

**San José State University**  
**Department of Kinesiology**  
**KIN 161, Philosophy of Sport, Section 02, Fall 2017**

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**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday, 7:45 AM - 8:45AM (also by appt.)  
**Class Days/Time:** Monday and Wednesday, 12:00 PM - 1:15 PM  
**Classroom:** SPX 151

### **Course Description**

Emphasis on systems of philosophy, aesthetic and moral considerations, metaphysical fitness and contemporary issues. This course is designed to provide a philosophical analysis of the various sub-disciplines under the umbrella of kinesiology. Issues related to sport, fitness, movement efficiency, health, and rehabilitation will be studied from an axiological (ethics & aesthetics), ontological (meaning & significance), and existential perspective. In addition, how sport, fitness, rehabilitation, and movement activities shape individual and group identity (self-concept & self-esteem) will be examined. The mind/body connection will be discussed in terms of optimal performance and optimal health.

Moreover, the ethical implications of contemporary issues related to sport and physical activity will be addressed including; drug enhanced performance, violence, gender and politics in sport.

#### **The design of this course is fourfold in nature:**

- 1.** To provide analysis of the leading philosophies and theories related to sport, fitness, movement efficiency, and personal health.
- 2.** To understand ethical, aesthetic, and technical issues related to sport, business, fitness, health, and rehabilitation.
- 3.** To discuss the philosophical, sociological, and psychological aspects of sport, movement, fitness, and health behaviors as related to the development of the individual, as well as diverse

groups. This integrative understanding will serve as a basis for developing human potential and skills for responsible social interaction.

4. To understand the role of violence, drugs, and politics in sport, fitness, movement, and rehabilitative activities.

## **Course Goals**

1. To develop a philosophical analysis of fitness, sport, embodiment, drug-enhanced performance, personal health and rehabilitation.

2. To acquire a philosophical understanding of sport, health, fitness, and rehabilitation within the context of a diverse, multicultural, and interdependent world.

3. To identify philosophical criteria for passing judgment on artistic and technical movement forms.

4. To analyze pertinent issues related to sport, fitness, health, and rehabilitation from an axiological (values), ontological (personal meaning), and ethical perspective.

5. To focus on practical ethical issues in sport, that is, to answer the question: how ought we to act in sport (with special attention to how we ought to treat one another in sport settings).

6. To acquire an understanding of the pursuit of excellence, as well as human limitations; the importance of accepting success, failure, and loss will be analyzed and discussed.

7. To explore in implications of physical activity (including sport) on moral choice making.

8. To be able to articulate a professional philosophy relevant to students' professional work practice.

## **Undergraduate Degree Student Program Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

1. Students will be able to explain, identify, and/or demonstrate the theoretical and/or scientific principles that can be used to address issues or problems in the sub-disciplines in kinesiology.

2. Students will be able to effectively communicate in writing (clear, concise and coherent) on topics in kinesiology.

3. Students will be able to effectively communicate through an oral presentation (clear, concise and coherent) on topics in kinesiology.

4. Students will be able to utilize their experiences across a variety of health related and skill based activities to inform their scholarship and practice in the sub disciplines in kinesiology.
5. Students will be able to identify and analyze social justice and equity issues related to kinesiology for diverse populations.

### **Required Texts/Readings**

Jason Holt, *Philosophy of Sport: Core Readings*, Broadview Press, 2014.

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas with proper notice (see syllabus for dates).

### **Classroom Protocol**

1. Since much of the learning in class occurs during in-class discussions, it is vital that students attend class.
2. Make-up exams will not be given except in cases of serious documented illness or unforeseen emergencies.
3. Promptness is required to maintain a positive and productive learning atmosphere.
4. Papers are expected by the class meeting time on the due-date. Late papers will be penalized one half letter-grade per day late (i.e. From an "A" to an "A-").
5. In-class & homework assignments may not be made up unless there are serious and compelling circumstances.
6. Please put away cell phones (and switch them to silent) – use of these devices during class time is not appropriate.
7. Laptops will only be permitted for class related activities – if computers are not being used for classroom activities, you will be asked to discontinue use.
8. Email correspondence should include your full name and the class you are inquiring about (KIN 161). For policy or assignment questions, please check the syllabus first before sending a message to the instructor.

## Methods of Evaluation and Grading Policy

### Methods of Evaluation:

Critical Reflections - 7 assignments, 5 points each, 35 points total

In Class Midterm Examination - 25 points

Ethical Position Debate - 25 points

Debate Position Summaries - 5 assignments, 5 points each, 25 points total

Final Examination - 50 points

    In Class Portion - 20 points

    Take Home Portion - 30 points

Total Points Available - 160

### Grading:

Traditional 90-80-70-60 scale with plus and minuses: 88 is B+, 72 is C-, etc.

