



# **JOU 4313C: SPORTS REPORTING**

# SPRING 2026

Monday | Period 6-8 (1:55 PM - 4:55 PM) | 1090 Weimer Hall

## Professor Ryan Hunt

Office Hours: Tue. & Wed, 1pm-3pm OR by appointment. Weimer Hall #3040D

[ryanhunt@ufl.edu](mailto:ryanhunt@ufl.edu) Office: (352) 392-6303; Mobile: (908) 967-2560

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sports reporting is much more than just game coverage. A great sports writer must look beyond the box score in order to inform, educate and entertain fans in numerous ways – on multiple platforms. This course is designed to broaden a student’s understanding of effective sports reporting and to sharpen and develop the student’s writing, reporting and other skills required in today’s industry.

## **COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- To expose you to multiple forms of sports reporting and improve your skill set.
- To learn techniques used by sports reporters and apply them to your career.
- To produce original content of professional quality across various genres.
- To get a better understanding of the industry and the change in consumption habits

## **COURSE TOPICS**

### *Techniques*

Understanding audiences  
Knowledge of AP Style for sports  
What makes a good sports story  
Asking questions, getting quotes  
Developing story ideas, content plans  
Working on deadline  
Developing your voice, style

### *Genres*

Game coverage (previews, recaps)  
News coverage (original, aggregation)  
Commentary and analysis  
Alternative story types (listicles, rankings)  
Multimedia: Video, podcasts  
Sports betting and its impact  
Social media

## **READING**

*There is no mandatory textbook for this class. However, you are expected to read...*

- [CJC Sports Style Guide](#): I put this together not just to replicate The Associated Press Stylebook, a guide most professional organizations use, but also to incorporate local elements or other style questions you may run across that are NOT included in the book. Bookmark this. Use it. Learn it.
- Daily national and local sports coverage. Stay on top of the news, especially when it comes to Florida athletics or the NFL.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

*Specific weekly schedule elements subject to change at the instructor's discretion.*

Week 1 (1/12) Intro/overview; Sports Journalism 101; Your media consumption; CJC Style Guide

Week 2 (1/19): **NO CLASS ... Presidents' Day holiday**

Week 3 (1/26): Four pillars of sports reporting; What's a good sports story? Finding the narrative

Week 4 (2/2): Breaking news; Writing on deadline; Aggregation & attribution; Common errors

Week 5 (2/9): Game coverage; Gamers for today's readers; Multimedia project intro

Week 6 (2/16): Covering a press conference; Getting (and using) quotes; What's a good quote?

Week 7: (2/23): **NO LECTURE ... Live event coverage: Game TBA**

Week 8: (3/2): Before the game (previews, analysis); Sports betting coverage and impact

Week 9: (3/9) Beat coverage: Developing ideas, content planning; what do audiences want?

Week 10: (3/16): **NO CLASS ... Spring Break**

Week 11 (3/23): Social media: Live tweeting, Reaching audiences and developing your own brand

Week 12: (3/30): Sports commentary & analysis; Alternative story examples (listicles, trends)

Week 13: (4/6): Reporting on contracts; Live deadline writing assignment

Week 14: (4/13): **NO LECTURE ... Live event coverage: Game TBA**

Week 15: (4/20): Reporting on concussions in sports workshop

Guest speakers to also be incorporated on a rotating basis over the course of the semester.

## **ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN**

*Note: Assignment specifics and due dates will be visible in Canvas. Always bring charged laptops to class. On average, this class will have one assignment per week, based on that week's lecture topic. =*

### **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

- ***Briefs (250 total points; five at 50 points each)***

We will have five short or in-class assignments designed to introduce a skill for sports reporting, including AP style, sports knowledge, writing news briefs and asking press conference questions.

- ***Deadline/Live Assignments (800 points; nine at 100 pts. Each, drop the lowest)***

We will cover topics, games and events as a class, both off TV and in person. We also will introduce elements that are commonplace for every beat reporter, such as game previews, listicles, live social media coverage, commentary/analysis and coverage planning.

There will be a minimum of two live events we cover as a class. *Note: There will be times the class covers a live game outside of class hours. During those weeks, the Monday lectures will be canceled.*

### **PROJECTS**

- ***Multimedia Project (150 points)***

Each student will be required to do one multimedia video project – sample ideas: either a postgame video standup or a topical video essay with voiceover – off a selected topic or sporting event. To simplify production and execution, video standups can be done in partnership with one other student. Each student, though, is required to submit their own projects independently. Ideas for the project will be due Feb. 15. The project will be due March 1.

- ***Final Project: Recording a Sports Podcast (250 Points)***

Your final project will be a 10-minute video podcast episode on a specific sports topic hosted with a fellow classmate. You will select a topic in advance, plan a show and then record it. Topics must be approved by the professor in advance.

