

**Course Title:** Soccer and Globalization (4 Credit)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Instructor:** Dr. Ryan Kirk, Dept of History and Geography,  
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E-mail is the preferred form of communication. I will be on e-mail during normal working hours (EST) and will check regularly during evening and weekends.

**Course Web site:** We will use **Moodle** extensively for all aspects of this course.

**Required Texts:** 1) *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*, by Franklin Foer

2) *Soccer Against the Enemy: How the World's Most Popular Sport Starts and Fuels Revolutions and Keeps Dictators in Power*, by Simon Kuper (2006 or 2010 edition, but not the original 1994 edition)

*Additional required and suggested readings will be provided in pdf format or html links, and typically consist of journal articles, on-line videos and web sites.*

**Description:** Soccer is the world's most popular sport. Globally, over 250 million people actively play and over three billion people watch the World Cup. This course uses soccer as a case study to better understand the breadth and magnitude of globalization in the modern world. Based on the perspectives of cultural geography, economic geography and political geography, the class explores how soccer both informs and reflects our changing world. Students will study how the modern game has evolved at both club and national levels, particularly in relation to immigration and economics, and will examine how soccer variably infuses different cultures and political systems around the world. Built upon readings, videos, individual research, and discussion forums, students will prepare multiple essays and a research paper on a topic of their choice. Students should have a general understanding of club and national team structures or be prepared for additional background reading.

**Introduction:** My scholarly expertise as a geographer consists of using spatial technologies and spatial analyses to better understand how we use and manage the natural world. My teaching philosophy in geography centers on getting students to improve their spatial reasoning skills to better understand the world broadly or within their own disciplines. This class is ultimately about understanding the spatial patterns and differential effects of globalization in different areas of the world. To get at this challenging topic, though, we will use the case study of soccer. I am not a published scholar of soccer yet (presently working on my first study), but I have been a lifelong participant and fan, and I have significantly expanded my study of the cultural aspects of the game over the past several years. I learned to play soccer in the old West Germany in the 1980s as the son of a US serviceman. I played briefly at a small Midwestern college in the early '90s, but the best teams I ever played on were in England during my undergraduate study abroad semester and with a bunch of West Africans during grad school intramurals. My most memorable playing experience was a pick-up game on a muddy pitch in the Peruvian rainforest with a bunch of locals who spoke Quechua. Indeed, this game manifests itself across the world in a mind-boggling diversity of ways. I very much look forward to exploring this diversity with you while applying a variety of geographic concepts along the way.

**Course Objectives:**

- 1) Gain a fuller understanding and appreciation of the breadth and diversity of globalization around the world.
- 2) Identify and evaluate multiple ways in which club and international soccer overlaps with political, economic and cultural components of globalization.
- 3) Study different leagues around the world to better understand labor and migration trends of globalization.

- 4) Examine the role of soccer in cultural development in different areas of the world.
- 5) Improve critical analysis, written communication, and research skills.

**Course Flow:**

This course is divided into 4 modules, one for each week of the summer term, plus a "finals" period over the last 2 days of the course. Due dates are associated with each module, so you can work on the material at your own pace each week. For each section, you will be expected to read 100-200 pages of material (from the books and beyond), watch a weekly recorded video lecture that supports the content, contribute substantively to on-line discussions regarding these topics, and research one topic in greater detail to present to your classmates in essay form. During the finals period, you will select from a list of questions and write synthesis essays covering major themes covered over the term.

**Statement of flexibility:** Given the on-line format, I am very willing to be flexible on due dates for justified individual circumstances, as long as you give me plenty of advance warning. For example, if you have a vacation planned during part of this term or if you are working or traveling abroad, please let me know the details and we can negotiate any changes accordingly.

