As produced by photography, film, television and other visual technologies, images have played a central role in the development of modern sport. Images of sport function as pedagogical and juridical tools, as forms of entertainment, as commodities, and as aesthetic objects. In these and other capacities, images are not simply documentary objects; rather, they are constitutive elements of sport. Images and/of sport are also fundamentally tied to cultural, national, and bodily identities and to conceptions of gender, sexuality, race, and place. With these issues at its core, this course will investigate the intersection of visual communication and sport by combining historical research and theoretical perspectives from communication and media studies, visual culture studies and the history and sociology of sport. We will examine specific visual technologies and modes of representation alongside the influence of sport – and its images – on the cultures in question.

Prerequisites: CS 203, CS 235, and registration in year four of an Honours Communication Studies program.

Learning Outcomes:

Throughout this course we will:
1. Develop and demonstrate working knowledge of key terms, concepts and issues within the discourse of mediated sport.
2. Critically evaluate academic and public debate surrounding visual communication and sport.
3. Build and practice core research and analytic skills.
4. Strengthen oral, written and visual communication skills.
Course Materials:
The course content includes one book, numerous essays, and a few websites and videos.

Course text:

Essays:
All of the course readings (not including the book) are available as free downloads through the Laurier library. You are expected to bring the readings (in paper or electronic form) to class with you each week – no exceptions. If you arrive without the readings you will be asked to leave and return with the readings.

Evaluation:
- Seminar participation = 20%
- Seminar assignment = 20%
- Tumblr blog = 25%
- Final project (due Dec. 11, 12:00 PM) = 35%

Please see the extended Assignments and Evaluation section after the course schedule

Communication:
My scheduled office hours are reserved for my current students only. You do not need to schedule an appointment, just drop-in between the hours indicated. If you cannot make the scheduled hours please arrange an alternate time with me. You can also contact me through voice mail and e-mail but please note the following:
- Please use your WLU e-mail address for all e-mail communication.
- Allow for 24 hours (48 over weekends) to receive a response to your e-mail.
- Please check the syllabus and/or the department webpage before contacting me. The vast majority of questions can be answered this way (i.e. “where is your office?” or “when are your office hours?”).

Course Policies:
1. **Attendance and participation are essential.** Missed classes will result in a significantly lower grade.
2. **Be courteous and respectful.** I will not tolerate any disruptive or disrespectful behaviour in class.
3. **Do your own work.** The penalties for plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct are severe and enforced at all times.
4. **Late Policy: Assignment and exam dates are not flexible.** The dates for the assignments and exams in the course are set well in advance and students are expected to honour them. Late papers or missed exams will not be excused without a doctor’s note explaining that you were not able to fulfill the required assignment / exam on the specific date in question. Students must reserve the examination period of Dec 5-18.
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<td>Tumblr blog: where possible, please bring your phone/tablet/laptop to class so that we can develop our Tumblr blogs.</td>
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Note on Evaluation:
The bulk of work in this course involves qualitative assessment. We do not have multiple-choice tests in this class and the answers and evaluation schemes are not black and white. There is no quantitative rubric or set of rules to follow to ensure that you receive a specific grade. Like assessing some forms of sport, the evaluation of oral, written and visual assignments involves judgment. Importantly, such judgment is not random. I have been a professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Laurier for ten years and have amassed a very significant amount of experience in evaluating student work. I put this expertise into practice when evaluating your work in this course and I strive to communicate the results of all evaluations in ways that not only explain the evaluation but help you to improve the skills used for the assignment in question.

1. Participation (20%)
As this is a fourth-year honours seminar, participation is a central component of the course. Participation is also a component where many students struggle. I think this is in large part due to a misunderstanding of what constitutes participation. You will not receive participation grades for being present; instead you must actively contribute to the class. If you attend every class but rarely speak, you will receive a failing participation grade. It is expected that you will arrive for each class with copies of the readings and that you will be prepared to discuss them. If you do not come to class with copies of the readings and you are not prepared to discuss them, you will not receive participation grades.

