

Sports Media & Society

MMC 6936

COURSE INFO

Weimer G030

W 2-3 (9:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.)

R 3-5 (11 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.)

INSTRUCTOR

Ted Spiker

3054 Weimer Hall

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392-6990

G-Chat: ProfSpiker (will be available at select times)

Twitter: @ProfSpiker

Office Hours:

E-mail for appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will cover the relationships between sports, athletes, media, and audience. We will focus on current (and some historical) case studies that showcase professional and ethical issues of today to discuss and analyze effects for all of those involved. 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.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course will consist of lectures, discussion, and guest speakers.

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

You are expected to attend every class and participate in discussions. Documented medical excuses and religious holidays will be accepted as excused absences.

TWITTER

Though it's not required to use Twitter for this class, I will often tag posts or comments with #SportsMediaUF. If you'd like to weigh in or see something relevant to class, please feel free to use that hashtag when posting on Twitter.

GRADING

You can earn up to 500 points for the semester. Details of assignments below.

150 points: Final Paper/Project

150 points: Case Study Presentation

75 points: League of Denial Paper

50 points: Social Media Presentation

75 points: Attendance/Participation/Reading Discussion

A:	465-500	C-:	350-364
A-:	450-464	D+:	335-349
B+:	435-449	D:	320-334
B:	420-434	D-:	300-319
B-:	400-419	E:	299 and below
C+:	380-399		
C:	365-379		

FINAL PROJECT: I want you to be able to work on a project that is most relevant to your career and educational goals. I am flexible and want you to come out of the class with something that is either an examination or practice of sports media. For example, you could do another case study as a paper. You could also do a piece of sports media (such as a long-form video or written story). Each project should have the approximate weight of a 20-page paper, and each grading rubric will be customized for the student. All ideas must be approved by May 22 (we can spend some time in class discussing ideas). **Due Wednesday, 6/18**, at start of class.

CASE STUDY: You will present a 30-minute case study to the class. You must have your idea approved (no duplication with any of the topics listed below, or with your own final project). You may choose to focus on an individual, a team, a league, a news event, a policy, an issue, etc..., but the *focus on sports media* should be clear, and it should involve some gray areas in ethics/principles that are relevant for discussion. Each case study presentation should include:

Facts/background/timeline about the case, scope of criticism/analysis from outside sources, key media principles and issues raised by the case, questions for discussion, and references at the end. Please submit an electronic and printed copy of your presentation materials. **Presentations will be on 6/5**. How you will be graded:

25 points: Quality/originality of idea

25 points: Quality of presentation: Are slides/references useful and helpful?

Is it organized and professional?

75 points: Content of presentation: Have you presented relevant facts about the case, background/context, critiques/analysis from independent sources? Do we have a thorough understanding of the issue?

25 points: Did you lead a thoughtful and relevant discussion?

LEAGUE OF DENIAL PAPER: Watch the PBS special about concussions, if you have not seen it already (we will not meet 6/4, so you can watch it during that time). Write a 3-page, double-spaced paper discussing the media issues involving the piece. Use secondary sources to supplement your own thoughts. Note: This is not a paper about the NFL and concussions. This is about what media issues are to play involving the NFL and concussions. **Due 6/11** at the start of class. Graded on overall presentation and content, quality of references (3 to 5), and writing clarity.

SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENTATIONS: Choose one sports-related Twitter account to examine. It can be an individual, a team, organization, or anything relevant to the sports world. You will do a 10-minute presentation showing us the account—and explaining the strategies that person/organization uses. **Presentations will be on 5/22.** Graded on originality of idea, thoroughness of examples, and quality of discussion points.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Please note that class schedule is subject to change, based on current events, guest speakers, etc....

Week 1 (5/14 and 5/15)

Introduction to Class (Media Principles)
Case Study: Tiger Woods
Twitter/Social Media in the Sports World

Week 2 (5/21 and 5/22)

Gender in Sports Media
Principles of Narrative/Great Storytelling
Case Study: Sports Media in 9/11 and Boston Marathon Bombings
SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENTATIONS 5/22

Week 3 (5/28 and 5/29)

Case Study: The Decision
Case Study: The Penn State Scandal
Case Study: Criticisms of ESPN
Sports Media and Social Issues

Week 4 (6/4 and 6/5)

NO CLASS ON 6/4 (watch League of Denial)
CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS 6/5

Week 5 (6/11 and 6/12)

