

MMC 6936
Sports Media and Society
#SportsMediaUF
Fall 2024
T period 3, R periods 3-4: Weimer 1064



PROFESSOR

Ted Spiker @ProfSpiker
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OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday, 2 to 4 p.m.
Or by appointment



TAs

Caroline King, Kelsi Manning (lead TAs)

OVERVIEW

In this survey course, we will cover the relationships between the sports industry, athletes, media, and audience. We will discuss the evolution of sports media from the early sportswriters to the day when athletes control their own messages via social media. 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. This course is about developing literacy and critical thinking skills about the sports industry and its relationship with the media. Major emphasis on case studies and current events.

COURSE FORMAT: IN-PERSON

We will meet in-person during the assigned class times. Slides will be available on Top Hat (see below) if you miss class. I advise you to team up with people in class to share notes if you need to miss class. We will remain in-person with no during-class Zoom option unless the situation and UF rules change (i.e. extreme weather). Attendance policy is in accordance with UF policy regarding documented excuses.

GRADING

You will be graded on a 1,000-point scale:

A:	92.5% to 100%	C:	72.5%
A-:	90% to 92.4%	C-:	70% to 72.5%
B+:	87.5% to 89.9%	D+:	67.5% to 69.9%
B:	82.5% to 87.4%	D:	62.5% to 67.4%
B-:	80% to 82.4%	D-:	60% to 62.4%
C+:	77.5% to 79.9%	E:	0% to 59.9%

ASSIGNMENTS

500: 4 exams (125 points each)
125 points: 6 reading quizzes (25 points each, drop lowest)
100 points: Reply to 4 discussion posts
175 points: Attendance/participation/engagement (Top Hat)
100 points: Sports Media assignments (various)
150 points: Grad student assignment

Exams: Exams will cover material from lecture only (no reading). They will be taken in Canvas during class periods on Tuesdays. **Do not come to class on exam days.** You may use your notes but not other people. Makeup exams are in accordance with UF policy. Exam dates:

Sept. 10
Oct. 8
Nov. 5
Dec. 3

Reading Quizzes: Reading quizzes will cover the selected readings for that quiz. You may use your notes and the readings but not other people. Quizzes are open for 12 hours from after class until midnight).

By Aug. 29 11:59 p.m.
By Sept. 19 11:59 p.m.
By Oct. 3 11:59 p.m.
By Oct. 24 11:59 p.m.
By Nov. 7 11:59 p.m.
By Nov. 21 11:59 p.m.

Discussion Posts: You must reply to 4 discussion posts of your choosing throughout the semester. Deadlines:

- 1 reply by Aug. 29 at 11:59 p.m.
- 1 reply by Sept. 19 at 11:59 p.m.
- 1 reply by Oct. 24 at 11:59 p.m.
- 1 reply by Nov. 21 at 11:59 p.m.

Graduate Student Assignment Graduate students will have an additional assignment; details to be handed out separately.

You do not get extra credit for replying to more than the minimum. And you must do one in each of the time periods above (not four from Sept. 1-19 for example). I will post several options for you to respond to—you only need to respond to one in each time period. Each post is worth 25 points. To get full credit, your responses should be about 75-100 words with clear and original thoughts and correct mechanics. Use of AI will result in a 0 for the assignment and reporting to the Honor Court. If you miss the deadline, you may submit a response for partial credit (max of 12 points).

Sports Media Assignments: Throughout the semester, you will be given small assignments that will help facilitate discussion. Please check Canvas for due dates, as many are in the beginning of the semester.

Attendance/participation/engagement: We will be using Top Hat (www.tophat.com) for class participation. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message. For instructions on how to create a Top Hat account and enroll in our Top Hat Pro course, please refer to Top Hat's Getting Started Guide (<https://bit.ly/31TGMlw>).

If you already have a Top Hat account, go to app.tophat.com/e/296310 to be taken directly to our course. If you are new to Top Hat, follow the link in the email invitation you received or...

- Go to <https://app.tophat.com/register/student>
- Click "Search by school" and input the name of our school
- Search for our course with the following join code: 296310

If a paid subscription is required, it will be listed at checkout when you enroll in our Top Hat Pro course. Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time please contact their Support Team directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), the in-app support button, or by calling [1-888-663-5491](tel:1-888-663-5491). Specific user information may be required by their technical support team when troubleshooting issues.

