

RTV 4930: Introduction to Media and Sports

Instructor: Dr. John W. Wright
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Tuesdays 6th Period
12:50-1:40 PM
Section 1F73
Weimer 1064

Graduate teaching Assistant: Annelie Schmittel

Overview and Objectives:

This one-hour course is designed to provide introductory study and analyses of sports professions relative to opportunities, responsibilities and current issues involving sports media professionals. Topics include distinctions among careers in sports media, including sports journalism and sports communications, values and ethics, issues related to race, gender and sexual orientation, sports and data and emerging media.

Sports related industries account for over \$200 billion in spending in the United States alone, with an upward trajectory, and there is an increasing need for highly trained and educated professionals in sports journalism and communications and for a better understanding in society of the relationship between sports and the various media. This course will provide a critical basis for creating this understanding as well as introductory knowledge relevant to the various sports media professions. The course, with emphasis on sports journalism and communications, will be required for all students to complete the College's proposed undergraduate Certificate in Sports and Media.

Objectives and Course Goals Include:

- (1) to develop understanding and ability to distinguish among the various sports communications professions
- (2) to provide basic knowledge of the responsibilities and skills necessary for sports journalists and sports communications professionals
- (3) to understand basic issues related to ethical practices in sports media professions
- (4) to increase awareness of issues related to race, gender and sexual orientation in sports media
- (5) to establish introductory knowledge of the business of sports and media
- (6) to establish understanding of a wide variety of sports and sports events with respect to media coverage
- (7) to be able to distinguish differences in professional and amateur sports with respect to media coverage

Credit Hours: 1

Course Pre-requisites: None

Required Reading: Assignments are available at various websites are listed in the course calendar.

Attendance Policy: Attendance in the class is required and critically important. Excused absences include approved UF attendance exceptions. In all instances of excused absences the instructor and student will work out a plan for completing missed course material.

Attendance is expected unless the student is ill. In case of illness, the instructor should be notified in advance and a physician's note may be required. Each unexcused absence will result in a deduction of 3% from the students final percentage score. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with UF policies which can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

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 requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of Instruction in this course based on a minimum of 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these evaluations are available to students at the above website.

Course Grading Components:

Class Participation & Attendance	30%
Quizzes	40%
Term Essay	30%

Quizzes will be given at the outset of each class session focusing on principles from the text and other course readings and content from the previous class.

The Term Essay: You may select one of two options for the term essay. Students who are enrolling in the Sports and Media Certificate Program are encouraged to select Option 1, the career perspective essay. All papers must be a minimum of 10 pages, double spaced, and should be carefully and thoughtfully composed. Grammatical or spelling errors and typos will result in a severe grade penalty.

Option 1: The Career Perspective Paper. This assignment will challenge students to integrate course material from the semester into a well-written, detailed description of a career aspiration related to sports and media. The essays must include discussion of sports journalism and sports communication/ but may focus on one considerably more than the other. The paper will include an assessment of abilities for such a position, and logistical, ethical, professional and cultural considerations, based on course content. More detail will be provided in class and in a course handout.

Option 2: Essay on Media and Sports: Impact, Challenges and Issues
Option 2 allows students to select a topic from the list below, or choose any topic approved by the instructor, and write an essay, incorporating material from course readings and discussions. More information and suggestions for the essay will be distributed and discussed in class.

Possible topics are:

- Impact of Social Media on Sports
- Impact of Twitter on Sports and Sports Journalism
- Ethnic, Gender and Sexual Preference Diversity and Sports
- Major Challenges Facing Sports Organizations in a Rapidly Changing Media Environment
- The Challenge to Improve Sports Journalism
- Crisis Management in Sports
- The Influence of Sports Networks on College Sports
- Impact of Title Nine on College Sports
- Media Coverage of Extreme Sports
- Sports Stars and Public Controversy: The Role of Media
- College Sports Recruiting and Media

The general format of APA (American Psychological Association) citation is the most commonly used style in mass communication papers. The instructor recommends using APA. However, if you are in a major that uses an alternative style guide, you are allowed to use whatever is best for your educational program. The key here is that quotes,

references and sources are properly and consistently cited, using both:
a) in-text citation (including author name(s), year and page number); and
b) a full list of references or bibliography at the end of your paper.
Use of footnotes/endnotes is permitted, but should be used sparingly in APA.

Grading will be numerical on the following scale.

Grading Scale:	A	(93-100%)
	A-	(90-92.99%)
	B+	(87-89.99%)
	B	(83-86.99%)
	B-	(80-82.99%)
	C+	(77-79.99%)
	C	(73-76.99%)
	C-	(70-72.99%)
	D+	(67-69.99%)
	D	(63-66.99%)
	D-	(60-62.99%)
	E	(under 60%)

Course Schedule

The course schedule is subject to change according to availability of guest speakers.

Week One: Jan. 6

Introduction to the course, discussion of syllabus, brief discussion of careers in sports and media

Week Two: Jan. 13

Tour of College of Journalism and Communications multimedia properties
Careers in media related to sports at the local, national and international level

Week Three: Jan. 20

Guest Speaker: Sports Careers: Significant issues and challenges facing media and sports, and the impact of social media

Week Four: Jan. 27

Ethics and sports media, case studies including domestic violence, race, gender and issues

Week Five: Feb. 3

Sports journalism – Working sports journalist guest speaker

Week Six: Feb. 10

Sports communication – Working sports communication/information professional guest speaker

Week Seven: Feb. 17

Media and sports management and ownership – Owner or high-level management guest speaker

Week Eight: Feb. 24

Media Issues: sexual preference and race in sports

Week Nine: March 3

Spring Break

Week Ten: March 10

Distinguishing sports media professional roles and responsibilities in major media sports: football, baseball, basketball and hockey

Week Eleven: March 17

Distinguishing sports media professional roles and responsibilities in major media sports: soccer, tennis, golf

Week Twelve: March 24

Ethics and sports media, case studies including domestic violence, race, gender and issues

Week Thirteen: March 31

Guest speaker: open topic

Week Fourteen: April 7

Challenges of working with international sports

Week Fifteen: April 14

Increasing role of numbers and data in sports media

Week Sixteen: April 21

Speaker, national/international perspective, selected by students (in class or Skype)