

Global Cultural Sporting Environment M5X02091

Lecture 5 – Sport in North America

2020-21



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Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

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Lecture Aims

- ❑ WRIT 1 Assignment recap
- ❑ Introduce key characteristics of sport in North America.
- ❑ Independent study tasks



Module Assessment

WRIT 1 Essay: 4000 words (100% contribution)

To what extent has the relationship between sport and national identity been eroded and replaced by a homogenous global sporting culture? Critically evaluate the arguments for and against this statement and draw your own conclusions.

Define the key concepts and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject; provide examples of how sport contributes to national identity, using historical and present day perspectives. Analysis should also consider the role of the state and international organisations with regards to national identity and sport; and must draw on the case studies, theories and concepts covered within the Module.

Evaluation must be critical in nature and underpinned with appropriate and accurate citations. Students should adhere to the Harvard referencing system.

Assessment Format and Submission

Answers should be presented as a structured essay of 4,000 words, containing an introduction, main body sections and conclusion. Work should be written in Arial font, size 12 with 1.5 or double line spacing.

A list of references must be included at the rear of the essay. References are those sources directly cited in the text.

Please adhere to the specified word limit. Marks will be deducted in accordance with the Academic Quality Handbook if work is 10% above the limit.

Further advice and guidance will be provided during lectures and seminars.

Please note this is an online submission so students must submit their work via Turnitin.

Due date: Friday 11th December 4pm

Lecture/Seminar Schedule: Semester 1

Teaching Week	W/C	Sessions Details
2	28/09/2020	Module Introduction
3	05/10/2020	Sport, culture and national identity – UK and Ireland
4	12/10/2020	Sport, culture and national identity in the Rest of World – The Arab World
5	19/10/2020	Sport, culture and national identity – South East Asia
6	26/10/2020	Sport, culture and national identity in the Rest of World – North America
7	02/11/2020	Globalisation and Sport – Part 1
8	09/11/2020	Globalisation and Sport – Part 2
9	16/11/2020	Culture, commercialisation and consumerism in sport
10	23/11/2020	Professional Team Sports – International Comparisons
11	30/11/2020	Sport for Development and Peace
12	07/12/2020	Assignment Support Session
Christmas Vacation		Monday 14 th December to Monday 18 th January 2021



Sport in North America



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Breakout Group Tasks

- In what ways has/does sport contribute to culture and identity in North America?
- Which sports/sports events are most symbolic of North America?
- To what extent is the North American sports culture becoming a global sports culture?
- Which sport do you think is America's national sport?



'Sport is an integral and pervasive part of social life in North America and for many people North America, and in particular the United States, is the centre of the sporting world', Slack and Parent, 2016, p. 465. **What do you think?**







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Introduction



3 key features characterise North American sport:

1. Commercialisation
2. Professionalisation
3. Media involvement.

(Slack and Parent, 2016)

Sport and the US National Identity

1. The development of American sport has interacted and coincided with the development of American society as a whole (Bairner, 2001). (n.b. sport reflects society).
2. After the Civil War (1861-1865) the search was on for sports that “were national in scope and **Americanizing in effect**” Mrozek (1983, p. xvi).
3. USA, like Ireland, succeeded in constructing its own sporting culture despite links with Britain.
4. Colonialists had established sports before the British inspired nineteenth-century sporting revolution.
5. Sport is connected to American people’s **‘search for heroes, a belief in rugged individualism, and an espousal of the strenuous life’** Bairner (2001, p.93).

Sport and the US National Identity

6. Profound **links have existed between American sport and the military** since the time of the Spanish-American war of 1898.
7. Waves of immigrants to US readily embraced America sports.
8. A national sporting culture was firmly established in the US between 1876-1926. Many of the nation's sporting bodies were founded and sport was aided considerably by developments in the media, and there was a particular emphasis on team sports (Bairner, 2001).
9. American sport history is '**characterised by a tension between expansionism and isolationism**' Bairner (2001, p. 92).



