

## **MMC 3210 - Sports Media Law & Ethics**

**Fall 2021**

**[3 credits]**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Eric Esterline

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** eesterline@jou.ufl.edu / (352) 846-0172  
*[PLEASE USE CANVAS MESSAGING AS PRIMARY FORM OF CONTACT]*

**PURPOSE OF COURSE:** MMC 3210 is designed to offer instruction and knowledge in sports law and ethics. Even as non-lawyers, it is important that media professionals working in the sports industry have a grasp on applicable laws and ethical considerations. Having such a familiarity will allow students to have the necessary understanding of issues so as to clearly and thoroughly communicate them to their media audiences.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES & GOALS:**

- (1) To understand the intersection between the media and sports and the legal and ethical implications associated therein.
- (2) To acquire the appropriate ethical and legal knowledge and skills to work in the sports industry as a media professional.
- (3) To obtain a keen understanding of sports as an industry by drawing on a cross-section of various areas of the law.
- (4) To identify and respond to legal and ethical issues associated with sports management, contracts and regulations.
- (5) To develop one's own awareness of sports law and ethics with an eye toward identifying and critiquing competing legal and ethical theories.

**COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:** General questions for the course should first be posted to the general discussion board. If your questions are not sufficiently answered, then please email the instructor through the email tool for the course management system.

**COURSE ELIGIBILITY/PREREQUISITES:** None.

**COURSE READING:** NO TEXTBOOK IS REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE. READING MATERIALS FOR CLASS WILL BE POSTED AND SHOULD BE READ **BEFORE** WATCHING LECTURES.

### **COURSE MODULES:**

**Module #1 - Course Welcome & the American Legal System**

**Module #2 - Sports Contracts & Negotiations**

**Module #3 - The Role Of Sports Agents & Agency Law**

**Module #4 - Labor Law, Collective Bargaining & Antitrust Law In Sports**

**Module #5 - Intellectual Property Considerations & Issues in Sports**

**Module #6 - Religion & Sexuality in Sports**

**Module #7 - Women in Sports**

**Module #8 - Race in Sports**

**Module #9 - Law & Ethics In Sports Media And Reporting**

**Module #10 - How Social Media Has Changed The Face Of Sports**

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

**PARTICIPATION POLICY:** Because this is an entirely online course, you are not expected to make an appearance anywhere at any time. However, you most certainly ARE expected to participate in the discussions and complete your quizzes and exam at the designated times.

**DISCUSSION BOARD & QUIZ POLICY:** All discussion boards and quizzes are open-resource; however, please avoid using random sites such as Wikipedia. **Your #1 resource should be the class lectures.** Late submissions on any discussion board or quiz will result in point deductions for each day past the due date listed in the syllabus.

**EXAM POLICY:** There will be one (1) exam during this semester. THERE IS A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR MISSED EXAMS. IF YOU MISS THE EXAM, YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO ACCEPT A ZERO FOR THAT EXAM.

**MAKE-UP POLICY:** An unexcused, missed exam will result in a zero on the exam (this includes contacting the instructor after the exam if you are ill). If you are sick or have an emergency that prevents you from taking the exam at the scheduled time, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible. **Documentation of the illness or emergency will be required.** If you need to schedule a make-up exam, please email the course instructor giving a detailed explanation and attaching any documentation that verifies your reasoning. A make-up exam will be given at the sole and absolute discretion of the instructor. Scheduling a make-up exam is the responsibility of the student and should be done—if at all possible—before the scheduled exam time. If you have a serious emergency or death, please contact the Dean of Students Office ([www.dso.ufl.edu](http://www.dso.ufl.edu)) and they will contact your instructor so that you do not have to provide documentation of the emergency/death in order to get a make-up exam. A make-up exam is NOT permitted for the following reasons (among others): family vacation, sporting event travel, attending weddings (unless you are IN the wedding), having exams in other classes on the same day. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with the university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

### **UF POLICIES:**

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exam. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as

soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

**NETIQUETTE - COMMUNICATION COURTESY:** All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. Please consider the following pointers for emailing your course instructor and/or interacting with fellow students in the discussion boards:

- Send your email to the address preferred by your instructor. For this course, your instructor prefers to be contacted with the email tool in the course management system.
- Keep your message as clear and concise as possible. Reading a three-page dissertation on the importance of your family vacation is not fun for anyone except your mother.
- All uppercase letters indicates shouting...PLEASE AVOID THIS UNLESS YOU ARE EXTREMELY HAPPY!
- Refrain from profanity in your message, even if it is meant to be humorous.
- Refrain from using texting abbreviations such as OMG or BTW.
- Close your emails respectfully and politely.

Please review the Netiquette Guide for Online Courses at: <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

## **GETTING HELP:**

For issues with technical difficulties, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://request.it.ufl.edu/>

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from Helpdesk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

## **GRADINGS POLICIES:**

The following table outlines the five (5) components of the course on which you will be evaluated.

Evaluation Components	% of Total Grade
Discussion Posts	20%
Quiz #1	20%
Quiz #2	20%
Quiz #3	20%
Final Exam	20%

**Exam** – The final exam will consist of fifty (50) questions and will be cumulative, meaning it will test on ALL MODULES. Question formats *may* include: fill in the blank, multiple choice, multiple response, and true/false. Students shall be permitted to use notes and material, however, the assistance of another student and/or online searches are strictly forbidden. Exam questions are generated by the course instructor and the majority of focus should be given to the lecture notes when studying. The exam will need to be completed between the time period of April 24, 2021 – April 30, 2021. Once accessed you will be given 45 minutes to complete the exam.

