

PERSPECTIVES ON SPORTS & MEDIA

JOU/CMN 3953 COURSE SYLLABUS

Spring 2012

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the impact sports and the mass media have had and are continuing to have on each other. In addition, this course focuses on the history of sports writing and sports broadcasting and the state of these fields today.

COURSE GOALS

Students will learn to:

- understand the importance of sports to the mass media
- understand the work of sports journalists, as well as how the sports writing and broadcasting have evolved.
- understand the history and contributions of women and minorities to sports media
- understand how athletes, regardless of gender and race, have been portrayed by sports journalists
- understand the ethical dilemmas faced by sports journalists, as well as how these challenges should be handled

TEXTBOOKS

- *American Sports: From the age of folk games to the age of televised sports* (Rader)
- *Grantland Rice & His Heroes* (Inabinett)
- Additional books have been placed on reserve in Booth Library.
- Selected magazine articles have been placed on Booth's eReserve system.

CLASS WEBSITE

PDFs from lectures, selected videos and articles, class requirements, along with information about sport and media are posted on the class website located at www.sportsmedia.wordpress.com

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Each student is expected to be in complete compliance with the college policy on academic honesty as set forth in the student handbook. Any student cheating on an exam or submitting plagiarized work will receive a zero and be reported to judicial affairs.

ABSENCES & MAKE-UP WORK

Students are expected to be in class on time and remain until the dismissal. Absences are unexcused when the professor has not been notified of an acceptable reason within 24 hours of the class meeting. When absent, please contact a fellow student to find out what was missed. You are responsible for all material covered or assigned during classes, even if you are

not there. Your grade on late assignments will drop one letter grade for every day they are late.

GRADING

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Tests (2)	200
Media Evaluations (4)	100
Issue Paper	100
Attendance	100
Total	500

Assignment descriptions

- **Tests** – Students will be asked to think critically on the topics addressed in readings, lectures and documentaries to develop essay responses. So take comprehensive notes.
- **Issue paper** – Students will rely upon their research, analytical, writing, and interviewing skills to produce a paper that investigates an issue related to sports media. The professor assigns all topics. Papers will be evaluated for content, structure and writing skills. These papers must be 6-8 typed, double-spaced pages in 12-point Times New Roman or Arial. Put your name, title of this class and ‘Issue Paper’ in the upper, left corner of the first page. Then, skip a line before inserting a title for this paper. Use 1-inch margins. Please, staple all pages. These assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Failure to comply with all of these requirements will result in a ‘0’ for this assignment.
- **Media Evaluations** – Students will critique media examples selected by the professor for print, radio, TV and multimedia. Students will rely upon evaluation criteria offered in class before analyzing these respective media. Papers will be evaluated for content, structure and writing skills. These papers must be 4-6 typed, double-spaced pages in 12-point Times New Roman. Put your name, title of this class and ‘Media Critique’ in the upper, left corner of the first page. Then, skip a line before inserting a title for this paper. Use 1-inch margins. Please, staple all pages. These assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Failure to comply with all of these requirements will result in a ‘0.’
- **Attendance** – Students will lose 5 points for each missed class. 2 tardies = 1 absence.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) for answers regarding accommodations, auxiliary learning aids and physical accessibility. Diagnostic information regarding the disability must be submitted so the most appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog for more information.

CLASS REVISIONS

This syllabus may be changed at any time during the semester by the instructor.

Schedule of Assignments

Jan. 9 INTRODUCTION TO CLASS

- Review class requirements
- Introduction to the symbiotic relationship between sports and the media

Jan. 11 SOCIOLOGY OF SPORTS

- Read "In My Tribe" from *Sports Illustrated* (11.28.2011)
- Read "Penn State of Mind" from *Time* (12.12.2011)
- Discuss why sports are so important to so many people in the United States.

