

*The primary task of a useful teacher is to teach his students to recognize inconvenient facts—
I mean the facts that are inconvenient for their party opinions (Max Weber)*

SOCCKER AND GLOBAL POLITICS

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NO SCREENS OF ANY KIND IN CLASS—phones, tablets, laptops. PERIOD. Failure to follow this policy will result in asking you to leave class.

INTRO: In October, 2008 a terrible kidnapping took place outside of the city of São Paulo, Brazil. A 21-year old took his former girlfriend hostage, eventually murdering her. The event was played out for over 100 hours live on national television, yet some of the most dominant discourses were not about violence but about soccer. Indeed, the president of the Palmeiras Soccer Club rushed to the kidnapping site to try to negotiate the release of the hostage, only to have his good intentions crushed by fans that started chanting team songs, forcing his negotiations with the kidnapper to halt. After the episode ended in tragedy, the director of the SWAT team that botched the hostage rescue attempt lamented that the week was horrible, but it would end much better if only Palmeiras would win the following Sunday.

Many traditional scholars would analyze this story as an example of mass hysteria resulting from Latin American identity formation. The explosion of research on identity in the region has largely ignored sport since it has been viewed as an end, not as a cause. Instead, many scholars have focused on Anderson's Imagined Communities, which points to print culture as a critical factor in national identity construction, or Tilly, Centeno, and Weber who argue that national wars against foreign enemies make states and national identity. For Latin Americanists, both sets of arguments are unconvincing, yet rarely have other causal factors been established as part of a systematic explanation of identity formation for South America.

Soccer is both the global game, uniting continents and nations, and a source of intense local identity and fracturing of national identity, resulting in street battles and violence in many cities. The pulling of identity towards a larger identity in Italy, Africa, and Brazil and the use of soccer to weaken national identity and favor local ideas of nationalism and citizenship is what makes soccer a fascinating and enduring element in international and comparative politics. This course will use readings, lectures, film, and a research project to explore soccer and politics. The students are expected to do the readings before class, to participate in class discussions, and to gain an understanding of the political dimensions of the beautiful game.

Identity is not the only political or social manifestation that can be highlighted through soccer. In fact, soccer is an excellent lens to examine and understand a great many of the key features of global politics, such as:

Inequality, elections, gender representation, war, ethnic and religious divisions, global human trafficking, human rights, processes of globalization, dictatorship, corruption, diplomacy, propaganda, secession, institutions, imperialism/colonialism, fascism, racism, democracy, state recognition, and more.

This class will provide an orientation to soccer and politics: the beautiful game. Books, newspaper readings, lectures, discussion, library assignments, and film will be the vehicles to spread the understanding. This course is reading intensive. You must be willing to engage the literature, focusing and turning off distractions. If you do not enjoy reading and are not willing to read before class, please drop the class.

Course Description: This course introduces students to the multiple ways in which soccer is a lens to understand social, cultural, economic, and political forces as well as the ways in which soccer acts as an agent for change. There are multiple arenas of political life that can be shaped or explained through soccer. These include, for example:

1. the tensions between cosmopolitanism and tribalism (London vs. Buenos Aires)
2. language vs. blood/land as a source of primal identity in homeland societies (Athletic Bilbao vs. Barcelona)
3. Anarchism and fascism (Carsi vs. Lazio/Real Madrid)
4. Gender equity (Japan vs. USA vs. Norway)
5. Government using sport in bread and circus to distract the population (see Italy under Mussolini, Iran and North Korea in World Cups, Brazil and Argentina in 2013.)

6. Democracy vs. electoralism: Fifa, AFA, and more
7. Colonialism and imperialism: FIFA in Africa, baseball in Nicaragua and Cuba vs. soccer in Costa Rica.
8. Religion and Politics: The Maradoniano church, San Lorenzo and the Pope, Atlanta FC, Turkey and Iran rejecting and later embracing soccer.
9. Identity formation in immigrant societies (Garra Charrua in Uruguay and embrace of Brazilian ethnicity)
10. Core, Periphery and Semi-Periphery. Can the US ever enter the core or global soccer powers? The Elk Horn effect. The David Beckham effect? The Dirk Nowitzky effect?
11. Folklore and rationalization. Spain in World Cups and Euro Cups.
12. The allure and failure of Pharaonic projects, megaevents, the allure of modernization theory for development. Why did South Africa build so many stadia that they did not need? Why is there a huge stadium in Leiria Portugal and Cuiabá Brazil? Soccer explains Lukes 3rd face of power and Galtung's harmony of interests between global elites at FIFA and elites in their own countries through glamour and construction money.
13. The limitations of facebook, twitter, technology to start a revolution. Al Ahly in Egypt and the truce in Istanbul. What is the relationship between technology, soccer, and politics?
14. Diego Maradona, Argentina, and the Paradox of Plenty.
15. What is a state? Frank Zappa, Gibraltar, Palestine, UN vs. FIFA and the power of enforcement
16. Federalism, regionalism, and western expansion—Portland Timbers and Cuiabá American football.
17. Soft Power, small states using soccer to expand power and improve reputation
18. Human trafficking
19. Gendered sports, Women with Balls
20. Booms and busts of commodities, Anzi

Learning Outcomes:

Student will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.