**Grades:** Grading will be broken down into the following categories:

| Component                                       | % of Final Grade |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Participation & Lecture Response (5% each week) | 20%              |
| Research Essays (3 @ 10% each, 1000-1300 words) | 30%              |
| Research Paper (1800-2500 words)                | 25%              |
| Final Exam (open notes/open book/open internet) | 25%              |

**Participation:** Participation consists of three parts: 1) answering simple questions from each video lecture to demonstrate understanding of the ideas, 2) contributing to on-line discussions using the Moodle Discussion Board, and 3) responding to your fellow student's research essays. The discussions are designed for you to engage your peers in understanding the content. At a minimum, you must contribute 5 substantive comments each week, and they must be on at least two separate days (e.g., you can't submit all comments the night before the due date.) However, I expect many students will submit more than 5. I will act as discussion facilitator by providing leading questions and correcting misinformation, but I will not actively join the discussions. It is worth your time to contribute to the discussions because they will greatly inform your essays and the final exam. Your comments will be graded each week using the rubric found on the last page of this syllabus.

In addition, you will be expected to provide 2 anonymous reviews of your peer's essays for the first two weeks. The reviews other students give you will not affect your grade; I grade the essays before I grade the reviews. Rather, you will be graded on the thoughtfulness and quality of your reviews to your peers. Reviews will be completed via Moodle surveys. A sample of the review form is available on Moodle.

**Research Essays:** For the first three weeks, you will pick from a set of selected questions and write a position essays based on the readings, the discussions, and your own outside research. The questions for the essays are designed to integrate content from across the module. Essays will be due by 11:59 pm (EST) on each Monday. Peer reviews for the first two are due with 4 days of the respective due dates so that you can get feedback while preparing for the next essays. More detailed instructions and guidelines for the essays are on Moodle.

**Research Paper:** As the centerpiece project, you will develop a large research paper that explores a specific way in which soccer and globalization intersection. This can be a specific aspect of soccer: evolution of tactics, regional styles of play, economic patterns, migration, international development, cultural development, nationalism, or a detailed case study where soccer and society intersect. The final paper will be between 1800-2500 words (approximately 6-9 pages double spaced). The paper will be developed in a multi-step process over the course of the term.

**Final Exam:** The final exam consists of a series of short essay questions that span the material covered throughout the term. You are welcome to use any resources available, including the book, discussion board, websites or other library resources. You will receive the questions two days prior to the official "final exam" date.

## Grading Policies:

Overall grading is criterion-referenced, in which grades are designed to measure how well students perform relative to predetermined standards. Grades follow the traditional scale and the traditional thresholds are guaranteed: (e.g., > 93% = A, 90-93% = A-, etc). No individual assignments will be curved, but the final grades may be curved upwards (never downwards) at the discretion of the instructor based on how class performance and grade distributions match expectations. I will work hard to communicate grade status throughout the semester as well as give indications of any potential final curve.

Grades on each assignment can be contested to the instructor up to 1 week after the assignment is returned for errors or perceived injustice. Send an e-mail containing sound reasons why a grade should be changed.

Incomplete grades are assigned at the discretion of the professor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between the professor and student *before* the last day of the course.

Submitting Assignments: Due dates for assignments are listed on the course schedule (below). All assignments are to be submitted electronically on Moodle, and must be received by the due date and time for full credit. Instructions for submitting assignments are available on Moodle.

Late Assignments: Extensions on the three research essays may be granted if requested in advance with appropriate justification. **Without an approved extension, essays may be submitted up to 3-days late for 80% partial credit, or up to 7-days late for 60% partial credit.** Assignments will not be accepted later than 7 days after the due date without an approved extension. No late assignments will be accepted for the Research Paper and the Final Exam.

Academic Integrity Policy: Students are expected to abide by the Elon Academic Honor Code (available at <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/handbook/honor.xhtml> ). Alleged violations will be dealt with according to University policy.

Special Assistance: Please inform the instructor of any special needs for accessibility and learning, and appropriate measures will be taken to aid success in the course. If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please register with Disabilities Services in the Duke Building, Room 108 (278-6500) for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.

## How to succeed in this course

The primary key to success is consistent effort and critically engaging the material. It is the nature of on-line courses that learning the material is your responsibility. My primary role this term is to provide guidance, structure and feedback to your self-learning experience. In other words, my role is not to pass along knowledge as is typical in most on-campus courses.

The time commitment for this course is supposed to match the total time for any other full-semester or winter term course. This time should be spent reading and critically reflecting on the material, actively joining on-line discussions, and researching, writing, and editing your assignments.