Jan. 16 HOLIDAY

- No class in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jan. 18 SPORTS MEDIA THROUGH THE AGES

- Read "Sports and Media in the Ancient Mediterranean" by Thomas Scanlon in *Handbook of Sports and Media*, pp. 3-19.
- In-class assignment – determine which culture is most similar to modern United States.

Jan. 23 EARLY AMERICAN SPORTS

- Read "Sports in Early America" in *American Sports*, pp. 1-19.
- Read "Media Made Sport: A History of Sports Coverage in the United States" by Robert McChesney in *Media, Sports and Society*, pp. 49-70.
- In-class assignment – Watch first chapter from the documentary *Baseball*.

Jan. 25 GOLDEN AGE OF SPORTS

- Read *Grantland Rice and His Heroes* – chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 9.
- Critique selected stories written by Grantland Rice.

Jan. 30 JOURNALISM PIONEERS

- Read chapter on Paul Gallico in *No Cheering In The Pressbox*, pp. 61-80.
- Read chapter on Red Smith in *No Cheering In The Pressbox*, pp. 243-260.
- Read chapter on Shirley Povich in *No Cheering in The Pressbox*, pp. 114-128.
- Critique selected stories written by sportswriting pioneers.

Feb. 1 MODERN PRINT JOURNALISM

- Review modern approaches to journalism used today compared to the early pioneers. Look at today's top sportswriters.
- In-class assignment – Critique modern sports stories, comparing them to pioneers. Students will evaluate another contemporary story that is due Feb. 8.

Feb. 6 SPORTS ON TELEVISION

- Read "College Sports in the Age of Television" in *American Sports*, pp. 280-296.
- Discuss Roone Arledge's impact on sports and sports media.

Feb. 8 ROONE'S IMPACT ON TV SPORTS

- Watch *40th Anniversary of Wide World of Sports*.
- Discuss main points addressed in documentary.

Feb. 13 EVALUATE SPORTS BROADCAST

- Evaluate sports broadcast in class.
- Students will evaluate another TV sports event broadcast on their own, writing a report due Feb 20.

Feb. 15 RADIO PIONEERS

- Read selected chapters from *The Broadcasters*.

Feb. 20 SPORTS-TALK RADIO

- Read Chapter 3 (“Inside the Sports Radio Industry”) in *Beers, Babes and Balls: Masculinity and Sports Talk Radio*, pp. 28-49.
- Students will evaluate sports-talk radio in class, writing a report due at the end of the class.

Feb. 22 NEW MEDIA

- Read “How Yahoo Sports Became ESPN’s Biggest Competitor” at outkickthecoverage.com.
- Read “Tension Over Sports Blogging” in *New York Times* (April 21, 2008).
- Critique several sports media Web sites.

Feb. 27 NEW MEDIA

- Critique several sports media Web sites in class.

Feb. 29 MIDTERM

- Please, bring one or two No. 2 pencils, along with a pen, to take test. These writing instruments won’t be supplied in class. The test will include a combination of multiple choice, short response and essay.

March 5 ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN SPORTS AND MEDIA

- Read “The Shame of College Sports” in *The Atlantic* (Oct. 11, 2011).

March 7 ECONOMIC TIES – PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

- Read the following from *Field of Schemes* – chapters 13, 14, along with the Preface and Introduction. The book is on reserve in the library.

March 12-16

- Spring break – rest, relax, repeat.

March 19 ECONOMIC TIES – WORLD CUP 2010

- Read the following articles on eReserve from *Time* magazine – “The Global Game,” “The World Cup As Big Business,” and “Yes, Soccer is America’s Game.”
- Read “South Africa: A Big Bounce from the World Cup” in *Bloomberg Businessweek* (May 13, 2010).
- Watch “World Cup Soccer in Africa: Who Really Wins?”

March 21 BUSINESS OF SPORTS

- Guest Speaker

March 26 **COLLEGE ATHLETICS**

- Read “College Sports 101” that can be downloaded from the sportsmedia.wordpress.com Website or found online.
- Read “Big-time college athletics: Are they worth the big-time costs?” in *USA Today* (Jan. 15, 2010).