The good news is that it is relatively easy to get a good participation grade. Do the readings consistently, make notes, and come prepared to discuss. If you struggle in some way with participation or you want to discuss strategies to ensure good participation, please come see me.

2. Seminar Assignment (20%)
Each student is required to complete one seminar assignment during the term. The assignments will be distributed randomly in the 2nd or 3rd week of class (once class registration has finalized). This exercise requires you to employ a wide range of skills – you have to analyze a reading and be able to synthesize a set of ideas into clearly articulated points. You have to provide a clear rationale and defend your choices and you have to be able to apply your ideas outside the reading by bringing in external examples. The combination of skills needed for this exercise requires you to make a continued, thorough and critical engagement with the reading and issues in question.

The point of the assignment is relatively simple: identify three (3) important issues/ideas/arguments in a given reading. You will be assigned one of the course readings and you are required to come to class that day prepared to lead a discussion around three things that you found particularly worthwhile in the reading. For each of your three points you must do the following:

1. Identify what the point is clearly and concisely (you should be able to communicate the point in a sentence or two).
2. Defend and rationalize your choice (why is this point important? Why did you choose it? How does it benefit the class? How does it relate to other course material?)
3. Provide at least one fully developed example (preferably visual) from outside course readings that helps to explain or think through the point you have chosen.

Please note that this is not to be a presentation. The goal is to lead a discussion – while your voice will likely be the dominant voice it should not be the only voice!

3. Tumblr blog (25%)
As one component of the course you are to create a Tumblr blog. The purpose of this is to provide a space for you to reflect on and analyze your own experiences with the course topic (visual communication and sport) outside of class. You are expected to contribute to your blog each week and your blog will be graded based on the frequency of postings as well as their quality. At a bare minimum, you should be posting once a week, but to do well you need to post more frequently. In terms of quality, I am primarily interested in the extent to which you work through ideas raised in the course content. While your opinions are important, the blog is part of a senior-level university course; therefore, your blog should not be a repository of unsubstantiated claims or observations about sport.

Please use your last name and the course code (CS 400Q) only in the name of your blog and e-mail me the link to your blog. My blog for the course is finncs400q. You must have your Tumblr blog established by September 18 (the second class). I will distribute all blogs to the class so we are all linked with each other. Please make sure to add finncs400q to the blogs you follow. Also, your blog for this course needs to be a dedicated blog and not combined with other blogs / social media outlets.

Examples of things you could post to your blog include:
- your experiences watching a sporting event (live or mediated) as they relate to the course
- images you take of sporting events, stadia, memorabilia, etc.
- further discussion / reflection on an idea raised in class
- links to other blogs, websites, articles on issues related to the course
- questions for the class to discuss
- discussion of films, tv shows, or other items of pop culture that address sport and that extend the course discussion

“Remember that you should discuss / comment on whatever you post. You don’t want others in the class (including me) to see your post and wonder “why did they post that?”

4. Final Project (Due Dec. 11, 12:00 PM, 35%)
Option1: Essay
For this assignment you are to produce a research paper on a topic of interest within the course framework of visual communication and sport. Papers are to be roughly 2500 words in length (2400-2600). You can write on any topic within the general framework of visual communication and sport. Areas for analysis include:
- a specific visual technology (hawk-eye, dive-cam, dartfish etc.)
- a specific sporting event (the 2012 Winter Classic, 2008 Olympic opening ceremonies, a Kitchener Rangers game)
- a specific sports stadium (its design, seating arrangement, decoration, etc.)
- sports photography (the work of a specific sports photographer)
- sports journalism
- sport in film or a film about sports

Regardless of your specific subject of study, and using the course readings as your guide, it is expected that you will analyze your subject in relation to at least one of the key issues in visual
communication and sport, such as gender, class, power, social status, identity, etc. You must confirm your topic with me before writing the paper.