You will be graded on your planning (research and script), organization (show structure and flow), execution (quality of your content, ability to make a good argument, delivery), collaboration (ability to interact with your partner) and technical issues (sound quality). Scripts (50 points) will be due April 12. The final version of the podcast (200 points) will be due April 27.

### **ATTENDANCE**

- ***Attendance + Class Participation/Professionalism (150 points)***

You are expected to attend class. You miss one class; you miss a lot. Unexcused absences that do not follow the University's attendance policies will be an automatic 15-point deduction.

This overall score also takes your class participation into account. Points can also be deducted at the instructor's discretion for chronic lateness and/or failure to consistently participate in discussions.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

This class adheres to all University academic and attendance policies. For more detail on specific policies – including grading, accommodations, evaluations and honor code – plus a list of available academic resources, [please see this link](#).

## **GRADING**

*You will be graded on a 1,600-point scale. Students will be graded in accordance with policies for assigning grade points as articulated here. Grades may be rounded up at the instructor's discretion.*

- A: 93.5-100% (1,496-1,600 total points)
- A-: 90-93.4% (1,440-1,495)
- B+: 87-89.9% (1,392-1,439)
- B: 83.5-86.9% (1,336-1,391)
- B-: 80-83.4% (1,280-1,335)
- C+: 77-79.9% (1,232-1,279)
- C: 73.5-76.9% (1,176-1,231)
- C-: 70-73.4% (1,120-1,175)
- D: 60-69.9% (960-1,119)
- E: 59.9% and below (Under 960)

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Please submit all assignment elements in Canvas. For ALL written assignments, you **must share them in a Google doc** with me at [ryanhunt@ufl.edu](mailto:ryanhunt@ufl.edu). PDFs of assignments will not be accepted.

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

There will be select opportunities to earn extra credit during the course of the semester. Details to come in specific classes. Class attendance is required to participate in that extra-credit assignment.

## **DEADLINES AND DEDUCTIONS**

Journalism is a deadline business. This course is designed to mirror the expected behavior of a professional newsroom. They're called deadlines for a reason.

Failure to meet assignment deadlines will result in a 10-point deduction in the first 24-hour period it's late. Late assignments beyond 24 hours may not be accepted, and could be graded as a zero, unless an emergency can be documented. If an illness or a personal emergency prevents you from completing an assignment, advance notice and written documentation will be required. If advance notice is not possible because of a true emergency, written documentation will be required ASAP.

Fact errors – misspelled names, incorrect stats, wrong titles, inaccurate information – will result in a significant deduction at instructor's discretion, depending on the scope of the error(s) and assignment. At a minimum, any fact error is at least a 15-point deduction.

Check the names in your story. Then double check them.

### **A NOTE ABOUT AI**

Does AI belong in journalism? In the real world, [you would be fired \(or be forced to resign\)](#) if you turned in work with your name on it that was written or had significant elements [generated by AI](#). Major companies [have been embarrassed](#) by using AI and [passing it off as human](#) work. And [jobs have been eliminated](#) across the industry.

You are here to learn, improve and get more reps, so my No. 1 expectation for you is to simply do your own work. In this class, I will randomly pick certain stories and run them through [multiple AI checkers](#). AI detectors are one tool among several and will not be used as the sole basis for an academic misconduct decision. If an assignment is flagged, it will not be accepted. You may receive a 0 plus a half-letter grade deduction from your final grade.

Using AI in an unethical way is akin to plagiarism. And that is one of the biggest sins in journalism. Do your own work. Don't take the easy way out. The only AI welcome here is Allen Iverson.

### **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

This is a workshop-style class in which we will all contribute ideas and engage in discussion. For the sake of other students, please don't be a distraction in class. Professional courtesy is expected. No checking your phone in class. If you need to use your phone, please leave the room to do so.

### **THE INSTRUCTOR**

Ryan Hunt is a Sports Lecturer at the University of Florida. A 1997 graduate of UF's College of Journalism and Communications, Ryan spent 25 years at *Sports Illustrated*, including the last four as its co-Editor-in-Chief. Ryan managed SI's editorial staff, leading a team of experienced reporters and editors and overseeing the digital strategy – from daily content planning to major event coverage to franchise development..

At SI, Ryan started as an entry-level Associate Producer in Atlanta before climbing the ranks – Homepage Editor, News Director, Associate Managing Editor to Executive Editor – to become one of only 11 people to hold the top editorial title at the brand. He grew up in the Tampa-St. Petersburg area and was the sports editor of the *The Independent Florida Alligator* during his time at UF. Nearly 30 years ago, I was in the same position as you are today.