without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, religion, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or any other extraneous consideration not directly and substantively related to effective performance. This policy implements all applicable federal, state; and local laws, regulations; and executive orders. Direct related inquiries to the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity, 474 Oregon Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403; telephone (541) 346-3123; TDD (541) 346-0852.

*Late Work and Make-up Exams:* The acceptance of late assignments or make-up exams is only permissible when an emergency or an event of a serious nature prohibits their completion and submission by their proper due dates. You should correspond with me immediately if such an event arises.

*Absences:* Attendance will not be taken at lectures, but you will need to attend the lectures in order to provide sufficient commentary for the discussion/blog threads on Blackboard for each week. An omission of comments for a week can be excused only if an emergency or an event of a serious nature prohibits attendance. You should correspond with me immediately if such an event arises. Otherwise, you are permitted to miss posting comments on the discussion/blog threads for **a single week** before your participation grade
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suffers accordingly.

VIII. Supplemental Materials: Grading Rubric for Assignments and Participation

Numeric values and grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10 point scale</th>
<th>100 point scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9.8-10</td>
<td>98-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>9.3-9.7</td>
<td>93-97</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>9.0-9.2</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>8.7-8.9</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>8.4-8.6</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>8.0-8.3</td>
<td>80-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>7.7-7.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>70-73</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>6.7-6.9</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>6.4-6.6</td>
<td>64-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>6.0-6.3</td>
<td>60-63</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Under 6.0</td>
<td>Under 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A+ is possible for uniquely exceptional performance on the weekly assignments and exams

Weekly Assignments, Discussion/Blog Comments, and Exam Essays

Weekly assignments, discussion/blog comments, and exam essays will be evaluated according to the following criteria. These are a slightly modified form of Paul Halsall/Fordham University/Grading Rubric (http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/rubric.asp). The letter grades listed below can be collated with the numerical grades listed above:

The Superior Essay (A/A-)

*Thesis:* Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.

*Structure:* Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.

*Use of evidence:* Primary source information used to buttress every point with at least one example. Examples support mini-thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences.

*Analysis:* Author clearly relates evidence to "mini-thesis" (topic sentence); analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material.

*Logic and argumentation:* All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections to outside material (from other parts of the class, or
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other classes) which illuminate thesis.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices.

The Good Essay (B+/B)

Thesis: Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality.
Structure: Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.
Use of evidence: Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotes well integrated into sentences.
Logic and argumentation: Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. Some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made.
Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have one run-on sentence or comma splice.

The Borderline Essay (B-/C+)

Thesis: May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.
Structure: Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.
Use of evidence: Examples used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences.
Analysis: Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to mini-thesis (or there is a weak mini-thesis to support), or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote. Logic and argumentation: Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections.
Mechanics: Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). Errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several run-on sentences or comma splices.

The "Needs Help" Essay (C/C-)

Thesis: Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.
Structure: Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.
Use of evidence: Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; "plopped in" in improper manner.
Analysis: Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; may be no
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identifiable argument, or no evidence to relate it to.

Logic and argumentation: Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. Simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views.

Mechanics: Big problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices.

The Failing Essay (D/F) Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. Very difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. Has no identifiable thesis, or utterly incompetent thesis.