Note: “.5” and above in final grade calculations are rounded-up

Example: A final tally of 87.5% rounds-up to 88%, a B+, whereas a final score of 87.4% will *not* be rounded up, and will result in a B for the course.

## Course Assignments

### *Critical Reflections*

I will provide you with seven questions throughout the semester. The questions will be sensitive to the reading material covered in class the days prior. I am looking for concise, thoughtful, critical and informed analysis regarding the reading from which the question is taken.

There will be seven reflections required of you throughout the semester. See the course schedule for assignment dates.

Responses shall be no more and no less than **one full paragraph** (type written, 12 point font, double spaced, one inch margins). I am NOT looking for a summary of the reading, rather, I am looking for individual analysis. You only have a paragraph to get your thoughts across, so, make them count!

## ***Ethical Position Debates***

One of the goals in this course is to get you to think, write and talk about sport in disciplined, thoughtful and creative ways. For many of you it will be an opportunity to discuss and write about sport in ways that you have never thought about or considered. Toward the end of the semester (check the course schedule for exact dates) the class will stage a series of debates that deal with controversial issues in the larger world of sport and Kinesiology in general. Your goal, in teams of about 4 students, is to persuasively argue opposing viewpoints on the issue assigned for your team to debate.

One team will argue the **pro side** (athletes should be allowed to use performance enhancing drugs for example) while the other team will argue the **con side** of the issue. We will assign teams and topics at random, via the trusted “drawing out of a hat” method during the first few weeks of the semester.

The format of the debate is as follows:

One person from each team (in alternate order) will present an opening statement of approximately five minutes outlining their main position on the issue; this is to be followed by a rebuttal of about five minutes by a second member of each team (in alternate order, each second member receives a five minute rebuttal window), followed by rebuttals to the rebuttals by the third member of each team. The point of the rebuttals is to answer possible criticisms and objections to your position you are defending – thus you will have to anticipate possible attacks the other team may make on your position!

At this point, the debate will be opened up to the entire class so they can question and challenge either side; finally, the last member of each debate team gets to make a closing statement.

Every member of the debate team must participate in the oral discussion. You may refer to an outline or notes during the debate, but are **not allowed** to read from either in making your case. It is the responsibility of each team to research the issue and present their case based on that research.

A **minimum of 3 academic sources** (other than the textbook) should be consulted for the debate preparation and those sources should be referenced in the team’s outline. Each team will be required to turn in a detailed outline of their opening, rebuttal, and closing statements along with an indication of what each member specifically contributed. More information on the debates will be provided as we progress through the semester.

## ***Debate Position Summary***

In order to facilitate a productive discussion, class members not participating in the day’s scheduled debates are required to summarize in one page (no more, no less) the pro and con

positions of each side of a debate issue. These typed summaries may be drafted to during the debate, but must be submitted no later than the next class meeting.

In your response, please indicate which side you think provided the most compelling case for their side of the issue. Who do you think won the debate, and why?

**NOTE:** If you are debating, you do not need to turn in a summary in addition to your team outline. (For example, since there are six debates during the semester, you would be required to turn in five one-page summaries of the debate topics that you are NOT involved in arguing.)

### ***Midterm Examination***

The midterm examination will take place in class. You are required to bring in an 882 - E scantron and a No. 2 pencil. The examination will be open book. Lecture notes posted on Canvas and electronic devices will **not be allowed**.

### ***Final Examination***

Your responses for the take home portion of the final examination will be similar to what I expect from your critical reflections. The questions assigned will be generally more difficult, covering more dense and technical subject matter. Also, I expect longer responses.

EACH response shall be a *minimum* of three full paragraphs (type written, 12 point font, double spaced, one inch margins). Try to limit each individual response to a maximum of two pages. If you feel like you need to write more than two pages, feel free, but make sure the material is relevant.

Again, each individual response shall be a *minimum* of three full paragraphs. If you turn in three paragraphs *total*, you will receive a failing grade immediately.

The in class portion of the final will require an 882 - E scantron form and a No. 2 pencil. The examination will be open book. Lecture notes posted on Canvas and electronic devices will **not be allowed**.

