

Sports & Culture in France – May 2021

COURSE DESIGNATOR: MONT 3701

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

NUMBER OF CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Robin Recours (Associate Professor, University Montpellier 1)

Dr. Ludovic Marin (Associate Professor, University Montpellier 1)

Guest lecturers : Thomas Riffaut, Sofien Manaa

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This program focuses on the study of sports and sports culture from a French perspective. Course topics are centered around sports and culture and include tourism, psychology, leadership, coaching and pedagogy. Most afternoons are spent engaging in activities, such as indoor soccer, bubble soccer, beach volleyball, Pétanque, trampoline, basketball, tennis, stand-up paddle, climbing and hiking. A two-night active excursion to the National Park and Forest of the Cévennes Mountains is included.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Deepen cross-cultural understanding by examining sports, sports psychology and the nature of professional sports in France and the USA and through interaction with local faculty, staff and students.
- Gain French, European and international perspectives on sport.
- Increase independence and self-reliance by learning to navigate French society.
- Acquire practical knowledge in sports-related professions such as coaching, sport management, leadership and kinesiology.

METHODOLOGY

Students will study the theory of sports and sports psychology every morning and engage in a variety of sport activities in the afternoon. Weekly exams will test the students' comprehension of the theory of the specific sports. Students will also write two five-page papers about relevant issues in sports sciences or sport culture in France.

REQUIRED READINGS/ MATERIALS

Articles to be distributed in France

Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes by Robert Louis Stevenson (a pioneering classic of outdoor literature)

GRADING

Grading Rubric		
A	95-100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90-94	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	86-89	
B	83-85	
B-	80-82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	76-79	
C	73-75	
C-	70-72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	66-69	
D	60-65	
F	0-59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

SUMMARY OF HOW GRADES ARE WEIGHTED

Participation in activities	20%
Written work (two, five-page papers)	30%
Marketing presentation for major sporting event	10%
Weekly comprehension test (2 exams)	20%
Final exam	20%
Overall grade	100%

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Activities: All activities listed in the course syllabus are required unless a student is excused in advance. Participants will not be graded on their athletic abilities, but for being present and actively trying.

Written papers: The topics for each of the papers will be discussed with and agreed upon with the professors. Students will be expected to write five pages (typed, double-spaced) using proper citation of at least 3 sources for each paper.

Marketing presentation: Students will design a marketing campaign for a major sporting event in a post-COVID world. Students will present their ideas to the class.

Weekly tests: At the end of each week, a short exam will be given to assure that students are understanding the units presented that week and are completing the required readings.

Final Exam: The final, administered on the last day of the program will include information from all of the program lectures, required readings and activities.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS BEFORE COURSE STARTS

- May 14: Departure from the US
- May 15: Arrival in Montpellier
Move-in directly to program housing (Citadines Antigone)
Optional Dinner with the student assistants
- May 16: 9:30 AM Survival French class/ Orientation
12:30 PM Welcome lunch with Program Staff
2:30 PM Guided tour of Montpellier

COURSE CONTENT

Class times: 9AM-12:30PM or 1PM-3PM

UNIT 1 – Monday, May 17

Topic: Historical, Sociological and Marketing Approach to Sports and Leisure

Instructor: Thomas Riffaud

Lesson: A history of leisure and sports in France and Europe

For those authors who study the origin of modern sports, there are two main schools of thought: the first maintains that sports are an ancient practice (Bernard Jeu; Roger Caillois; Georges Duby; Marc Augé) that began in archaic or medieval times. The second school of thought holds that sports are a recent phenomenon that was born in 18th-century England, and that they are indicative of a socio-historical rupture with ancestral games (Norbert Elias; Georges Vigarello; Pierre Bourdieu). Whatever the approach, it is always worthwhile to examine the past in order to better understand the present. The goal of this session of the course will be to explore the evolution from traditional games to modern sports.

Afternoon Activity: Foot bulle or other activity

UNIT 2 – Tuesday, May 18

Topic: Historical, Sociological and Marketing Approach to Sports and Leisure

Instructor: Dr. Robin Recours

Lesson: Recreation, sports and sport(s) tourism

Sports and leisure activities always take place in space, from well-equipped centers (stadiums, gymnasiums, sports centers) to rural locales, from the mountains to the deserts. In this session we will describe the 5 location types for

sports tourism (the city, the country, the desert, the mountains, the sea); we will present the sports that can be performed there and their respective imaginary realms.

