

COM 4930 (Section DC08): Sports Communication, Fall 2023
Tuesday period 4 (10:40-11:30am and Thursday periods 4-5 (10:40am-12:35pm
in Rolfs Hall, Room 314

Instructor: Dr. Lisa Joniak Athearn

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00-3:30pm & Wednesday 9:00-10:30am

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Website: <http://elearning.ufl.edu> (follow logon for e-learning in Canvas)

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLq_Bd341q2JhhLhUCdjylFqTgAuRdYk7W

Course Description & Objectives:

This course explores the theoretical foundations for the processes, practices and difficulties that people experience in communication interactions in the sports context. The sports context has exploded both in the salaries and reward structures for participants, but also in the leadership and management possibilities as a professional career, and the demands of communicating competently. Some content areas we will cover include: Community & Sport Foundations, Negotiating Identity in Sport, Relational Issues in Sport, and Emerging Trends in Communication & Sport.

Students taking this course should enjoy mastery of the following skills:

1. Understand the theories of communicating with others in the sports context,
2. Formulate timely written opinions about certain issues,
3. Apply sports communication theories to a wider range of contexts and
4. Improve written and oral communication and presentation skills.

Course Prerequisite: COM 1000 or equivalent

Required Text: Communication and Sport: Surveying the Field, (3rd ed. 2017) by Billings, Butterworth, & Turman. Publisher: Sage. ISBN: 978-1506315553 This text is available at most bookstores supplying the university and can also be purchased online.

Course Assignments:

1. Participation	100
2. Movie Analysis Paper (3@100)	300
3. Exams (3@100)	300
4. Group Project-Preplanning	50
5. Group Project-Presentation	250
Total	1000

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94 – 100%		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%
B-	80 – 83%		D-	60 – 63%

C+	77 – 79%		E	<60
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Course Assignment Description:

- 1. Participation (100 points):** This class emphasizes the ability to integrate class materials into class discussion and assignments. It is imperative that you stay up to date on the assigned readings and ask questions in class discussions. Being present in body (whether virtual or face-to-face) is not considered a substitute for being here in mind. Consistent and competent participation in class is essential to maintaining an acceptable grade in this course. **Exemplary participation** (90%-100%) includes initiating contributions to class discussions, insightful and constructive contributions, and excellent focus and listening to others in every class session. **Proficient participation** (80%-90%) includes mostly insightful contributions to class discourse, plus a sharp focus and attentive listening to others for most class sessions. **Developing participation** (70%-80%) includes contributing to classroom discussion at least half of the time, sometimes offering constructive comments with some signs of insight, but a general lack of focus and attention to others. **Unacceptable participation** (<70%) includes a lack of participation, uninformed comments to class discussion, lack of involvement in activities, constant lack of focus (e.g. distracted on phone) and poor listening to others. Participation in your group project is essential to maintaining an acceptable grade in this course.
- 2. Movie Analysis Paper (MAP) (3@100pts each = 300 points):** You will watch and critically analyze three sports-themed movies. For each MAP, you should choose only **one** movie from the ones listed and analyze it.

MAP #1 (due 10/5) choices: Hoosiers (1986); Major League (1989), Cool Runnings (1993), Remember the Titans (2000) or Student Wild Card Choice

MAP#2 (due 11/2) choices: A League of their Own (1992), Battle of the Sexes (2017), King Richard (2021), I Tonya (2018), or Student Wild Card Choice.

MAP #3 (due 12/5) choices (note these are all documentaries): Hoop Dreams (1994), When we were Kings (1996), Murderball (2015), Free Solo (2018) or Student Wild Card Choice.

In total, each student will write three MAPs over the course of the semester. Papers should be approximately 3-4 (1,100-1,200 words) pages in length (not including title page or bibliography), double-spaced, 12-pt, Arial font, with 1" margins. Your paper should consist of three main areas: (1) a summary of the movie, including its plot and characters, (2) an analysis of how it ties into the themes/concepts we've been discussing in class (with examples) and how well it illustrates some points related to sports and communication, and (3) a review of the film itself explaining what you liked and/or didn't like or what was or was not interesting about it. You will be expected to utilize the terminology we have learned on a given topic to talk about the movie.

Your MAP will be graded on substance, structure, focus, accuracy and technical control. A specific grading rubric for the MAP is available via Canvas. Movie Analysis Papers will be submitted via Canvas by due date.
- 3. Exams (3@100 each = 300):** Exam 1 (on 9/21) will cover chapters 1-5 of the book (including lecture and discussion), Exam 2 (on 10/19) will cover chapters 6-9 of the book (including lecture and discussion), and Exam 3 (on 11/9) will cover chapters 10-15 (including lecture and discussion). Exams will be

composed of T/F, multiple-choice questions and short essays. Exams will be given in class (no aids allowed).

4. **Group Project (Preplanning 50pts & Presentation 250pts, total 300 points):** You will work either on your own or with a small group (2-3 people) to select and plan a thematic presentation (see list below). Your job is to work with your team to analyze, interview, and present a multimedia project of a theme that has been discussed over the course of the semester. Each group should demonstrate proficiency in explaining some aspect related to their theme, as well as creativity in their presentation of it. While you have a lot of latitude to choose examples representing whatever theme you choose and how you present them, you must show depth of understanding the theme through your analysis and use of the terminology and concepts we've learned in class. Additionally, one required component of the project will be a detailed interview with someone who works in the area of the theme. You will share your plan with the class in advance of your group presentation date (Preplanning, 9/28). It's important during the preplanning stage (especially in class workshop time) to demonstrate that you are utilizing your time well and equitably distributing tasks among the group members. On their assigned date, groups will present their project to the class, as well as submit a Slide/PPT or other materials (e.g. interview questions) used in the project. Your group will be evaluated 20% as a team and 80% as an individual. Team evaluation is based on how well you worked together, your presentation aids and effectiveness of presentation. Individual evaluation is based on your participation in the assignment, including the substance and quality of your deliverables (both prior and during the presentation). A specific rubric for this assignment will be available on Canvas.

