

**Faculty of Health Sciences**  
**School of Kinesiology**  
The University of Western Ontario  
Kin 3378F / English 2680F  
**Sport in Literature – Fall 2015**

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Office Hours: Thurs: 8:30-10:00, or by appointment  
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Course web site is on OWL

Tues 9:30-11:20  
Thurs 10:30-11:20

**Introduction:** Sport Literature is the study of the relationship between sport and life as reflected through fiction, non-fiction, essays, and poetry with a focus on sport. The principal aim of the course is the exploration of themes as they are developed in and through sport literature. Another important objective in this course is to develop critical thinking and feeling skills as they emerge in response to the genre of sport literature and in considering the relationship between sport and culture from a variety of perspectives.

**Course Readings:**

1. **Sport Poetry:** Each course theme includes poems – and in some cases, essays – for analysis; some are provided on the course website under each theme (the course has 11 themes; see **Course Themes** below). As we go through each theme, I need you to download and print the poems and/or essays for each theme to bring to class for discussion and note-taking purposes.
2. **The Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins
3. **The Old Man and the Sea** by Ernest Hemingway
4. **Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail** by Cheryl Strayed
- 5 **Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption** by Laura Hillenbrand
6. **The Bone Cage** by Angie Abdou
7. **Shoeless Joe** by W.P. Kinsella
8. **The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics** by Daniel James Brown

\*\* All texts, # 2-8 above, are available in the UWO bookstore and those book store editions will be the editions I use for page references in class (in case you find other editions or you use an e-reader). I will also, from time-to-time, assign web site readings

as we go through each course theme. See the note to this effect at the bottom of page 2. In class, I will provide an approximate schedule of dates for when each novel will be covered so that you have time to read and prepare in conjunction with other courses and scheduling you might have.

### **Course Format and Expectations:**

This course is very much taught in the style of a participatory English course. There are **7 novels** to read along with essays and poetry; these materials **MUST** be completed each week as the course progresses. Although all points of view will be encouraged and respected, each individual needs to be prepared to support and express a point of view based upon a careful and close reading of the written works. The format of each class will involve discussion rather than lecture and everyone will be expected to participate in any and all discussions – silence may be golden, but not in this course. **Participation in class discussion is mandatory.** Literature of any kind is about the human condition *expressed* in written form. Thus, unlike the sciences or fact-based courses, there are no incorrect points of view; what is important is that you are able to support your point of view.

**\*\*\* While the use of computers/notebooks for the purpose of note-taking during class is permitted, the use of the internet, email, twitter, msn, face-book etc. is strictly prohibited. \*\*\*** *Audio and/or videotaping of lectures is not permitted* unless approval has been sought from the instructor in advance.

### **Learning Outcomes/Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- a) **Describe** course concepts and applications to sport and literature (Knowledge)
- b) **Deconstruct** poems, essays, and novels through literary analysis (Comprehension)
- c) **Demonstrate** an ability to critically assess a poem or essay (Application)
- d) **Analyze** a full text or novel through thematic analysis (Analysis)
- e) **Compare and contrast** sport literature writings in alignment with broader categories such as aesthetics, love, exhilaration, participation (Analysis)

### **Assignments and Grading:**

**NOTE:** In keeping with the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, all student grades are regarded as strictly confidential between each student and the course instructor. All grades will be posted for each student on OWL; full course grade statistics, the number of

A+'s, A's, B's etc will also be posted but each student will only be able to view his/her grade. In the same vein, student papers will only be returned to each author in person, in class, or, to the paper's author in my office.

**1. Mid-term examination** (30 %) The exam is essay- and short-answer in style. **Date:** *Tuesday, October 20th, in class.*

**2. Teaching a Poem or Short Essay** (10%) You will be paired with either 1 or more, likely 2 other students (dependent on class size), at random, to teach a sport-themed poem or piece of fiction. You will have 15 minutes to *lead an analysis regarding the meaning and implications of the piece you select* with the class. The source for your selection will be the *Sport Literature Anthology*, posted online, in a folder of the same name, in pdf. Details will be covered in class and in a set of Guidelines are posted in the Poem or Essay Class Presentations' folder in OWL. Presentations will start around 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week in October.

**3. Essay:** (30%) The essay is to be a full analysis of **either** a sport literature novel of your choice (**\*\*approved by the instructor by Thursday October 8<sup>th</sup>, no exceptions**), **or**, a collection of poems/short stories about sport (for example, John B Lee's **The Hockey Player Sonnets**, or Richard Harrison's **Hero of the Play**, (**\*\*also to be approved by the instructor by Thursday October 8<sup>th</sup>**). The assignment will be discussed in more detail in class. **Due date for the essay:** Thursday **Nov 19<sup>th</sup>**, submitted **a) by hard-copy** in class on Thursday November 20<sup>th</sup>, **and b) as an electronic copy, in Word format, sent to Assignments link on our OWL site by 4:00 PM on Thursday Nov19<sup>th</sup>**. Late papers will be deducted 5 per cent per day. **\*\* All e-versions of your paper will be screened by Turnitin, the leading academic plagiarism checker. See the note on plagiarism below. \*\***  
**\*\* See also the Assignment Description under folder, 'Essay Assignment' in our OWL course website along with 2 essay examples\*\***

**4. Final Examination** (30%) Essay-style exam; scheduled during the Registrar-Scheduled final examination period in December. Any special final examination requests must be made through your Academic Counselor.

