

RTV4930: Sports Media and Entrepreneurship

Fall 2024

College of Journalism and Communications

University of Florida

Instructor Information

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Classroom: Online

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Office Hours: Friday 11 a.m. - 1p.m. - By Appointment Virtually

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Course Site: <https://ufl.instructure.com>

Textbooks are NOT REQUIRED

Additional Readings will be posted and available online.

Course Overview

Have you ever wondered how Bleacher Report, Omaha Productions, and Barstool Sports went from startups to household names? Discover their secrets in RTV4930: Sports Media and Entrepreneurship. This course is your gateway to mastering the expertise, skills, and entrepreneurial spirit needed to thrive in the fast-paced world of sports media.

You'll learn about the sports media landscape and acquire practical tools to launch and sustain successful ventures. Whether you dream of launching the next big sports media brand or simply want to excel in the industry, this course will set you on the path to success. Imagine, one day, you could be running your own million-dollar media empire.

Course Structure and Approach

The course integrates book knowledge with practical, hands-on experience to show you a template for how it's done. This unique approach ensures you understand the core concepts and feel confident applying them in your career. The curriculum includes lectures, guest speakers, group discussions, and projects, all aiming to equip you with the tangible skills and knowledge needed to thrive in the ever-changing sports media industry.

Lectures: Each week, lectures will cover essential sports media and entrepreneurship topics, from the fundamentals of journalism and media production to the intricacies of business planning and digital marketing.

Guest Speakers: Throughout the course, you'll hear directly from industry professionals who have succeeded in creating thriving businesses. These experts will share their experiences and provide knowledge about being in the trenches. This exclusive opportunity will undoubtedly inspire and motivate you as you embark on your sports media career.

Group Discussions: Participate in lively discussions in class meetings, online and in Canvas boards. This will encourage critical thinking and collaborative learning. You'll explore different perspectives and ideas, enriching your understanding of the material.

Hands-On Projects:The highlight of this course is a one-of-a-kind, semester-long project where you'll team up to create your own media company. This isn't just an assignment—it's a transformative opportunity to turn your passion into a real-world business venture. Weekly assignments will steer you toward crafting a comprehensive business plan, leading to a thrilling Shark Tank-style presentation to a panel of judges at the semester's end. This is your moment to take charge of your learning and make a splash.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will:

- **Discover the Professions and Niches within Sports Media:** Get a broad overview of the exciting careers in sports media, from sports journalism and media production to communications and digital content creation. You'll find out there are more sports opportunities than you imagined.
- **Learn How to Build a Thriving Sports Media Company:** Understand the steps and strategies necessary to create a successful company. We will leverage your journalism skills to create a business that stands out in the professional sports industry.
- **Explore Entrepreneurial Opportunities:** Learn what it takes to launch your venture in the sports media industry. We'll cover the principles of entrepreneurship, different business models, and strategies to create sustainable revenue streams. You'll see how to turn your innovative ideas into a thriving business.
- **Leverage Journalism Skills for Business Success:** Apply your background in journalism to develop a strong foundation for your company. This includes creating compelling content, building a loyal audience, and utilizing multimedia storytelling to engage and grow your brand.
- **Execute Strategic Marketing and Growth Plans:** Learn how to craft effective marketing strategies and growth plans to help your sports media company attract and retain an audience. This will include digital marketing techniques, audience analysis, and engagement tactics.
- **Pitch Your Business Plan:** Throughout the course, you'll work on a business plan for your sports media venture. This includes conducting market research, building a brand, crafting digital marketing strategies, and planning finances. By the end, you'll pitch your plan.

Semester-Long Project

Get ready! This is the highlight of the course, where you'll get to put everything you learn into practice by your very own sports media company. Here's what you can expect:

Team Formation:At the beginning of the semester, you'll form teams with your classmates. Collaboration is vital. Prepare to embark on this entrepreneurial journey together.

Weekly Milestones: Your Business Plan JourneyEach week, your team will focus on building a business plan. These assignments are designed to give you practical experience in running a media company. Here's a simplified preview of what you'll be working on:

- **Brand Identity and Mission:** What makes your brand unique and identify your niche. Define your company's purpose and long-term goals. Are you a Front Office Sports or an ESPN?
- **Market Research and Audience Engagement:** Identify your target audience and understand their needs. Plan and execute social media campaigns to build brand awareness and engage your fanbase.
- **Content Creation and Branding:** Develop a theoretical content strategy guide. This guide will outline your vision for storytelling, branding, and audience engagement, without the need to create actual content or branding materials.
- **Business Plan Development:** Draft executive summaries and develop marketing strategies. Create financial projections and plan your business structure.