## **San José State University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page. For more information on general university policies, visit the following link:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>

## KIN 161 / Philosophy of Sport - Fall 2017 Course Schedule

If necessary, changes to course schedule/material will be disclosed with ample prior notice.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/23 W  8/28 M	<p><b>Course Requirements &amp; Responsibilities - Meet and Greet.</b> <u>Introduction to the Philosophy of Sport</u></p> <p><b>What, Exactly, Is a Sport?</b> <u>Introduction to the Philosophy of Sport</u></p> <p>“Philosophy of Sport” by R. Scott Kretchmar (Posted on Canvas)</p>
2	8/30 W  9/4 M (No Class)	<p><b>The Magic World of Play</b> <u>The Nature of Sport: Playing Games</u></p> <p>“The Nature and Significance of Play” by Johan Huizinga</p> <p><b>Labor Day - No Class</b></p>
3	9/6 W  9/11 M	<p><b>*Critical Reflection #1 is due</b></p> <p><b>Irrational Foundations of Games</b> <u>The Nature of Sport: Playing Games</u></p> <p>“The Elements of Sport” by Bernard Suits</p> <p><b>Again...What is a Sport?</b> <u>The Nature of Sport: Defining Sport</u></p> <p>“The Nature of Sport: A Definitional Effort” by John W. Loy</p>





Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
7	10/4 W          10/9 M	<u>The Nature of Sport: Exploring Physicality</u> “Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment, Motility, and Spatiality” continued.  <b>Is Sport Art? Are Athletes Artists?</b> <u>Rules and Values: Sport Aesthetics</u> “The Aesthetic in Sport” by David Best
8	10/11 W          10/16 M	<b>*Critical Reflection # 4 is due</b> <u>Rules and Values: Sport Aesthetics</u> “Sport, the Aesthetic and Art: Further Thoughts” by Peter J. Arnold  <b>To Dope or Not to Dope... That is the Question.</b> <u>Rules and Values: Banning Drugs</u> “Good Competition and Drug-Enhanced Performance” by Robert L. Simon
9	10/18 W          10/23 M	<b>*Critical Reflection # 5 is due</b> <b>Individual Autonomy vs. Paternalistic Restrictions - Which Side Prevails?</b> <u>Rules and Values: Banning Drugs</u> “Paternalism, Drugs, and the Nature of Sports” by W.M Brown  <u>Rules and Values: Banning Drugs</u> “Paternalism, Drugs, and the Nature of Sports” by W.M Brown continued.
10	10/25 W (Midterm)          10/30 M	<b>Midterm Examination</b> Bring an 882 - E scantron and a No. 2 pencil!  <b>Should Boxing, MMA, and American Football be banned?</b> “Boxing, Paternalism and Legal Moralism” by Nicholas Dixon

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
11	11/1 W  11/6 M	<p>“Boxing, Paternalism and Legal Moralism” by Nicholas Dixon (continued)</p> <p><b>*Critical Reflection # 6 is due</b></p> <p><u>Rules and Values: Breaking Rules</u></p> <p>“Can Cheaters Play the Game” by Craig K. Lehman</p>
12	11/8 W  11/13 M	<p><u>Rules and Values: Breaking Rules</u></p> <p>“Playing Games With Prisoners Dilemmas” by Simon Eassom</p> <p><u>Rules and Values: Breaking Rules</u></p> <p>“Playing Games With Prisoners Dilemmas” by Simon Eassom (Continued)</p>
13	11/15 W  11/20 M	<p><b>Are Athletes “Superior” People? Are Fit People “Better” People?</b></p> <p><u>Rules and Values: Beyond Rules</u></p> <p>“Nietzsche: A Philosopher of Fitness” by Esar Shvartz</p> <p><b>*Critical Reflection # 7 is due</b></p> <p><b>Smack Talkers - Good Competitors or Cowards?</b></p> <p><u>Rules and Values: Beyond Rules</u></p> <p>“Gamesmanship” by Leslie A. Howe</p>
14	11/22 W (No Class)  11/27 M	<p><b>Thanksgiving Holiday - No Class</b></p> <p><b>The “Good Sport” - Virtue Embodied?</b></p> <p><u>Rules and Values: Beyond Rules</u></p> <p>“Sportsmanship” by Randolph M. Feezell</p>

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
15	11/29 W	<b>In Class Debates</b>  Team 1 A v. Team 1 B Team 2 A v. Team 2 B
	12/4 M	<b>In Class Debates</b>  Team 3 A v. Team 3 B Team 4 A v. Team 4 B
16	12/6 W	<b>In Class Debates</b>  Team 5 A v. Team 5 B Team 6 A v. Team 6 B
	12/11 M (Last Class)	<b>Final Examination Review</b>  Come prepared with questions!
17	12/19 Tu. (Final)	<b>Final Exam Period   9:45 AM - 12:00 PM</b>  Bring an 882 - E scantron and a No. 2 pencil!