

RTV4959C: Sports Capstone

Fall 25

College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida

Instructor: Eric Esterline

Class Meeting: Thursdays, Periods 4-6 (1:55 p.m. - 4:55 p.m.)

Place: WEIM 3024

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Office Hours: Tuesdays (11a-noon), Wednesdays (11a-noon)

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Course Site: <https://ufl.instructure.com>

Course Text: NONE

Readings and Resources will be posted and available online.

Overview and Objectives

Usually taken in the last year of study, the capstone sports portfolio course integrates material from previous courses and requires each student to prepare a final project as well as a comprehensive e-portfolio to assist the student in a job search. Students completing the course will demonstrate progress in their written, oral, and communication skills, as well as the ability to think creatively and critically. Those students who complete this course will be prepared to enter and perform satisfactorily in entry-level sports communication and media positions.

Course Learning Objectives

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- (1) Interpreting the current issues affecting the sports industry and how they relate to careers in the sports industry
- (2) Enhance the understanding of the ethics and values in the sports industry;
- (3) Explaining and practicing the skills needed in a job search;
- (4) Planning, producing and improving a resume;
- (5) Producing and organizing their brand through social and media platforms;
- (6) Planning and producing a portfolio to showcase examples of the student's best work to professional audiences

(7) Executing and Implementing the skills and knowledge they have obtained throughout their undergraduate career to produce a final “capstone” multimedia project

College of Journalism and Communications Objectives

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation, all students should be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the US
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

Course Eligibility

Students must have received a grade of “C” or better in Sports Reporting (JOU4313c and Sports Communication (PUR3463).

Course Grades

The following table outlines the point-accruing components of the course. The total points earned from each component will be summed and divided by the total points possible in the course.

Evaluation Components	Points Per Component	% of Total Grade
Sports Industry Current Events Discussions (15)	10 pts each = 150 pts	10%
Your Sports Job Search Assignments	Various = 75 pts	
Resume Development Project (4) Current Resume = 25 pts Future Resume = 25 pts	150 pts	10%

Cover Letter = 25 pts Final Resume = 75 pts		
Professional Branding Project (10)	30 pts each = 300 pts	20%
Electronic Portfolio Project (3) Portfolio Check 1 = 50 pts Portfolio Check 2 = 50 pts Final Portfolio = 300 pts	400 pts	27%
Capstone Project (6) Pitch = 25 pts Pre Reporting = 50 pts Sources = 25 pts Draft 1 - 50 pts Draft 2 = 50 pts Final Project = 300 pts	500 pts	33%
Total	1600 pts	100%

Assignment Descriptions

SPORTS INDUSTRY CURRENT EVENTS DISCUSSIONS (150 POINTS)

We will hold discussions surrounding various topics in the sports industry, sports careers, or our guest speakers. You will be required to post your thoughts and respond to classmates as well. There will be a rubric for you to follow to ensure you participate and complete it properly.

YOUR SPORTS JOB SEARCH ASSIGNMENTS (75 POINTS)

You will read specified chapters from the provided PDF How to Prepare for Your Sports Job Search and respond to different prompts related to the chapter. These assignments will help you develop a plan of action searching for your job so that you will be more successful in finding a job that fits your needs and skills.

PROJECTS - All projects will be expected to be of high quality work. On days projects are due, students will present a report on their work in class and receive feedback from the instructor and classmates.

Projects will be posted on the course website.

- **Capstone Project (500 points)** - This assignment allows you to produce a new project according to your major option and interests. Eligibility: (1) You may not complete a project in a genre unless you have completed specific coursework for that genre. (2) Your capstone cannot be a rehash or improvement on a previous project, whether produced for class or not. It needs to be a new project. Your pitch must be approved prior to beginning your project, and not all project ideas will be approved. The final project is worth 250 points. The other 250 points are distributed throughout the semester

for checkpoints during the composition of the project.