**Discussion Posts** – There will be a discussion post activity after each module. You are to discuss/answer at least two (2) of the topics posed in each discussion board. The goal for those discussion board posts is to start thinking more critically about the material. These discussion posts will require you to interact with a small group of your classmates—which will allow you to give and receive feedback. *Failure to adequately discuss/answer at least two (2) posed questions will result in a penalty to be decided solely by the instructor.*

**Quizzes** – You will have a total of three (3) quizzes- each consisting of twenty (20) questions. Students shall be permitted to use notes and material, however, the assistance of another student and/or online searches are strictly forbidden. Quiz questions are generated by the course instructor and the majority of focus should be given to the lecture notes when studying. The quizzes will need to be completed within the allotted week period provided. Once accessed, you will be given 15 minutes to complete each quiz.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Quiz #1 will test Modules # 1 & 2
- Quiz #2 will test Modules # 3 & 4
- Quiz #3 will test Modules # 5 & 6

**GRADING SCALE:** Any discrepancies with grades should be pointed out to the instructor before the last day of class. See the UF undergraduate catalog web page for information regarding current UF grading policies: [www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades](http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades).

The following table describes the grade scale and GPA impact of each letter grade. Minus grades are not assigned for this course.

Letter Grade	Percent Associated with Each Letter Grade	GPA Impact of Each Letter Grade
A	90.00-100%	4.0
B+	87.00-89.99%	3.33
B	80.00-86.99%	3.0
C+	77.00-79.99%	2.33

C	70.00-76.99%	2.0
D+	67.00-69.99%	1.33
D	60.00-66.99%	1.0
E	0-59.99%	0

## **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

It is HIGHLY recommended that you adhere to the following schedule as closely as possible. You will need to complete all activities for a given week by 11:59 pm the Sunday of each week. For example, all activities for Module 1 are due at 11:59pm on January 24, 2021. The course is set up so that you must move through each module sequentially. You will not be able to access Module 2 lectures (etc.) prior to completing Module 1. It is HIGHLY recommended that you approach each module in the following order:

- Complete the required reading pages
- Watch and take plenty of notes on the lecture videos
- Complete Discussion Posts & Quizzes

## **STUDY TIPS FOR CLASS:**

- Read the posted material BEFORE you watch a lecture.
- Snow-ball the lecture notes. Begin studying lecture material immediately after the first lecture. Then, after the second lecture, begin your studies with day one lecture material. Continue this all the way up to the exam.
- Engage your classmates. This material is meant to be discussed...and you can't do that well with just yourself. Post questions to the discussion board. Exchange contact information and have a phone conversation. Post cool videos you find regarding related material to the discussion boards. ENGAGE!
- If there is something in the reading that was NOT in lecture, you are not expected to know it.
- **CALENDAR ALL DUE DATES AND SET REMINDERS.** Google Calendar is a great resource for this. Please take the needed 15-20 minutes to set the dates on a calendar with appropriate reminds. You are all busy and you might understandably forget to submit a discussion post or take a quiz on time. This happens every semester and unfortunately, your grade will suffer unnecessarily. **PLEASE TAKE THIS BIT OF ADVICE SERIOUSLY.**

## **Respect for Diversity Statement:**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. 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. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

It is imperative that there be an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom. 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. 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. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention. If and when this occurs, there are several ways to alleviate some of the discomfort or hurt you may experience:

1. Discuss the situation privately with me. I am always open to listening to students' experiences, and want to work with students to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.
2. Discuss the situation with the class. Chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material. Discussion enhances the ability for all class participants to have a fuller understanding of context and impact of course material and class discussions.
3. Notify me of the issue through another source such as your academic advisor, a trusted faculty member, or a peer. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue.

## **U Matter, We Care:**



Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Module	Corresponding Period	Assignment/Quiz	Date Due
<b>1</b>	<b>August 23 – September 5</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	9/5/21
		Post to discussion board	9/5/21
<b>2</b>	<b>September 6 - September 12</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	9/12/21
		***No discussion board***	N/A
		Complete Quiz #1	9/12/21

<b>3</b>	<b>September 13 – September 19</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	9/19/21
		Post to discussion board	9/19/21
<b>4</b>	<b>September 20 – October 3</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	10/3/21
		Post to discussion board	10/3/21
		Complete Quiz #2	10/3/21
<b>5</b>	<b>October 4 – October 10</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	10/10/21
		Post to discussion board	10/10/21
<b>6</b>	<b>October 11 – October 24</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	10/24/21
		***No discussion board***	N/A
		Complete Quiz #3	10/24/21
<b>7</b>	<b>October 25 - October 31</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	10/31/21
		Post to discussion board	10/31/21
<b>8</b>	<b>November 1 – November 7</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	11/7/2021
		Post to discussion board	11/7/2021
<b>9</b>	<b>November 8 – November 14</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	11/14/2021
		Post to discussion board	11/14/2021
<b>10</b>	<b>November 15 – November 21</b>		
		Complete all Module readings & lectures	11/21/2021

		Post to discussion board	11/21/2021
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>December 6 – December 15</b>		
		Complete Final Exam	12/15/2021