A wide-angle photograph of a large stadium filled with spectators. In the center of the field, a large American flag is being displayed. Several jets are flying in the sky above the stadium, and there are fireworks or smoke effects on the sides. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

“The United States is a nation barely emerging from infancy wherein its identity is weak and veiled in a shroud of uncertainty” but “patriotism remains an all powerful element throughout American sport” Wilcox (1994).

*“...it has been shown that the emphasis on team sports as opposed to individual activities is itself a particularly American characteristic. Of these American games, arguably the most significant, in terms of representations of what it means to be American, is baseball,”
Bairner (2001, p.95).*

Why do you think baseball is America's national game – “the National Pastime”?

Why baseball?

“The answer according to Story (1995) is obvious. Men loved it for the simple reason that is satisfied their need for comradeship, recognition, and order,” Bairner (2001, p. 96).



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“As Bairner (2001) notes, regardless of scale and level of popularity, **any sport that provides a meaningful cultural value for the nation can be regarded as a national sport** of the country in question”, Bairner et al (2016, p.505)



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High School Sport in North America

High School Sport in North America



- Run by NFHS.
- Many schools employ athletic directors and bigger schools will employ paid coaches,
- No formal national champs; competition culminates at state level.
- All Star Games featuring representative teams provide scouting opportunities.



- High school sport run by provincial organisations.
- Schools unlikely to employ athletic directors.
- Coaches drawn from teaching ranks and interested volunteers.
- Provincial championships and no national schools champs.
- NGBs will organise age grade national championships instead.

Problems Facing High School Sport

1. Over emphasis on winning (rankings, win-loss ratios etc) and the higher profile sports, which often cater for male participants.

- US schools therefore encourage students to focus on a single sport, whereas in Canada LTAD principles have been embraced and there is the Canadian Sport for Life Movement (CS4L).

Problems Facing High School Sport

2. **Growing involvement from corporate sponsors.**
3. **Too much focus on participation opportunities for males.** (Female participation has increased, but still lags behind males, as does number of female coaches and administrators).
4. **Concern that high school sports may foster and perpetuate violence.**

Slack and Parent 2016, pp. 467-470

'Evidence suggests that male athletes in contact sports, such as ice hockey, basketball, and football accept a certain level of violence in sport and as the amount of contact in the sport increases so too does the acceptance of violence'

Slack and Parent (2016, p. 469) citing Weinstein *et al.*, 1995.



Inter collegiate sport



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Intercollegiate Sport in North America



- Highly structured and commercialised.
- Student input minimal and programmes run by professional paid staff.
- NCAA has 400 staff, revenues of \$872 million in 2012 and consists of 1076 active schools.
- NCAA sponsors 89 national champs in 23 different sports.
- At highest level same spectacle as professional sport.



- More linked to educational objectives than US approach, however still more commercially orientated than UK student sport.
- 11 staff and estimated exp. of CAD£2.3m in 2013.
- Broadcasts championships on its own TV channel.
- Does not engender same passion and community interest as US campuses.

Problems Facing Intercollegiate Sport

Slack and Parent (2016, p. 474) highlight 3:

1. Gender equity
2. Commercialisation.
3. Lack of student involvement.

(All 3 more pronounced in US than Canada).

Q. Why have these been highlighted as problems?

Increased commercialisation has meant that intercollegiate sport has become an 'entertainment conglomerate, with operating methods and objectives totally separate from and mainly opposed to, the educational aims of the schools that house its franchises' (Sperber, 1990, p.56)