- Sponsorship, Financial, and Legal Planning: Create proposals to attract sponsors and partners. Solidify a budget and financial plan to ensure your company's growth. Understand legal requirements and draft necessary documents.

Final Presentations: The course will culminate in a competition. You'll pitch your business plan to a panel of judges, which may include industry professionals. This is your chance to showcase your hard work, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit. Impress the judges; you might get valuable feedback and opportunities to take your ideas further!

Course Schedule

| Week | Date | Topic | Assignment |
|------|--------------|---|--|
| 1 | August 22 | Introduction to Sports Media and Entrepreneurship | Self-brand analysis |
| 2 | August 29 | Understanding the Audience | Market research for your media company |
| 3 | September 5 | Content Creation and Strategy | Develop mission and vision statement |
| 4 | September 12 | Media Production Techniques | TBD |
| 5 | September 19 | Entrepreneurship in Sports Media | Draft executive summary of your business plan |
| 6 | September 26 | Monetization Strategies in Sports Media | Develop a revenue model for your media company |
| 7 | October 3 | Innovations in Sports Media | Create a technology plan for your media company |
| 8 | October 10 | Social Media Campaigns | Create a social media strategy for your media company |
| 9 | October 17 | Global Sports Media Landscape | Compare and contrast sports media practices in two different regions |
| 10 | October 24 | Sponsorship and Partnerships | Create a sponsorship proposal for your media company |
| 11 | October 31 | Financial Planning | Develop a financial plan for your media company |

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|----|-------------|--|--|
| 12 | November 7 | Survival, Layoffs, and Perseverance | Write a reflection on strategies for personal and professional perseverance |
| 13 | November 14 | Emerging Trends and Future of Sports Media | Write a report on an emerging trend in sports media and its potential impact |
| 14 | November 21 | Project Development and Execution | Refine your business plan and prepare for the final presentation |
| 15 | November 28 | Thanksgiving Break | No Class |
| 16 | December 3 | Final Presentations | Shark Tank-style presentations to a panel of judges |
| 17 | December 10 | Course Wrap-Up | Final project submission |

Grading and Evaluation

Total Points for the Semester: 1000

| Component | Points Each | Total Points | % of Total Grade |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------|
| Assignments (10) | 20 | 200 | 20% |
| Online Discussions (5) | 25 | 125 | 12.5% |
| Midterm | 100 | 100 | 10% |
| Sports Organization Project | 200 | 200 | 20% |
| Final Exam | 150 | 150 | 15% |
| Attendance & Participation | 225 | 225 | 22.5% |
| Total | | 1000 | 100% |

Assignment Descriptions

Assignments (10 assignments, 20 pts each): Weekly assignments related to the final project. Each week, complete a specific research task, contributing towards building a comprehensive business plan for your sports media venture.

Online Discussions (5 discussions, 25 pts each): Participate in online discussions relevant to sports media and entrepreneurship. Post your thoughts and respond to classmates. Graded on depth of insight, engagement, and relevance to the topic.

Group Project (200 pts): Collaborate to create a comprehensive business plan for a hypothetical sports media company. Present the business plans in a Shark Tank-style pitch at the end of the semester.

Attendance and Participation

Regular attendance and active participation are crucial for your success in this course. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Participation includes contributing to discussions, engaging in group activities, and preparing for each class.

Required Materials

Textbook: Sports Entrepreneurship: Beyond the Big Leagues by Christopher Mumford (recommended but not mandatory)

Supplementary Readings: Available on Canvas

Software/Tools: Access to video editing software, social media platforms, and other relevant tools

Academic Integrity

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the University of Florida community members, 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."

AI Policy for Student Work: In this course, you will be asked to use generative AI for some assignments. AI is commonly used in the profession, so familiarity with generative AI tools is important. When AI is allowed or encouraged, document how AI was used. This includes providing original prompts, showing edits, or using appropriate citations.

Support Services

Writing Studio: Provides assistance with writing projects. Writing Studio

Tutoring Center: Support for various subjects. Tutoring Center

Counseling and Wellness Center: Support for managing stress or coping with life. Counseling and Wellness Center

Communication

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about the course. You can reach me via email, and I will respond within 24 hours. My office hours are also available for one-on-one discussions.

Let's do this!