**Schedule Summary**

| <b>Week</b>       | <b>Topics</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Readings</b>                                       | <b>Due Items at end of the module</b>                  |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Week 1</b>     | <b>Focus: introduction &amp; Background</b><br>* Defining globalization<br>* Overview of club and national team structures<br>* Spatial patterns of soccer's expansion<br>* Modern history of the game<br>* Examples of where soccer intersects with politics, economics, culture | All readings and reading prompts are posted to Moodle | Research Essay 1 due<br>Research Paper rationale due   |
| <b>Week 2</b>     | <b>Focus: Politics and Soccer</b><br>* Soccer fans and nationalism<br>* FIFA and supranationalism<br>* The use of soccer in terrorism, dictatorships, and civil wars                                                                                                              |                                                       | Essay 1 reviews due<br>Research Essay 2 due            |
| <b>Week 3</b>     | <b>Focus: economics and migration</b><br>* Player transfer<br>* Comparing leagues around the world<br>* International teams and migration<br>* Club wealth disparities<br>* Case study: US College Soccer                                                                         |                                                       | Essay 2 reviews due<br>Research Essay 3                |
| <b>Week 4</b>     | <b>Focus: Soccer Culture</b><br>* Regional styles of play<br>* Soccer and community around the world<br>* Soccer and international development                                                                                                                                    |                                                       | Research Paper Annotated bib due<br>Research Paper due |
| <b>Final Exam</b> | Final Exam questions sent on [tbd]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                       | Final Exam due 11:59 pm (EST) of final exam day        |

Grading Rubric for the Discussion Board Posts. This rubric rates your contributions across all of your posts, with understanding that not all of your posts will meet all of these criteria.

|                                                                                 | <b>Needs Work</b>                                                                             | <b>Developing Work</b>                                                                    | <b>Accomplished Work</b>                                                                                  | <b>Exemplary Work</b>                                                                                       | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Quality of Posts</b><br><br>2 points                                         | Related to topic/largely fact based                                                           | Limited understanding of problem but some analysis                                        | Adequate understanding of problem although analysis, synthesis evaluation is limited                      | Clear analysis, synthesis and evaluation                                                                    |              |
| <b>Evidence of varied levels of reflection</b><br><br>2.5 points                | No reflection may result in 0 for this section                                                | Response shows postings have been read                                                    | Recognition of multiple perspectives                                                                      | Extension and refinement of perspectives, substantial evidence of original thought                          |              |
| <b>Related new information to prior knowledge (connections)</b><br><br>3 points | No reference to prior knowledge may result in 0 for this section                              | Attempt, but it is weak and/or limited                                                    | Postings reflect prior knowledge related to new information but no evidence of integration of new content | Prior knowledge is actively reference and clearly relates to problem evidence of integration of new content |              |
| <b>Constructive response to other's ideas</b><br><br>1 point                    | No response to others will result in 0 for this section                                       | Recognition of other's opinions but no evaluation of these                                | Recognition of other's opinions but limited evaluation                                                    | Recognition of other's opinions with examples of analysis / syntheses of those opinions                     |              |
| <b>Evidence of support for opinions</b><br><br>1 point                          | No references / studies cited in support of statements made will result in 0 for this section | Attempt to reflect on literature but not clearly stated                                   | Limited evidence of review of literature but attempt is clearly stated                                    | Clear cut evidence of critical review of literature that is correctly cited                                 |              |
| <b>Mechanics of postings (grammar, spelling, organization)</b><br><br>.5 point  | Poor sentence structure and organization with frequent spelling /grammatical errors           | Complete sentences but could improve on organization; has 3 spelling / grammatical errors | Complete sentences but could improve on organization; has 1-2 spelling / grammatical errors               | Complete sentences, well thought out organization. No spelling or grammatical errors                        |              |

Content adapted from: Magnuson, C. (2005). Experiential learning and the discussion board: A strategy, a rubric and management techniques. *Distance learning*, 2, 2. 15-20.

Final rubric borrowed from Dr. Matthew Buckmaster, Elon University.