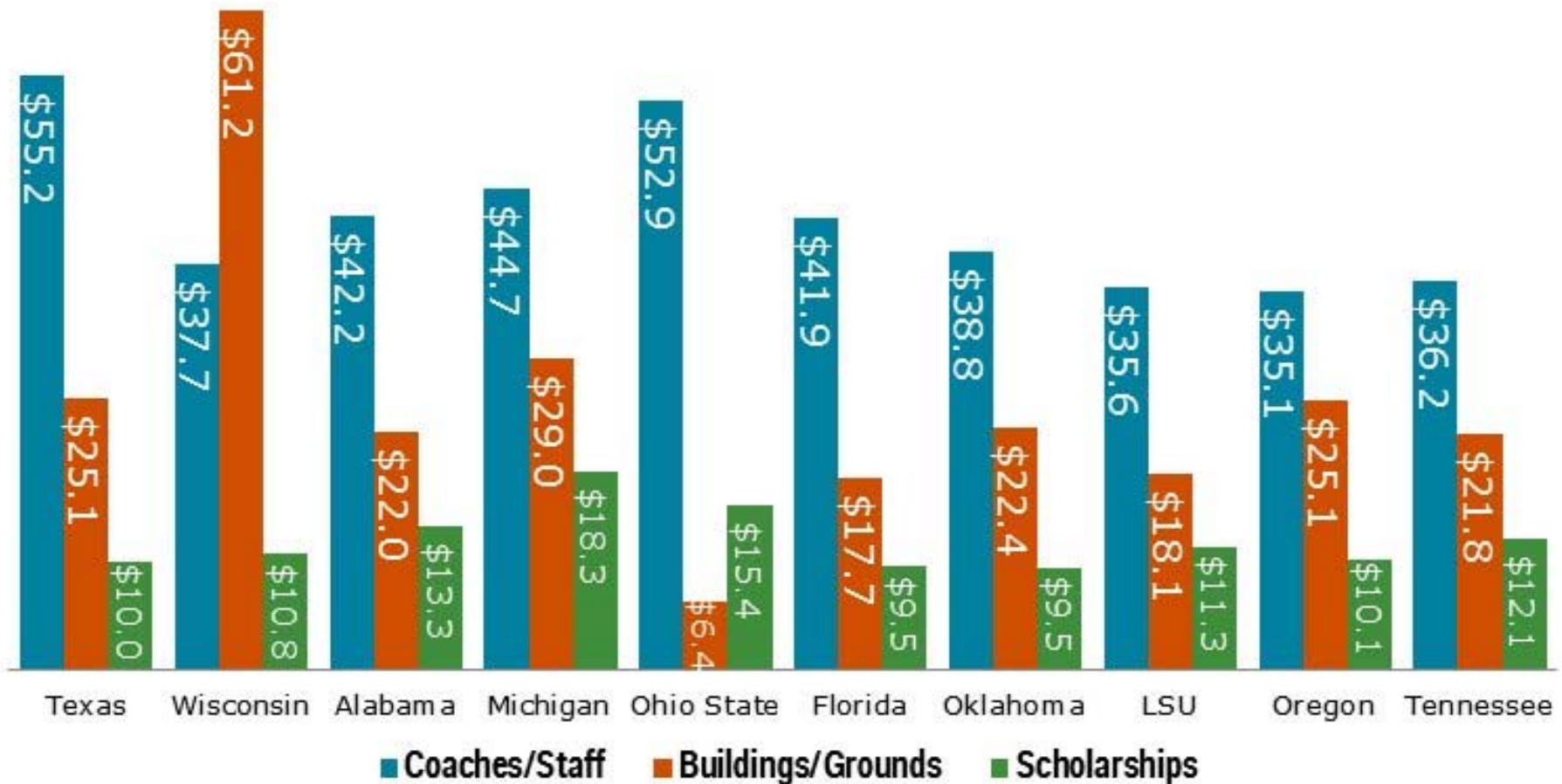


THE UNITED STATES OF COLLEGE FOOTBALL

-THE MOST POPULAR COLLEGE FOOTBALL TEAM BY STATE-

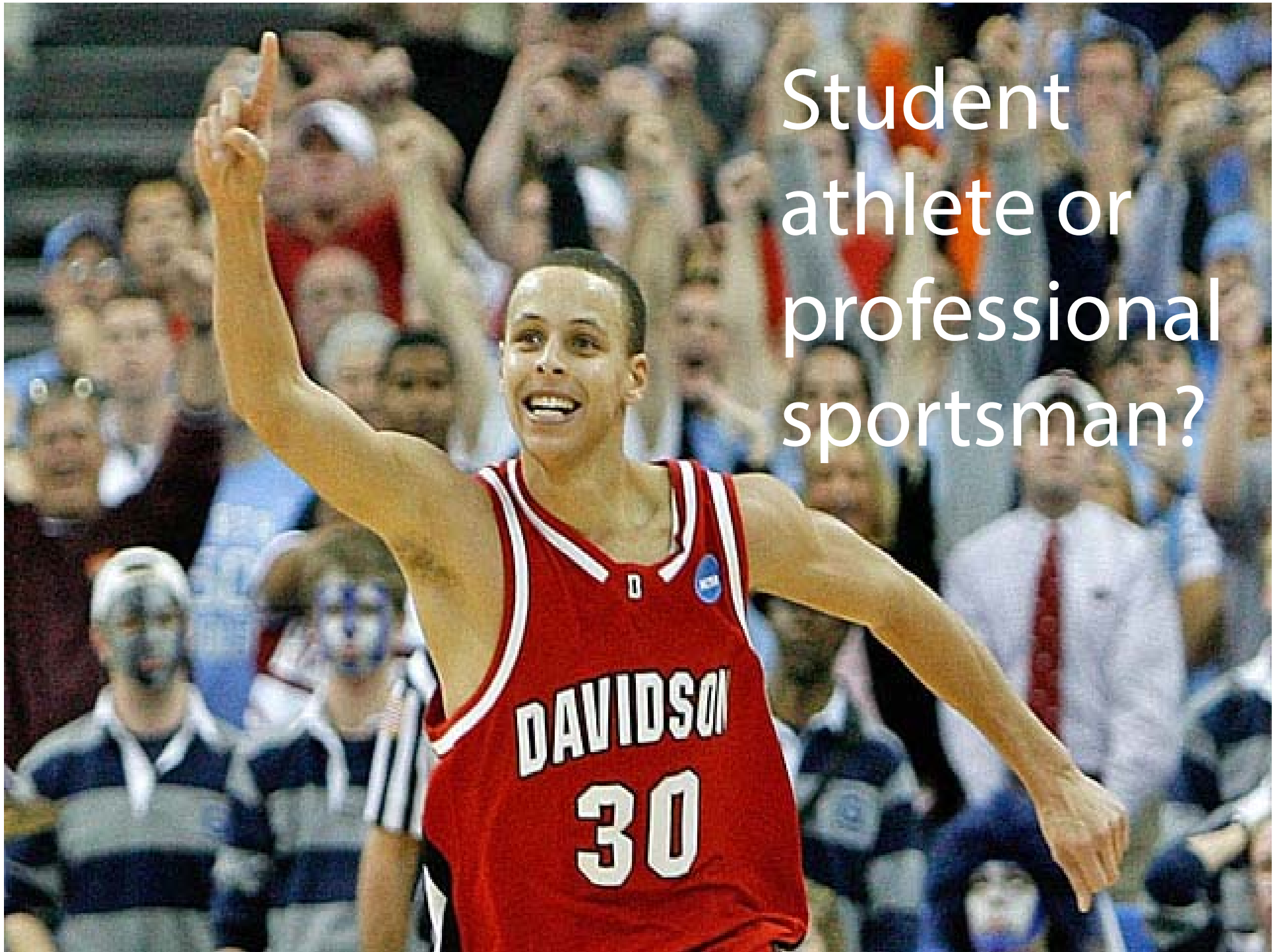


Athletic Department Expenses (2013)



Schools with the 10 largest athletic department revenues
SOURCE: USAToday.com

Student
athlete or
professional
sportsman?





What do you think about the hyper commercial approach to college sport in the US?

Independent Study Task for next Week

Review one of these North American sports in terms of its place in society and extent to which it represents the national identity; has been used as a nation building tool, and in terms of its global reach.

- Baseball in USA - Cieran
- American Football in USA - Chris
- Basketball in USA - Brooklyn
- Ice hockey in Canada - Owen
- Lacrosse in Canada - Callum
- Football in Mexico -
- Wrestling in Mexico - Cedric

Prepare a 2 slide Powerpoint and use this to feedback to the class next week.

Any questions?



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