

MMC 3703/6936  
Sports Media and Society  
#SportsMediaUF  
Fall 2021

T period 3, R periods 3-4: Weimer 1064



**PROFESSOR**

Ted Spiker @ProfSpiker  
2070 Weimer  
352-392-6990  
[tspiker@ufl.edu](mailto:tspiker@ufl.edu)

**OFFICE HOURS**

Tuesday 2-3:30 p.m.: in-person  
Wednesday 1-2 p.m.: [Zoom](#)

Also available by appointment

**TAs**

Xiaobei Chen [xiaobei.chen@ufl.edu](mailto:xiaobei.chen@ufl.edu)  
Josie Clancy [josiyclancy@ufl.edu](mailto:josiyclancy@ufl.edu)  
Steven Walker [@swalker\\_7](mailto:stevenwalker7@live.com)

## OVERVIEW

**This is a joint class with an undergraduate section that includes additional elements for graduate students.** In this survey course, we will cover the relationships between the sports industry, athletes, media, and audience. We will discuss the evolution of sports media from the early sportswriters to the day when athletes control their own messages via social media. We will cover the various mediums—newspapers, magazines, books, radio, TV, online, forums, blogs, and social media—in terms of their history, function, impact, and ethical implications. This course is about developing literacy and critical thinking skills about the sports industry and its relationship with the media.

## COURSE FORMAT: IN-PERSON

We will meet in-person during the assigned class times. Slides will be available on Top Hat (see below) if you miss class. I advise you to team up with people in class to share notes if you need to miss class. We will remain in-person with no during-class Zoom option unless the situation and UF rules change. Attendance policy is in accordance with UF policy regarding documented excuses.

## NO CLASS

Please note we do not meet on:

**Nov. 11, Nov. 25** (holidays)

**Nov. 23** (we will not hold live class, but I will do an online lecture for you to view on your own time; note that you do have a reading quiz that day)

## GRADING

You will be graded on a 1,250-point scale:

A:	1,150-1,250	C:	901-974
A-:	1,125-1,149	C-:	875-900
B+:	1,100-1,124	D+:	850-874
B:	1,025-1,099	D:	775-849
B-:	1,000-1,024	D-:	750-774
C+:	975-999	E:	0-749

## ASSIGNMENTS

600 points: 4 exams

150 points: 3 reading quizzes

100 points: Reply to 5 discussion posts

25 points: Intro post (15) and final post (10)

125 points: Attendance/participation/engagement (Top Hat)

250 points: Presentation

**Exams:** Exams will cover material from lecture only (no reading). They will be taken in Canvas during class periods on Tuesdays. **Do not come to class on exam days.** You may use your notes but not other people. Exam dates:

Sept. 21

Oct. 12

Nov. 16

Dec. 7

**Reading Quizzes:** Reading quizzes will cover the selected readings for that quiz. You may use your notes and the readings but not other people. Quizzes are open for 12 hours from after class until midnight).

By Sept. 28 11:59 p.m.

By Oct. 19 11:59 p.m.

By Nov. 23 11:59 p.m.

**Discussion Posts:** You must reply to 5 discussion posts of your choosing throughout the semester. Reply to three before Oct. 19, and two after that and before Dec. 7. You do not get extra credit for replying to more than the minimum. And you must space them out throughout the semester (3 and 2 as outlined above). I will post a lot of options for you to respond to—only respond to ones you want (5 total for the semester). Each post is worth 20 points. To get full credit, your responses should be about 75-100 words with clear and original thoughts and correct mechanics.

**Intro Post and Final Post:** In the discussion board, you will see a post labeled Intro Post and Final Post. Responses should be about 75 to 100 words each to get full credit. These are separate from your 5 discussion-post replies. See deadline dates in Canvas.

**Presentation:** See assignment in Canvas.

**Attendance/participation/engagement:** We will be using **Top Hat Pro** ([www.tophat.com](http://www.tophat.com)) for class participation. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message. For instructions on how to create a Top Hat account and enroll in our Top Hat Pro course, please refer to the invitation sent to your school email address or consult Top Hat's Getting Started Guide (<https://bit.ly/31TGMlw>).

If you already have a Top Hat account, go to <https://app.tophat.com/e/080662> to be taken directly to our course. If you are new to Top Hat, follow the link in the email invitation you received or...