If you have connection issues during class, write your answers down your answers on a piece of paper with your name and UFID. Hand that paper to a TA at the end of the class period. We will not accept any submissions outside of the class period.

A perfect Top Hat score will be 175 points, but I will offer many more possible points than that throughout the semester. So if you are sick, you will not need to make up Top Hat points in order to get a high score. If you have an extended illness, we will use makeup policies in accordance with UF policies.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The weekly course schedule can vary because of guest speakers and current events. Because of the fluidity and nature of the course, we do not lock in lecture subjects for the entire semester. I will, however, give you previews of upcoming classes about two weeks at a time, so you can know what is ahead. We do a lot of case studies to represent bigger themes in sports media. In general, most of the lectures and material get broken down into these major subject areas:

Sports Media Basics
Case Studies of Conflict
A Brief History (and Look into the Future) of Sports Media
Race, Gender, and Speech in Sports Media
Social Media in Sports
International Sports Media
Covid-19 and Sports Media in Times of Crisis

READINGS

PDFs of these are in FILES in Canvas in case you have trouble accessing the links.

For Quiz 1

“The Worldwide Leader in Sextapes,” GQ, January 19, 2011
<https://www.gq.com/story/aj-daulerio-deadspin-brett-favre-story>

For Quiz 2

The Yang Slinger: Vol. IV, Jeff Pearlman’s Journalism Yang Yang, Nov. 1, 2021 (only “Dealing with Dicks” story)
<https://pearlman.substack.com/p/the-yang-slinger-vol-iv>

For Quiz 3

“For women in sports media, dealing with toxic masculinity is far from new,” Washington Post, July 19, 2020.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2020/07/19/women-sports-media-dealing-with-toxic-masculinity-is-far-new/>

For Quiz 4

“Kaepernick Saga Raises Questions About the Media,” Lonnae O’Neal, The Undefeated/Andscape, September 1, 2016. <https://theundefeated.com/features/kaepernick-saga-raises-questions-about-the-media-diversity/>

For Quiz 5

“Eyes of the Storm,” Sports Illustrated, March 1998. <https://vault.si.com/vault/1998/03/02/eyes-of-the-storm-when-tennessees-whirlwind-of-a-coach-pat-summitt-hits-you-with-her-steely-gaze-you-get-a-dose-of-the-intensity-that-has-carried-the-lady-vols-to-five-ncaa-titles>

For Quiz 6

“The Dave Portnoy Playbook,” New York magazine, Nov. 23, 2021.
<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/dave-portnoy-barstool-sports.html>

TWEETS OF THE WEEK

You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit through Tweets of the Week, using the hashtag #SportsMediaUF. I will also experiment with other engagement on social media, including giving exam hints and other extra-credit opportunities.

RECORDING OF CLASS

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture **does not** include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY STATEMENT

The University of Florida’s College of Journalism and Communications Department of Journalism embraces a commitment toward an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class and religion. We expect each of our journalism courses to help foster an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. We will be discussing topics within the course and in current-events discussions that will look at many of these issues. I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions — please be respectful of others’ emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense.

CLASSROOM NEEDS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

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/>

HONOR CODE

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.” This includes the use of AI, ChatGPT, and other similar programs. The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Professor Ted Spiker is the chair of the UF department of journalism and has been a faculty member at UF since 2001. He was recognized as the University of Florida Teacher of the Year for 2016-17, and he was the Summer 2019 UF commencement speaker. A graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a former articles editor at *Men's Health*, Spiker has had work published in *The Washington Post*, *TIME.com*, *Esquire.com*, *Outside*, *O the Oprah Magazine*, *Fortune*, *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Runner's World*, *Reader's Digest*, *Best Life*, and many others. He is also the author of one book and the co-author of 25+ books. He has moderated public interviews of Rob Gronkowski, Erin Andrews, Stephen A. Smith, Abby Wambach, Alex Rodriguez, Dave Portnoy, Guy Fieri, Howie Mandel, Terry Crews, Josh Peck, Pitbull, a bunch of people from *The Office* (Dwight, Kevin, Oscar, Ryan), and others.