**Option 2: Alternative Assignment**

As this is a course about visual communication, I welcome forms of non-traditional assignments that incorporate the visual. You are welcome to propose a non-traditional assignment in place of the traditional text essay. You could create a website, video, painting, drawing, comic book, brochure, presentation, mock-exhibition, or any other form of visual-based project. However, you must meet with me to discuss your choice, and your choice has to be approved before you can work on the project.

**Tips for either Option**

- I would strongly recommend you pick a topic that is of distinct interest to you. Your research project will be much better if you are genuinely interested in the topic!
- Pick a topic that can actually be addressed (make sure other people have written about it or something similar so that you have material to work with).
- Find a question or set of questions that you want to answer (i.e. what was the public’s response to the first use of instant-replay in the NFL? What words are used by commentators to describe female tennis players and how is this significant? When was hawk-eye first used in cricket and why?)
- Be as specific as you possibly can. You cannot write about ‘baseball,’ ‘the Olympics,’ or ‘gender’ – but you can write about the visual technologies used in a single baseball game, or the representation of women or men in a single Olympic event. As a general rule of thumb, the more specific your subject the better.
- Don’t forget the course topic: visual communication. You cannot write about sport generally – topics have to be at the intersection of visual communication and sport.

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**Guidelines for written assignments**

Papers are to be double-spaced and in a standard, 12-point font. Use MLA or APA format for all citations: use parenthetical documentation within the text and include a Works Cited page. Do not include title pages and do not submit papers in duo-tangs or other binders. A single staple in the top, left corner is sufficient. Your name, student number, paper title, the date and word count should appear in the upper left corner of the first page. Leave one blank line before starting your essay.

**Final note on all assignments**

I am a stickler for deadlines (ask any of my former students). There are no extensions, do-overs or make-ups or other ways to change or add to your grade. None. Zero.
Notes

1. Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier's Accessible Learning Office for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.

2. Students are expected to be aware of and abide by University regulations and policies, as outlined in the current Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar.

3. Students must reserve the examination period as stated in the Undergraduate Calendar under Academic Dates. If you are considering registering for a special examination or event, you should select a time outside the examination period. Consult with the Undergraduate Calendar for special circumstances for examination deferral. (Applicable to Undergraduate students only.)

4. The penalties for plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct are severe and enforced at all times. The Student Code of Conduct and Discipline, and the procedures for investigating and determining appropriate disciplinary measures for breaches of the Code are given in the current Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar.

Please note: submitting the same work to two different courses, or to different sections of the same course, is academic misconduct and will be addressed according to the procedures outlined in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar. Students who are repeating a course are not permitted to re-use essays or assignments from the previous course.

Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for plagiarism. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.

5. Students are to adhere to the Principles in the Use of Information Technology and the Policy on the Classroom Use of Electronic Devices. These Principles and Policy, and resulting actions for breaches are stated in the current Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar. Please see the Policy on the Classroom Use of Electronic Devices.

6. Students' names may be divulged in the classroom, both orally and in written form, to other members of the class. Students who are concerned about such disclosures should contact the course instructor to identify whether there are any possible alternatives to such disclosures. Additional information on the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act at Laurier is available at the Privacy Coordinator Office.

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**Foot Patrol walk home service | 519.886.FOOT (3668)**

Foot Patrol is a volunteer operated walk-home service, available daily during evening hours. Male-female, radio-dispatched teams trained in Emergency First Aid are available on request to escort students to and from campus as well as to off-campus destinations, either by foot or by van.

**Counselling Services & Peer Help Line | 1-866-281-PEER (7337)**

Counselling Services are available to help students deal with emotional, psychological and social challenges of university. Counselling, consultation or referral are available on the 2nd floor of the Student Services Building (across from Health Services), Monday-Thursday 8:30am-8:00pm, Friday 8:30am-4:30pm. Peer Help Line, a confidential listening, referral, information and support line, is available during evening hours to provide support.

**Student Food Bank**

All Laurier students are eligible to use the Student Food Bank. Anonymous requests can be made online at WLUSU.COM under the Services tab. All dietary restrictions are accommodated, and food hampers typically last up to a week.

For more information visit WLUSU.com