- Go to <https://app.tophat.com/register/student>
- Click "Search by school" and input the name of our school
- Search for our course with the following join code: 080662

The instructor and TAs cannot provide support for Top Hat. See Top Hat support directly: [support@tophat.com](mailto:support@tophat.com). **If you have connection issues during class, write your answers down your answers on a piece of paper with your name and UFID. Hand that paper to a TA at the end of the class period.**

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The weekly course schedule can vary because of guest speakers and current events. Because of the fluidity and nature of the course, we do not lock in lecture subjects for the entire semester. I will, however, give you previews of upcoming classes about two weeks at a time, so you can know what is ahead. In general, most of the lectures and material get broken down into these major subject areas:

Sports Media Basics  
Case Studies of Conflict  
A Brief History (and Look into the Future) of Sports Media  
Race, Gender, and Speech in Sports Media  
Social Media in Sports  
Olympics and International Sports Media  
Covid-19 and Sports Media in Times of Crisis

## READINGS

### For Quiz 1

"How ESPN Ditched Journalism..." Deadspin, Nov. 12, 2012  
<https://deadspin.com/how-espn-ditched-journalism-and-followed-skip-bayless-t-5929361>

"The Worldwide Leader in Sextapes," GQ, January 19, 2011

<https://www.gq.com/story/aj-daulerio-deadspin-brett-favre-story>

“Sportswriting’s future may depend on the Athletic, which is either reassuring or terrifying,” Washington Post, March 4, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2020/03/03/the-athletic-sports-media-future/> or PDF in “files”

“Past, Present, Future: How Barstool Sports Is Swinging for the Fences in Digital Media,” Forbes, July 11, 2017. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/markjburns/2017/07/11/past-present-future-how-barstool-sports-is-swinging-for-the-fences-in-digital-media/#4ee97cec4edb>

### For Quiz 2

“Female athletes still face rampant sexism on the job,” Michael Serazio, Quartz, June 21, 2019. <https://qz.com/1649524/female-sports-journalists-still-face-rampant-sexism-on-the-job/>

“Sports media’s racial reckoning,” Sarah Fisher and Kendall Baker, Axios, July 7, 2020. <https://www.axios.com/sports-media-race-reckoning-985b6ca2-acf3-4df6-8eeb-8b092ed8bcf8.html>

“Crafty vs. Sneaky: How Racial Bias in Sports Broadcasting Hurts Everyone,” Karen Given, WBUR, June 26, 2020. <https://www.wbur.org/onlyagame/2020/06/26/racial-stereotypes-sports-broadcast-bias>

“Kaepernick Saga Raises Questions About the Media,” Lonnae O’Neal, The Undeclared, September 1, 2016. <https://theundeclared.com/features/kaepernick-saga-raises-questions-about-the-media-diversity/>

### For Quiz 3

“10 Ways Social Media Ruined Sports,” Bleacher Report, March 22, 2016. <https://bleacherreport.com/articles/2626562-10-times-social-media-ruined-sports>

“Sports are Coming Back. Is Sports Media Coming Back with It?” The Ringer, July 15, 2020. <https://www.theringer.com/sports/2020/7/15/21325404/sports-return-coronavirus-nba-mlb-nfl-journalism-media>

“Eyes of the Storm,” Sports Illustrated, March 1998. <https://vault.si.com/vault/1998/03/02/eyes-of-the-storm-when-tennessees-whirlwind-of-a-coach-pat-summitt-hits-you-with-her-steely-gaze-you-get-a-dose-of-the-intensity-that-has-carried-the-lady-vols-to-five-ncaa-titles>

## TWEETS OF THE WEEK

You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit through Tweets of the Week, using the hashtag #SportsMediaUF. I will also experiment with other engagement on social media, including giving exam hints and other extra-credit opportunities.

## RECORDING OF CLASS

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture **does not** include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments

(quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## **INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY STATEMENT**

The University of Florida’s College of Journalism and Communications Department of Journalism embraces a commitment toward an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class and religion. We expect each of our journalism courses to help foster an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. We will be discussing topics within the course and in current-events discussions that will look at many of these issues. I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions — please be respectful of others’ emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense.

## **CLASSROOM NEEDS**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

## **EVALUATIONS**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

## **HONOR CODE**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click here to read the Honor Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

## **ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR**

Professor Ted Spiker is the chair of the UF department of journalism and has overseen the department's magazine courses since he arrived at UF in 2001. He was recognized as the University of Florida Teacher of the Year for 2016-17, and he was the Summer 2019 UF commencement speaker. A graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a former articles editor at *Men's Health*, Spiker has had work published in *The Washington Post*, *TIME.com*, *Esquire.com*, *Outside*, *O the Oprah Magazine*, *Fortune*, *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Runner's World*, *Reader's Digest*, *Best Life*, and many others. He is also the author of one book and the co-author of 25+ books. He has moderated public interviews of Erin Andrews, Abby Wambach, Alex Rodriguez, Terry Crews, Josh Peck, Pitbull, a bunch of people from *The Office*, and many others.

## **ABOUT THE TAs**

Steven Walker is a senior Journalism Sports and Media student at UF. He is the current editor-in-chief of *The Alligator*, and has bylines in the *Orlando Sentinel*, *Miami Herald* and *Associated Press*. Steven is an avid fan of the *Orlando Magic*, the *Green Bay Packers* and (of course) the *Florida Gators*.

Josie Clancy is a rising junior studying journalism with a specialization in sports and media, hoping to get a master's degree in mass communication. She played softball for 14 years and would definitely argue that although UF is an everything school, the Gator softball program is unmatched.

Xiaobei Chen is a Ph.D. student at UF concentrating in health communication. She is a former journalist and PR practitioner.