Afternoon Activity: Visit to FISE and other recreation and sports sites

Wednesday, May 19: Kayaking day

Meet at 10am at the Corum tram stop

UNIT 3 – Thursday, May 20

Topic: Historical, Sociological and Marketing Approach to Sports and Leisure

Instructor: Dr. Robin Recours

Lesson: Sports and leisure in France: Between integration and discrimination

Today, even if everyone can do a sport and invest her/himself in leisure activities, not everybody has the same consumer power when it comes to sports and leisure; not everybody can benefit from the same financial resources, or the same symbolic resources. In our societies there are very rich, rich, less rich, poor, and very poor people. There are also entire groups in each society that have been historically excluded from sports or for whom it isn't easy to do sports because of their social circumstances (i.e. race and gender issues). In this session, we will see that each of these groups manages differently in accordance with its budget and resources. Leisure time can thus also be a factor when it comes to integration, just as it can become a source of discrimination.

Afternoon Activity: Beach sports

UNITS 4/5— Friday, May 21

Morning:

Topic: The history of nature preserves and national parks in France

Instructor: Dr Robin Recours

Lesson: National parks as recreation places in France

History also shapes how we see and use our territory. The history of the creation of natural preserved areas in France is important to personal recreation of the French. This presentation will show how the national parks were designed and managed for the benefit of all. This will prepare students for their weekend excursion to the Cevennes National Park.

Afternoon:

Topic: Sports policies and business

Instructor: Dr. Robin Recours

Lesson: Environmentally protected zones and sports facilities

Nature is a space that athletes prioritize. Athletes love to do their sports in nature, but not just anywhere in the great outdoors. They prefer protected natural parks, and often without even realizing it, they engage in their sports activities, in protected, ranked/classified parks. In this session we'll see what is a protected park in Europe, in particular when we look at the example of national natural parks (parcs naturels nationaux - PNN) whose sole mission is to protect the site, the landscape's natural beauty, and its biological diversity. In addition we will see that even if there are PNN in every country in the world, the way they operate and their organization in Europe have

unique aspects that professionals working in sports tourism and leisure should understand.

Immediately following this lecture, the weekly exam will be given.

Saturday, May 22 to Monday, May 24 - Excursion to the National park of the Cévennes

A detailed itinerary for the weekend will be provided on-site. The weekend will include hiking and exploring, a donkey ride reminiscent of Robert Louis Stevenson's journey, and a visit to the Museum of Protestantism in the heart of the National Park.

Return to Montpellier the afternoon of Monday, May 24

First paper is due by 10PM on Monday.

UNIT 6 – Tuesday, May 25

Topic: Social Psychology Approach to Human Movement

Instructor: Dr. Ludovic Marin

Lesson: Notions and concepts of the human body in France and in the USA (a cultural comparison)

When people think of ways of characterizing the culture of a given place, the most obvious parameters that come to mind are language (the way they talk), fashion (the way they dress) and food (the way they eat). If we try to delve a bit deeper into the examining what defines different cultures, beyond just the obvious, we realize that there are many subtle clues that give insights into the different ways a culture is defined. The way we perceive and interpret actions and behaviors can be totally different from one country to another. For example, why are Americans often seen as too superficial from a European perspective? Why do Americans consider French or Italians to be “too touchy” and not understand the value of a market physical gesture (a handshake or a kiss) to greet friends and colleagues each day? Many of these behaviors are based on how people perceive their own body. But paradoxically since we are often not aware these subtle interactions, a misunderstanding in communications can result in conclusions and judgments that may not be totally warranted. The goal of this class is to decipher the main cultural aspects of how Americans and French (and Europeans in general) perceive their body and its interactions. Some practical examples will be studied in order to better understand the interactions between American and French people.

