



Welcome to the **Emory University 2024 Olympics media tip sheet.**

Our media relations team has identified several Emory experts to discuss the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris. You are welcome to use all material listed. If you would like to be connected to one of our experts, please contact the media relations team at news@emory.edu.

Health & Safety

- **The health risk of the river Seine's poor water quality**

Just weeks before Olympic open-water swimming and triathlon events are scheduled to take place in the river Seine, the river's level of E Coli and enterococci bacteria are reportedly still testing at unsafe levels. What is the potential risk for Olympic athletes? What can be done to get the river's water quality to safe levels prior to the events?

Emory expert: [*Marlene Wolfe, PhD](#), associate professor in the Gangarosa Department of Environmental Health at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health. Dr. Wolfe is an environmental microbiologist, engineer, and epidemiologist who uses environmental detection of pathogens to understand population health and risks, and to implement and evaluate interventions that reduce environmental exposure to pathogens.

- **How to stay healthy and limit risks during a potential European heatwave**

As the anticipation builds for the 2024 Olympics, concerns of a potential heatwave during the events are growing. With outdoor competitions happening around the same time as the historic 2003 European heatwaves, the health and performance of athletes and spectators could be at risk.

Emory expert: [Arash Harzand, MD](#), is an assistant professor of medicine in the division of cardiology and a staff cardiologist at the Atlanta VA Medical Center where he focuses on vascular medicine and echocardiography.

Race & Equality

- **The role of Black athletes in the fight for equality**

The Olympic Games are not only a showcase of athletic prowess but also a platform where the ongoing struggle for racial equality is brought to the forefront. How have Black athletes historically used sports to combat racism and advocate for freedom and equality? What lessons can we draw from their experiences to understand the current dynamics of race and sports?

Emory expert: [Raja Malikah Rahim](#), a 2023-2024 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at Emory University, is a distinguished social and cultural historian specializing in African American history, sport history, and oral history. Her research focuses on the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) and its role in the long Black freedom movement. She explores how African Americans used sports to challenge racism and promote the “politics of Black athletic emancipation.” Her work provides crucial insights into the historical context of racial equality in sports, making her a valuable resource as the world turns its attention to the Olympic Games.

- **The cultural influence of Black athletes in the modern Olympics**

As the world’s eyes turn to the Paris Olympics, the impact of Black athletes on cultural and racial narratives in sports becomes ever more pertinent. How have these athletes shaped the socio-cultural landscape of sports? What roles do they play in addressing issues of race and representation on the global stage?

Emory expert: [Dr. Valerie Babb](#), Andrew Mellon Professor of Humanities at Emory University, is an expert on the cultural impact of Black athletes and the intersection of race and sports. Her latest book, [The Book of James: The Power, Politics, and Passion of LeBron](#), examines the influence of LeBron James beyond the court. She has also been a Scholar-in-Residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Dr. Babb offers profound insights into the role of Black athletes in shaping cultural and racial discourses in sports.

- **History of Black Olympians and the role of race in sports**

Black athletes have historically played a significant role in the Olympic games, not only for record-breaking achievements and inspiring moments, but also for calling attention to political and social issues.

Emory expert: [Carl Suddler](#), associate professor of history, studies the intersections of race, sports and politics. He can discuss Black athletes at the games—both current and historical—as well as the cultural influence of Black athletes and their impact on social justice issues.

Ethics & Politics

- **Ethics, Politics in Sports**

As the Olympics unfold, how do these global sporting events shape national identity and become platforms for political protest? What ethical issues surround fair participation, including gender segregation and "gender testing," and how do doping and other forms of cheating challenge the integrity of the Games?

Erin C. Tarver, assistant professor of philosophy at Emory's Oxford College, is the author of "[The I in Team: Sports Fandom and the Reproduction of Identity](#)" (2017). Tarver can discuss sports and nationalism: the role that the Olympics plays in the development of national identity, or the use of sport as a site for political protest. She also can discuss ethical questions around fair participation, especially gender segregation of competition and "gender testing," and the ethics of doping or other forms of cheating.

Marketing & Sponsorship

- **Brand sponsorships, sportswashing, and generational fan engagement at the Paris Olympics**

With the Paris Olympics fast approaching, what are the top brand-sponsorship stories of the year? How is the phenomenon of sportswashing influencing the Games, and what can we expect in terms of fan engagement across different generations? Furthermore, what does the absence of Caitlyn Clark on the Olympic team signify in terms of missed opportunities in women's basketball?

Emory expert: [Mike Lewis](#), professor of marketing, is a leading authority on sports marketing and fan engagement. He can discuss the year's most notable brand-sponsorship stories, the implications of sportswashing, and generational differences in Olympic viewership. His forthcoming research reveals that Olympic coverage will need to work hard to capture the attention of Gen Z and Millennials, while Baby Boomers remain the most dedicated fans. Lewis also highlights the missed opportunity to leverage the growing interest in women's basketball due to Caitlyn Clark's absence from the team. His insights provide a comprehensive understanding of the commercial and cultural dynamics at play in this year's Olympics.

Economics & Urban Planning

- **Economic impact of the Paris Olympics and urban planning**

As Paris prepares for the Olympics during its peak tourist season, what will be the economic impact on the city? How are city leaders balancing this influx by repurposing existing facilities and architecture for the Games, and what lessons can other cities learn from Paris' approach?

Emory expert: [Tom Smith](#), an economist specializing in sports economics, can provide in-depth analysis on the economic benefits the Olympics will bring to Paris. He can discuss the strategic decisions by city leaders to repurpose existing facilities

and landscape to optimize costs and infrastructure for the Games. Smith's insights also offer valuable lessons for other cities looking to host future Olympic events, highlighting the economic and logistical advantages of sustainable urban planning.

- **What's at stake for Paris as a global city and Olympics host**

Paris 2024 is being billed as the most technically advanced in history, but France's recent deadlocked election and unclear political future could affect preparations or the peaceful conduct of the games.

Emory expert: [Sam Cherribi](#) is an associate teaching professor of Middle Eastern studies and adjunct professor of economics. A former member of the Dutch parliament, Cherribi is a Europeanist, currently in France, who can discuss the recent French elections and their effect on the climate, funding, policies and politics of the games.

Athletic Performance

- **How Olympic athletes respond to and overcome performance challenges**

Every Olympics poses the risk of injury and/or mental challenges for elite athletes competing under tremendous physical and emotional pressure. How will Olympians respond to everything from disruptions of sleep and mental health challenges to potential injuries?

Emory expert: [Hillary Rodman](#) is an associate professor of psychology who specializes in psychology and neuroscience. She is teaching a course this fall on how the brain responds and adapts to conditions of challenge as they pertain to athletic performance.