Case Study: Manti Te'o
Case Study: Media Issues and Olympic Coverage
Case Study: John Rocker
LEAGUE OF DENIAL PAPERS DUE 6/11

Week 6 (6/18 and 6/19)

Case Study: Dr. V
Case Study: Richie Incognito
Sports Media: Past, Present, Future
FINAL PROJECTS DUE 6/18

REQUIRED READINGS: While there are no tests, you are expected to read the following material and weigh in during class. Please have the readings done before we meet on Wednesday (the exception being the first week, of course). Links or handouts will be sent out. The reading schedule:

Week 1:

"The Worldwide Leader in Dong Shots," GQ, Gabriel Sherman
<http://www.gq.com/sports/profiles/201102/aj-daulerio-deadspin-brett-favre-story>

"Social-media savvy grows..." CBSSports.com, Bruce Feldman
<http://www.cbssports.com/collegefootball/story/17771677/socialmedia-savvy-grows-even-as-coaches-schools-try-to-keep-up>

"Is Social Media a Broadcast Right?" socialmedia today, Chris Syme
<http://socialmediatoday.com/chrissyme/1017571/social-media-broadcast-right-university-washington-plows-new-ground>

Week 2:

"Damned Yankee," Sports Illustrated, Gary Smith
<http://www.cnnsi.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1011129/index.htm>

"Debating role of women in sports media," Sports Illustrated, Richard Deitsch
<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/more/news/20131124/media-circus-women-in-sports-media-espn-nfl-network/>

"Get used to it: Women cover sports," ESPN, Christina Kahrl
http://espn.go.com/espn/commentary/story/_/id/7586496/misogynists-not-disappear-soon-life-getting-better-women-covering-sports

"I Was an NFL Player Until I was Fired BY Two Cowards and a Bigot, Deadspin, Chris Kluwe

<http://deadspin.com/i-was-an-nfl-player-until-i-was-fired-by-two-cowards-an-1493208214>

Week 3:

"Can Bill Simmons Win the Big One," New York Times, Jonathan Mahler

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/05/magazine/can-bill-simmons-win-the-big-one.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

"How ESPN Ditched Journalism and Followed Skip Bayless..." Deadspin, John Koblin

<http://deadspin.com/5929361/how-espn-ditched-journalism-and-followed-skip-bayless-to-the-bottom-a-tim-tebow-story>

"The 'Decision' dilemma, ESPN, Don Ohlmeyer

<http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/columns/story?id=5397113>

Week 4:

NO READING

Watch League of Denial

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/league-of-denial/>

Week 5:

"Dr. V's Magical Putter," Grantland, Caleb Hannan

<http://grantland.com/features/a-mysterious-physicist-golf-club-dr-v/>

"Dr. V story Understandable," Inexcusable, ESPN, Robert Lypsite

http://espn.go.com/blog/ombudsman/post/_/id/305/dr-v-story-understandable-inexcusable

"Hype," Sports Illustrated, Bruce Newman

<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1126490/2/index.htm>

Week 6:

"The Death of the Sports Interview," ESPN, Tim Keown

http://espn.go.com/espn/page2/story/_/id/7319161/espn-death-sports-interview

"My team, my publisher," Nieman Journalism Lab, Justin Ellis

<http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/04/my-team-my-publisher-the-new-world-of-competition-between-leagues-and-media-in-sports/>

“In defense of an ‘annoying’ profession,” sportsjournalism.org, Dave Kindred
<http://sportsjournalism.org/uncategorized/in-defense-of-an-annoying-profession-with-knickers-in-a-decided-twist/>

UF’S GRADING POLICIES

Please read:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty of any kind is not tolerated in this course. The university's guidelines provide additional details, which you are expected to understand completely.

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentrights.php#academichonestyguidelines>

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Reasonable accommodations will be made for any students with disabilities. If you have a disability, the Dean of Students Office will give you official documentation, which you will give to your instructor. More information is on the Disability Resource Center page from the Dean of Students Office.

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Associate Professor Ted Spiker heads the magazine sequence in the journalism department at UF. He came to UF in 2001 after being articles editor at *Men’s Health*. A graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, Spiker has had work published in *Outside*, *O the Oprah Magazine*, *Fortune*, *Women’s Health*, *Runner’s World*, *Reader’s Digest*, and many other magazines. He is also co-author of a dozen books, including the bestselling *YOU: The Owner’s Manual* series with Dr. Mehmet Oz and Dr. Mike Roizen.

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