Cultural and ethical awareness. Students will become more aware of the diversity of cultural and ethical systems in the world. Able to understand and articulate key issues with respect for a range of different variables.

Students will demonstrate understanding of soccer as both a lens for understanding political and social concepts and dynamics and as a causal variable for change.

Students will demonstrate the ability to write a persuasive compelling argument.

Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the relationship between technological change and social/political change through soccer and the effect of technology on the game.

BOOKS and READINGS

This is a reading intensive senior level/graduate course. You must enjoy reading to succeed in this course. There are 3 required books for the first section of the course. The last section will feature PDFs and other readings on topics and cases that the class wants to explore.

Gaming the World: How Sports Are Reshaping Global Politics and Culture

by Andrei S. Markovits (Author), Lars Rensmann (Author) (first 2 chapters in PDF on TSquare)

Beyond Soccer: International Relations and Politics as seen through the beautiful game

by Tamir Bar-On: First 2 chapters in PDF on TSquare

Football, Nationality, and the State

by Vic Duke and Liz Crolley

Schedule of Readings, Exams, and Assignments

1/8	INTRODUCTION: Why is Football SO Important	3/7	State Chapter 6
1/10	Intro	3/9	State Chapter 7
1/12	Gaming 1	3/12	State Chapter 8
1/17	Bar-On Chapter 1	3/14	State Chapter 9
1/19	Gaming Chapter 2	3/16	Arocena & Bowman: Lessons from Beautiful Game (PDF)
1/22	Bar-On Chapter 2	3/19	Spring Break
1/24	Gaming Chapter 3	3/21	Spring Break
1/26	Bar-On Chapter 3	3/23	Spring Break
1/29	Gaming Chapter 4-5	3/26	TBD
1/31	Bar-On Chapter 4	3/28	TBD
2/2	TBA	3/30	TBD
2/5	Bar-On Chapter 5	4/2	TBD
2/7	Gaming Chapter 6 and Conclusion	4/4	TBD
2/9	TBA	4/6	TBD
2/12	Bar-On Chapter 6	4/9	TBD
2/14	State (Duke & Crowley) Chapter 1	4/11	TBD
2/16	Bar-On Chapter 7	4/13	TBD
2/19	State Chapter 2. TURN IN BOOK TITLE or Movie Titles	4/16	TBD
2/21	Bar-On Chapter 8	4/18	TBD
2/23	State Chapter 3.	4/20	TBD
2/26	Bar-On Chapter 9 and Conclusion.	4/23	TBD
2/28	State Chapter 4		Final Exam—Friday, April 27, 8:00 am to 10:50 am
3/2	Midterm		
3/5	State Chapter 5		

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory as is reading before class. There will be 7 short pop quizzes at the beginning of class on reading. The lowest score will be dropped and the remaining 5 quizzes will count as 20% of your final grade. If you don't like to read and prefer to wing your opinion in class, please leave now.

ADAPTS

The professor will work with ADAPTS so that all students have an equal opportunity for success. For information on ADAPTS, see <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/>

Honor Code Statement:

Plagiarizing is defined by Webster's as "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source."

If caught plagiarizing, you will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code.

For more information see: <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=9>

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to come to class and to come prepared to discuss the readings.

This is a very reading intensive course. If you do not like to read or do not have the time to read a solid hour or two per class meeting, then this is NOT the course for you.

Grading:

Quizzes: 20% (6 short quizzes over semester, 5 will count towards grade. From assigned readings. Random

Midterm: 25%

Final: 30%

Paper and poster of what you should know before going to X country. Soccer is the entrée into understanding a society and of becoming part of the hegemonic culture at a restaurant, in meetings, with new friends. Knowing the soccer culture, history, rivalries, thrills of victory, agonies of defeat, etc. is the easiest way to improve your quality of life and income if you move abroad. In this assignment, students will each pick a country and contact scholars/individuals from that country, research and read about the local importance of the game, and write 5 page “What You Should Know about Soccer Before Going to Uruguay.” Then you will produce a poster for discussion to class participants and others. 15% Analytical paper on two films or one novel/book: 10 %. Students are to read one soccer novel or approved book and write a five-page paper that merges the book with one of the topics covered in class. A rubric will be found in the Resources tab of TSQUARE as well as a list of potential books. Students can also select their own book and please feel free to discuss with professor at office hours. Students can alternatively watch two films that in part cover one (or more) thematic topic of the course. Films will be put on reserve at library or you can choose your own.

Professor reserves the right to make necessary changes to syllabus.