- **Professional Brand Project (300 points)**- Knowing your personal brand can not only help you market yourself to future employers, it can help you find organizations that are a good fit for you. As a result, it is important to be able to articulate your personal brand before you begin your job search. In this project you will use multiple in-class activities to summarize your personal brand. This project is done over the course of the semester in 10, 30 point assignments.
- **Resume Development Project (150 points)** - 1-2 pages, for the purpose of submitting to potential employers. Must be designed to assignment specifics. The purpose of the resume assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to take an inventory of your skills and experiences as you begin to think about your professional career.
- **Portfolio Site Project (400 points)** - Each student will accumulate items for their portfolio. This portfolio should help prepare you for the opportunities and responsibilities of a college graduate. It will be graded on its quality and completeness, meaning that it should provide excellent artifacts of student learning, as well as a sufficient quantity of such works. Your portfolio must include your capstone project and all “portfolio-required” assignments. The portfolio is designed to house your work done in various classes and/or experiences and must be available online.

LAB - Students will be required to attend a lab session once a week to work on current projects. At the beginning of the semester (Weeks 1-7) students will have lab time to work on their portfolio sites and resumes. Labs will be conducted by the instructor, other faculty and staff from the career resource center. The last half of the semester (Weeks 8-16), students will come in each week to work on different storytelling aspects of their capstone project. We will be working with a multitude of software in the Adobe Creative Suite as well as content platforms like WordPress and students have the opportunity in the lab to develop their websites, social media profiles and put to practice some of the strategies discussed in class. **Attendance is required and expected each week for Lab. See the weekly calendar for Lab topics.**

Grading (grades are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number for grading purposes)

935-1000 points	= A	895-934 points	= A-		
865-894 points	= B+	825-864 points	= B	795-824 points	= B-
765-794 points	= C+	725-764 points	= C	695-724 points	= C-
665-694 points	= D+	625-664 points	= D	595-624 points	= D-
0-594 points	= F				

Course Outline

Week 1	● Introduction to class
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagining life after college • Discussion of effective capstone pitch and project • Show examples of past projects
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Pitch Due, present to class • Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Discuss Pre-Reporting • Career Development • Professional Brand Project - What are your strengths • Guest Speaker -
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Pre-Reporting Questions Due • Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Communicating with and securing sources • Job Search Strategies • Professional Brand Project - What are your weaknesses
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Sources Due (discuss and critique) • Current Resume Due • Professional Brand Project - Tap into your values
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Resume Due • Professional Brand Project - The power of passion • Creating your Portfolio Website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Show examples ◦ Go over each platform • Resume Development Project • Guest Speaker -
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover Letter Due • Professional Brand Project - Pursuing your passions • Networking; Resume Development Project
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Resume Due <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Resume Critiques and Analysis • Professional Brand Project - Your network • Requirements for Portfolio Website-Work Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Video, written and social, best way for displaying • Guest Speaker -
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MidTerm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Students will provide an update of Capstone Project which will include sharing content gathered with peer evaluation and guest evaluation
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Draft 1 Due • Instructor and Peer Critiques • Written and interpersonal communication; Discussion of effective portfolio site

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Brand Project - Your online brand
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Interviews; Capstone and portfolio workshop • Requirements for Portfolio Website-About Me <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Resume, social, home page • Professional Brand Project - Elevator pitch
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Draft 2 Due <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Instructor and Peer Critiques via Canvas
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio Site Draft Due • Using LinkedIn to your advantage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Connecting with appropriate professionals ◦ UF Sports Alumni Network • Guest Speaker -
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Final Capstone projects • Capstone Final Draft Due
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone and Portfolio Presentations

Academic Policies & Resources

<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolices>

Absences and Make-up Work

Students are expected to be in class on time and remain until dismissal. Absences are unexcused when the professor has not been notified of an acceptable reason within 24 hours of the class meeting. When absent, please contact a fellow student to find out what was missed. You are responsible for all material covered or assigned. Your grade on late assignments will drop to a "C" immediately and then 10% more each day for every day after the initial 24 hours. **If a technical problem occurs that prevents the timely submission of an assignment, you should first contact your instructor and/or TA and then the UF Help Desk.** Follow up with an email to the instructor that includes an update and Help Desk Ticket #.

***NOTE: Topic schedule subject to change based on guest availability and other factors.**