

Sports Communication

PUR 3463 | Spring 2026

College of Journalism & Communications
University of Florida

Instructor: Robert Judin

Classroom: Weimer 1078

Meet: Thursday, 10:40 am to 1:40 pm

Office Hours: Tuesday 8:30 am to 10:30 am

(Weimer Hall 3103 or Zoom link provided in Canvas). Additional meetings by email request.

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Overview and Objectives

Sports Communication explores the critical role of public relations and media communication within athletics organizations. Students will learn strategies for building, protecting, and promoting sports brands through media relations, internal communication, social media, event planning, and crisis management. The course emphasizes practical, professional application through projects, case studies, and campaign planning exercises.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- (1) Demonstrate an understanding of the basic skills necessary to effectively carry out day-to-day responsibilities in sports communications and sports information professions
- (2) Demonstrate ability to generate content, including effective writing, from a sports perspective
- (3) Demonstrate ability to effectively integrate communications strategies with a sports organization's goals
- (4) Distinguish between sports communication perspectives and sports journalism

- (5) Distinguish in and among sports communication operations, issues and challenges in professional, intercollegiate and Olympic sports
- (6) Demonstrate understanding and skill strategies in handling negative publicity and communications crises in sports organizations
- (7) Demonstrate skill for assisting athletes, coaches, sports executives and owners to effectively handle media interviews
- (8) Demonstrate ability to manage use of social media by the organization, staff members and athletes
- (9) Demonstrate understanding of the ethics and values of sports communications

Course Readings

There is no book required for this course, but reading materials will be assigned weekly throughout this course.

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	Percent of Total Grade
Content Quizzes (10)	15 Points Each = 150 pts	15%
Individual Projects (10)	15 Points Each = 150 pts	15%
Group Projects (10)	15 Points Each = 150 pts	15%
Online Discussions (10)	15 Points Each = 150 pts	15%
Midterm Project (1)	100 pts	20%
Final Exam Project (1)	200 pts	20%
Attendance	100 pts	20%
Total	1,000 pts	100%

Assignment Descriptions

Content Quizzes (10 Assignments, 15 points per assignment):

The 10 quizzes assigned throughout the course will refer back to the content being discussed in class at that particular time. Questions from prior topics discussed may appear as extra credit opportunities.

Individual Projects (10 Assignments, 15 points per assignment):

Throughout the course, students will be required to complete 10 individual projects regarding the content being discussed.

Group Projects (10 Assignments, 15 points per assignment):

Students will be asked to form groups in class and complete a project as a functioning sports PR team based on the related material. Students will be allowed to turn in the group project as an individual project should they miss the in-class opportunity when absent.

Online Discussions (10 Assignments, 15 points per assignment):

Students will be required to submit an original post and respond to at least one classmate per discussion in the course's online forum regarding the content being discussed each week. Answers must be original and substantial to count for full credit. Failure to post or copied answers will result in a ZERO-point grade. Posts can partially serve to respond to another student's post but must also contain new and unique ideas, takes, and examples not previously used by another student.

Midterm Project (100 points):

Students will be asked to assemble a comprehensive internal and external communications plan for a single sporting event.

Group Final Exam Project (200 points):

Students will be assigned their groups to present a final exam project at the end of the semester. As a group, you will be given a hypothetical situation in which, as a team, you will have to devise a crisis management plan for a sports team or athlete.

Attendance (100 points):

Attendance is mandatory. Any unexcused absence will result in a proportional deduction of points.

Grading

Grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole number for grading purposes.

A	935-1,000	A-	895-934
B+	865-894	B	825-864
B-	795-824	C+	765-794
C	725-764	C-	695-724
D+	665-694	D	625-664
D-	595-624	E	0-594

Course Outline

Module 1: Intro to the Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sports media ecosystem• Roles of communication professionals• Evolution of modern sports PR
Module 2: Public Relations Foundations & Careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key PR principles in sports• Job paths in communication• Stakeholder relationship management
Module 3: Integrated Communication Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying key publics• Aligning PR with goals• Building unified messaging
Module 4: Internal Communication & Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team and staff communication• Managing internal crises• Communication flow and leadership

Module 5: Social Media & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content strategy and scheduling • Voice and tone development • Managing athlete accounts
Module 6: Media Training & Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing coaches and players • Crafting talking points • Handling tough questions
Module 7: Event Planning & Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credentialing and press logistics • Game-day messaging flow • Post-event media wrap-up
Module 8: Midterm Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and external communications plan for a sporting event.
Module 9: Crisis Management In Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipating potential crises • Drafting holding statements • Reputation recovery strategies
Module 9: Pitching a Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition vs Management • Creating & Delivering a pitch • Showcasing brand awareness creatively
Module 10: Publicity Campaign Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating campaign objectives • Media partnerships and timing • Measuring campaign success
Module 11: Ethics & Legal Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality and privacy laws • Fair representation and bias • Transparency in messaging
Module 12: NIL & Athlete Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, Image, and Likeness policies • Building personal athlete brands • Partnerships and endorsements
Module 13: AI & Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI tools in communication • Automation and analytics • Future of sports media

Late Work

You are responsible for all material covered or assigned. Your grade on late assignments will drop one letter grade for every day they are late. If a technical problem occurs that prevents 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 #.

Academic Integrity

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. For more information visit the Honor Code web page at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> or contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this process as early as possible in the semester.

Course 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/>.

Course Grading

Students will be graded in accordance with UF policies for assigning grade points as articulated in the link that follows. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

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 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.

*** NOTE: Topic schedule subject to change based on guest availabilities and other factors. There will be no change in project due date or the midterm examination.**

Policies

For all UF academic policies and student resources, see:

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-policy-on-course-syllabuses>

This syllabus is publicly available on the UF syllabus archive in accordance with university and state policy.