Possible Group Project Themes:

Group 1: Sports Media

Group 2: Fan & Community Culture

Group 3: Identity in Sports (Gender, Race, Ethnicity, etc.)

Group 4: Coach-Player-Team Dynamics

Group 5: Behind the Scenes (Facilities, Advising, Compliance, Training)

Group 6: Nationalism, Activism, & Politics in Sports

You do NOT have to pick one of these themes, they are merely suggestions. If you have another topic in mind please talk to Dr. A so we can discuss and agree on the topic and parameters you'll cover.

Course Expectations:

1. All written assignments must be typed and turned in on time via Canvas. Please proofread your work for clarity, accuracy, and relevance.
2. Files used for presentations are due on the same day as the presentation. You are expected to dress professionally on presentation days.
3. Attendance is mandatory. Our class is meeting synchronously during our scheduled time. **Only three hours absence for whatever reason will be allowed. Your participation grade will be reduced by 20 points for each absence beyond the three.** An excused absence is possible with a note from clinic or doctor, a letter notification for a career interview, or a notification from the Athletic department or other UF department if the student is participating in a UF event.

4. Participation in class is expected. High quality participation includes effective listening, working cooperatively with classmates, and overall demonstrating a positive attitude. Reading assignments must be met and the instructor has the right to use unannounced quizzes.
5. Everyone can succeed in this course. The course can be personally rewarding as everyone will get to know each other in the class, and class activities will be fun.

Accommodations: 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 which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester in order to allow us to provide the most effective support. Students with any accommodations should arrange a meeting with the instructor during the first week of class (and ideally before the end of drop/add) to discuss how we can work together to meet the students' needs and still adhere to the essential elements/functions of the course in regard to attendance and class participation.

Course Evaluation: 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/publicresults/> .

University Honesty Policy: 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 (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Schedule of Topics:

Subject to change as noted in class or on Canvas. You are responsible for keeping up with all announcements and updates on Canvas.

Week # & Dates	Topics Covered	Assignments & Tasks Due
Week 1 Thursday (8/24)	Course introduction & syllabus	Purchase book
Week 2 Tuesday (8/29) Thursday (8/31)	Ch. 1: Intro to Communication & Sport Ch. 2: Community in Sport Finishing up Ch. 2 Discussion of Potential Field Trips/Movie Screenings	Read Ch. 1 Note: Add/Drop Ends Read Ch. 2
Week 3 Tuesday (9/5) Thursday (9/7)	Ch. 3: Sports Media Discussion of Group Project Group Project Sign-Up	Read Ch. 3 Look over assignment details on Canvas. Come to class with questions, ideas, and themes. We will break into groups during class.
Week 4 Tuesday (9/12) Thursday (9/14)	Ch. 4: Sport Fan Culture Ch. 5: Sport & Mythology Workshop Day-Group Projects	Read Ch. 4 Read Ch. 5 Be prepared to share ideas, drafts and interview questions.
Week 5 Tuesday (9/19) Thursday (9/21)	Finishing up Ch. 5/Review for Exam 1 Exam 1 (Ch. 1-5)	 Exam 1 (Ch. 1-5)
Week 6 Tuesday (9/26) Thursday (9/28)	Group Project Preplanning Workshop Group Project Preplanning Presentations	Groups will share their proposed project ideas with the class (semi-formal presentation).
Week # & Dates	Topics Covered	Assignments & Tasks Due
Week 7 Tuesday (10/3) Thursday (10/5)	Ch. 6/9: Gender in Sport Finishing up Ch. 6/9 Potential Field Trip/Movie Screening MAP #1 Due	Read Ch. 6 & 9 MAP #1 Due (10/5)
Week 8 Tuesday (10/10) Thursday (10/12)	Ch. 7/9: Race & Ethnicity in Sport Ch. 8: Politics & Nationalism in Sport	Read Ch. 7 & 9 Read Ch. 8

Week # & Dates	Topics Covered	Assignments & Tasks Due
Week 9 Tuesday (10/17) Thursday (10/19)	Review for Exam 2/Group Project Workshop Exam 2 (Ch. 6-9)	Exam 2 (Ch. 6-9)
Week 10 Tuesday (10/24) Thursday (10/26)	Ch. 10 Parent-Child Interaction in Sport Ch. 11 Player-Coach Relationships in Sport Group Project Workshop or Potential Field Trip/Movie Screening	Read Ch. 10 Read Ch. 11
Week 11 Tuesday (10/31) Thursday (11/2)	Ch. 12: Small Groups/Teams in Sport Ch. 13: Crisis Communication Group Project Workshop or Potential Field Trip/Movie Screening MAP #2 Due	Read Ch. 12 Read Ch. 13 MAP #2 (11/2)
Week 12 Tuesday (11/7) Thursday (11/9)	Ch. 14: Commodification of Sport Finishing up Ch. 14 Group Project Workshop or Potential Field Trip/Movie Screening	Read Ch. 14
Week 13 Tuesday (11/14) Thursday (11/16)	Review for Exam 3 Exam 3 (Ch. 10-14)	Exam 3 (Ch. 10-14)
Week 14 Thanksgiving Break-No Class		
Week 15 Tuesday (11/28) Wednesday (11/30)	Final Group Workshop Group Project Presentations	
Week 16 Tuesday (12/5)	Group Project Presentations Last Day of Class Celebration MAP #3 Due	MAP #3 (due 12/5)

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.