

Position: Secretary

Lars Dzikus; Associate Professor; Interim Department Head; Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sport Studies; University of Tennessee, Knoxville

### Vision for NASSS

I support our organization's mission "to promote, stimulate, and encourage the sociological study of play, games, sport and contemporary physical culture." When I think of NASSS and its members, here are some qualities I envision: welcoming, diverse, productive, engaged, thoughtful, thought-provoking, inspiring, critical, and creative. Individually and collectively, I want us to make a positive difference in the world (of sports). I pledge to do more to support that vision. I believe it is imperative for all members support NASSS, especially during the current global COVID-19 crisis, political tensions, and economic challenges.

### Qualifications for Office

I have been a member of NASSH since the late-1990s and a member of NASSS since 2010. At conferences for both organizations, I have been a presenter, session organizer, and session moderator. I have also served on NASSS's election committee. At the institutional level, I have been able to hone my leadership skills in a variety of ways. Specific to the role of NASSS Secretary, I held a similar appointment in the Department of Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sport Studies at the University of Tennessee from 2009-2018. As Director of Graduate Studies, I have supported the department's day-to-day operations since 2012. Starting in July 2022, I will serve as the Interim Department Head. I have also served as Co-Director for the Sport and Religion Research Alliance since 2017. Further duties have included service on the Department Leadership Team, the department's Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and the Chancellor's Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People. Further, I have served on my university's Faculty Senate's Graduate Council committee and the associated Academic Policy Subcommittee since 2013.

These opportunities have significantly increased my knowledge about the university's policies and procedures, which has benefited my efforts as Director of Graduate Studies for the department and soon Interim Department Head. I am looking forward to applying and expanding my leadership skills in serving NASSS and its members.

### Summary of Publications

My primary research interests lie in sport and globalization (e.g., diffusion of American football to Europe), sport and religion (e.g., collegiate sport chaplains), and sport and violence (e.g., sexual abuse in youth sport). I have published in the *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *Sportwissenschaft*, *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, and *The Sport Psychologist*, among others. I generally teach graduate courses in Sport Studies including Sociological Aspects of Sport, History of Sport in America, History and Sociology of International Sport, and Social Theories of Sport.

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Rachel Allison is an Associate Professor of Sociology and affiliate of Gender Studies at Mississippi State University in Starkville, Mississippi. She joined MSU in 2014 after receiving her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Vision for NASSS: NASSS is the conference that I prioritize attending every year because of the opportunities it offers for mentorship, professional development, and community. My vision for our organization continues and strengthens the things that NASSS does well: the embrace of multiple theoretical and disciplinary perspectives; opportunities to hear and present research; and supports for graduate students that include Take a Student to Lunch, the graduate student luncheon, and silent auction for graduate student travel support. I think that NASSS would benefit from conversations about improving accessibility and reducing the environmental impact of our meetings, perhaps by considering options for virtual research presentations. I would also like to see NASSS maintain an updated website, as well as an active social media presence, and continue to support the *Engaging Sports* blog to communicate with a public audience. I would like to better advertise opportunities for graduate students and junior scholars to get involved in NASSS, continue to offer workshops and panels on professional development topics such as publishing and teaching pedagogy, and open space for the NASSS membership to weigh in on important issues related to our organization. Finally, I am often the only person from my university attending NASSS and I think about how we can organize the meetings to allow for new connections while recognizing that NASSS is often a space to reconnect with existing friends and colleagues.

Qualifications for Office: I have been a member of NASSS since 2011 and have attended every meeting since with the exception of 2012, when I was in the field collecting data for my dissertation. In addition to presenting research, I have organized and presided over sessions. I served as a NASSS Member-at-Large from 2015-2017. In that capacity, I chaired the book award (2016) and student paper award (2017) committees. I have also served on the student paper award committee (2015), SSJ article award committee (2018), and early career researcher award committee (current). I am also currently an Associate Editor for *Sociology of Sport Journal*. Beyond NASSS, I review posts for the *Engaging Sports* blog on The Society Pages, organized sessions on sport for the 2019 meeting of the American Sociological Association, and served as newsletter editor for the Sport, Leisure, and the Body section of the Society for the Study of Social Problems from 2013-2018.

Summary of Publications: I am a gender and sport scholar whose research to date has focused on women's professional soccer in the U.S. I am the author of *Kicking Center: Gender and the Selling of Women's Professional Soccer* (Rutgers University Press, 2018). I have published articles on sport in journals such as *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *Sport in Society*, and *Social Currents*. In 2019 I was awarded a FIFA Research Scholarship to study fans attending the 2019 Women's World Cup. I work to bring my research to a public audience through op-eds, blog posts, and media interviews. For instance, during the 2019 tournament I wrote an op-ed for the *Washington Post*, was interviewed for an article in the *New York Times*, and spoke on CBC Radio Canada.