Afternoon Activity: Pétanque

UNIT 7 – Wednesday, May 26

Topic: Social Psychology Approach to Human Movement

Instructor: Dr. Ludovic Marin

Lesson: Notions and concepts of interpersonal distances in France and in the USA (a cultural comparison)

In addition to our perceived body, the distance and space that people build around them is part of their own self. For example, if someone that you don't know comes too close and invades your personal space, you often feel uncomfortable or even threatened. The rules about respecting and maintaining “personal space” distance vary from culture to culture. The goal of this class is to highlight these cultural differences in order to reveal the differences between American and European societies. The session will also include discussion about the impacts of the

COVID-19 pandemic and how this has impacted these ideas of person space.

BBQ lunch at the Program Center after class

UNIT 8 – Thursday, May 27

Topic: Social Psychology Approach to Human Movement

Instructor: Dr. Ludovic Marin

Lesson: Interpersonal coordination applied to sports

Once students have understood the importance of non-verbal communication (see the previous class description), we will characterize different coordination signs present in team sports. The objective of this class is to apply the interpersonal motor coordination topic to team sport practice. An example will be given in a non-American team sport: handball. (Although, there is an American called handball, the one we will be studying is not the same game.) This game contains goals (and goal keepers) with basketball-like ball transportation (dribble, hand passes and so on). This game is internationally known and is an Olympic event. The French handball team is the current world champion; they won the gold medal in the last Olympics and Montpellier's handball team is the best in France.

Afternoon Activity: TBD

UNIT 9 – Friday, May 28

Topic: Social Psychology Approach to Human Movement

Instructor: Dr. Ludovic Marin

Lesson: Application and observation of applied interpersonal coordination in a team sport: a case study of a typical non-American team sport (handball)

The weekly exam will be given before leaving for the Handball practice.

Students will go to observe handball training of the professional players of the Montpellier handball club. Students will then learn the rules with a professional coach.

In the afternoon, they will have the opportunity to play a pickup game and will end the afternoon by watching a professional game.

Evening Activity: Professional Handball Game

Saturday, May 29 & Sunday, May 30

Free weekend for personal travel or exploration. Advice on travel logistics and ideas for local activities will be provided by the Student Assistant and the Montpellier staff.

UNIT 10 – Monday, May 31

Topic: Sports Marketing

Instructor: Sofien Manaa

Lesson: Culture, society and economy... Can sports be a business?

Based on the study of a major sport event, this class will present the stakes of sports business today. A systemic approach will be used, in order to understand the cultural, social, economic and managerial dimensions of sports business through the organization of a major event.

Afternoon Activity: Laser Tag!

UNIT 11 – Tuesday, June 1

Topic: Sports Marketing

Instructor: Sofien Manaa

Lesson: Roland Garros French Open: a case study

Historically this program visits the Roland Garros French Open. This year, we have all witnessed that the COVID pandemic has changed the nature of large sporting events. Using the French Open as a case study, the group will discuss the management and operation of these major events; in a pre- and post-COVID world.

Students will then integrate the notions of human and operational management, sponsorship and leadership to create promotional material for their own sporting event in a post-COVID era.

Second paper is due by 10PM.

Afternoon Activity: Beach-volley and Molky

UNIT 12 – Wednesday, June 2

Topic: Sports marketing

Instructor: Sofien Manaa

Lesson: From global to local.

Students' presentations of their events.

After studying major international events, the students will now change scale and see the local infrastructure and policies for the Montpellier area. They will analyze the differences and similarities between global and local sports events.

Examples will be taken from the FISE and the Women FIFA world cup 2019.

Afternoon Activity: TBD

UNIT 13 – Thursday, June 3

Topic: Social Psychology Approach to Human Movement

Instructor: TBA

Lesson: Wellness, just another buzz word?

Today we hear a lot about Wellness. And there are a lot of ways to pursue wellness advertised in and around

Montpellier. This lecture will explore what is meant by wellbeing and how you can pursue it in the area.

Afternoon: Free

Friday, June 4

Morning: Final exam

Goodbye Lunch in Montpellier

Saturday, June 5

Departure for the U.S.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES WITH THE STUDENT ASSISTANT

Afternoon activities will be decided upon based on the interests of the group. Here are a few possibilities.

- **Beach Volleyball**
- **Bocci ball (Petanque)**
- **Tennis**
- **Laser tag**
- **Karting**
- **Indoor Soccer**
- **Basketball**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the onsite syllabus for specific class requirements.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

STUDENT CONDUCT:

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.