### **Course Framework:**

Class discussion will take place according to the broad categories (listed below) rather than according to literary genre. The categories are meant to give a focus to the discussion rather than as a means of limiting the discussion. The sport poems and/or essays are provided under each theme-heading on our web site. This is the order in which we will pursue each course theme and each novel over the course of the term:

1. **Introduction:** overview and examples
2. **Fantasy** (Shoeless Joe)
3. **The Participant** (The Boys in the Boat)
4. **The Spectator** (The Hunger Games)
5. **Aesthetics** (The Old Man and The Sea)
6. **Film and Literature** (film analysis...a film selected by class consensus)
7. **Death and Dying** (Unbroken)
8. **Sport and Life** (Wild)
9. **Exhilaration/Love** (The Bone Cage)
10. **Humour**

Ultimately, no book or poem or essay or movie “about” sport is really about the sport; rather, these forms of writing represent efforts to express the human condition using sport as the dominant form of action or metaphor or story thread.

\*\*\* I will be posting **web site materials** as we proceed through each thematic unit and I will be clear in class and in OWL which ones are mandatory reading. \*\*\*

### **Course/University Policies**

**Lateness/Absences:** Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned due date and will not be accepted late, except under medical or other compassionate circumstances. Electronic submission of assignments will not be accepted (unless otherwise specified) under any circumstances. Submitting a late assignment without appropriate documentation will result in a zero (0) grade. Appropriate documentation for assignments worth less than 10% should be submitted to the Undergraduate office. A missed mid-term examination without appropriate documentation will result in a zero (0) grade. The course policy is not to allow make-ups for scheduled midterms, presentations or final exams, nor to assign a grade of Incomplete without acceptable and verifiable medical (or equivalent compassionate) reasons. Acceptable reasons might include hospital stays, serious illness, family emergencies (like serious accidents or illness, death) or similar circumstances.

**Written documentation:** Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. stating specific reasons and dates. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner. Documentation for any request for accommodation shall be submitted directly, as soon as possible, to the appropriate *Academic Counselling Office* of the student’s Faculty/School of registration not to the instructor, with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician or walk-in clinic. These documents will be retained in the student’s file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University’s Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy.

See <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> for specific policy and forms relating to accommodation.

**Scholastic offences:** They are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

A) Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as

footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar and the note on plagiarism below). All required papers might be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)

B) Computer marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

According to the **Examination Conflict policy**, “A student who is scheduled to write more than two examinations in any 24-hour period may request alternative arrangements through the office of their Academic Counsellor.” *\*This policy does NOT apply to mid-term examinations.* There will be no make-up for the mid-term exam. Students who miss this exam with a valid reason will have the final re-weighted accordingly.

**Classroom Behaviour:** Class will begin promptly at the time specified at the top of page one of this syllabus. In the event that you must arrive late, please enter the classroom with a minimal disturbance to the class. I reserve the right to lock the classroom door and deny entrance if lateness becomes a common occurrence. Excessive talking during class time is disruptive, disrespectful, and will not be tolerated. Students engaging in such behaviour may be asked to leave the room. Cellular phones, pagers, and text-messaging devices are disruptive when they are used in class. If you must bring these with you, please place them on silent mode or turn them off during class. Failure to do so may result in your being asked to leave.

Laptops for the **purpose of typing lecture notes** are permitted in class, but please be respectful to your fellow students and turn the sound off. If I receive complaints from other students regarding noise or other disruptive behaviour (e.g., watching videos on YouTube.com, updating your Facebook status, playing Solitaire), your classroom laptop privileges will be revoked.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For more information, visit <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>

## SUPPORT SERVICES

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/>
2. Student Health -- <http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombuds Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

## ENGLISH PROFICENCY FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF GRADES

Visit the website <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/english.pdf>

**\*\*\* Plagiarism Policy:** Excerpted from Senate Regulations:

“Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. **\*\*\*Students may be required to have their written work submitted, by the instructor to a program called Turnitin for plagiarism checking.”** **Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated in this course, and penalties will be assessed against those students found to have infringed on these regulations.** The minimum consequence will be a grade of 0% on any assignment in which plagiarism is detected.

**\*\*\* Please note that you are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites, and that you have not taken an anti-requisite course. Lack of a prerequisite or the completion of an anti-requisite cannot be used as a basis for appeal. If you are found ineligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time and you will not receive and adjustment to your fees. This decision cannot be appealed. \*\***