

HIS 4090: HISTORY OF BASEBALL SPRING 2022

Instructor: William Wood

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Hours: Generally, between 2:30 and 5:00, M-F (or anytime you can catch me)

Course Objectives

This course is admittedly an experiment with two primary objectives. The first is to explore the ways in which professional sports, specifically baseball, have intersected with, reflected, shaped and explained American society from the nineteenth century to the present. This is NOT a course in baseball trivia but rather an attempt to use baseball as a vehicle for interdisciplinary analysis of the American (and eventually even broader, global) experience. In so doing, students will have the opportunity to sharpen their writing skills, as well as their ability to engage in historical thinking and cultural analysis, through various assignments.

The second objective is to find out if Dr. Wood can teach a class that can fairly be described as “fun” in the Rick Kennedy sense of the word, and thus somewhat balance all my “sad history” courses.

Texts

Rader, Benjamin G. *Baseball: A History of America's Game*. Fourth Edition. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2018.

Tygiel, Jules. *Past Time: Baseball as History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Wendel, Tim. *Summer of '68: The Season that Changed Baseball—and America—Forever*. Boston: Da Capo Press, 2012.

Assignments and Expectations

1. Attendance and Participation (30%): My usual policy—treat this class as you would a job. Show up to every class prepared to work; if not, I dock you your pay. In extreme cases, I fire you. Given the uncertainties of this semester, participation may also include activities on Canvas such as Discussion Boards.
2. Reading and quizzes (10%): since nothing annoys me more than students showing up for class without a sniff of preparation, I will give random reading quizzes in the first two minutes of class to help ensure that you are on time and prepared.
3. Movie (or novel) review (20%): All students will select either a movie or a work of fiction that includes baseball as a substantial theme. After viewing/reading, you will submit a 3-4 page analysis of how baseball functions to reveal broader themes in the story. All selections must be approved in advance. This assignment will be **due March 3**.

4. Book review (20%): All students will select a biography or autobiography of a baseball player, manager or executive to read and review this semester. You will submit a 4-5 page analysis of the book, including: 1) what it reveals about the relationship of baseball to society at large and 2) whether the book should be added to or deleted from lists of books for future classes and why. This will be **due April 21**.

5. Final Exam (20%): All students will take a Final Exam covering the entire semester's content at the scheduled day and time: **Tuesday, May 3, 10:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.**

6. I intend to use an unconventional grading scale for this course:

A = 90-100%

B = 70-89%

C = 50-69%

F = 0-49%

[Since this course is a work in progress, the reading assignments will be posted on Canvas.]

[The legal stuff]

PLNU Mission⊗
To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Department of History and Political Science Mission:

As followers of Christ, the Department of History and Political Science promotes wisdom and scholarship about historical contexts and political systems, so that graduates can become local and global leaders in the service of Christ and humanity.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY⊗

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY⊕

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

STATE AUTHORIZATION⊕

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY ⊕

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PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY⊕

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.