March 28 **COLLEGE ATHLETICS**

- Read “Should College Athletes Get Paid” in *USA Today*.

April 2 **COLLEGE SPORTS & MARKETING**

- Read “How Student Fees Boost College Sports Amid Rising Budgets” on eReserve.

April 4 **SPORTS INFORMATION & MARKETING**

- Discuss job requirements and approaches by those who work in sports information and sports marketing.
- Guest speaker.

April 9 **SPORTS INFORMATION & MARKETING**

- In-class assignment – Critique SID materials, comparing approaches and content.

April 11 **ROLE OF PRESS IN THE INTEGRATION OF BASEBALL**

- Discuss Jim Crow laws.
- Review chapter on Wendell Smith in *No Cheering In The Press Box*, pp. 312-324.
- Read “The African-American Quest for Equity In Sports” in *American Sports*, pp. 315-328.
- Watch *Baseball: Shadow Ball* that focuses on challenges of African-American players.

April 16 **ROLE OF PRESS IN THE INTEGRATION OF BASEBALL**

- Watch *Black Magic* that focuses on challenges of African-American basketball players before the NBA integrated.

April 18 **CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN ATHLETES**

- Read “The Rise and Decline of Organized Women’s Sports, 1890-1960” in *American Sports*, pp. 218-23.
- Watch *Baseball: The National Pastime* about the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League.

April 23 **CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN ATHLETES/JOURNALISTS**

- Read “The Quest for Equity in Women’s Sports” in *American Sports*, pp. 330-342.
- Watch *Playing Unfair: The Media Image of the Female Athlete*.

April 25 **SPORTS JOURNALISM ETHICS**

- Review the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics.
- Read “Justice Delayed” in *American Journalism Review*, pp. 18-29 (Aug/Sept. 2007).
- In-class assignment – respond to sports ethical dilemmas.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

The following email etiquette tips are offered from a professor at Kennesaw State University and prompted by the N.Y. Times article: "*To: Professor@University.edu Subject: Why It's all about me.*"

Don't email professors and tell them you won't be in class. Bringing unnecessary attention to your absence only wastes your and your professor's time. Unless your absence impacts a grade component, just miss the class. Your professor may not know you weren't there. If a grade component is involved, you will need a university-approved excuse anyway. Telling your professor your wife is sick, and you have a meeting, and the kids are on vacation is inappropriate. Professors have families and personal lives too, and work hard to make sure we don't inconvenience your academic life.

Don't email professors asking for their notes. Your professors work hard to prepare and deliver their lectures. If you fail to take notes, miss class, or lose your notes, contact your peers first.

Don't email professors asking (or complaining) about your grades. Unless you have been specifically told to use email for specific grading topics or issues, don't do it. If there is a problem with a graded assignment, or you need to find out what you made on an assignment, make an appointment with your professor or stop by during office hours. Any time you want to discuss graded assignments, talk with your professor face-to-face. There is less chance of misinterpreted intent when looking them in the eye. Also, don't email professors asking if they have graded your assignment. They'll let you know.

Don't email your professor and copy the Dept Chair, Program Director or Dean. Unless you are emailing a glowing thank you, or congratulations message, any message you would need to copy a professor's supervisors should be delivered in person. Emailing and copying their supervisor will only make your position tougher to defend, whatever it is.

Treat your faculty (and fellow students) with respect, even in email. Your professors are dedicated to your education. We will attempt to create a supportive learning environment that is conducive to your degree pursuits. Don't misinterpret this "kinder, gentler professor" model with an offer of friendship or an invitation to treat us as peers. Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof. and unless specifically invited, don't refer to them by first name. Respect us, and we will respect you. Also refrain from bad-mouthing any of your professors or even any fellow students by email or out loud in the presence of any member of the faculty. It's just unprofessional. Remember email is forever, and professors have been known to compare notes and talk to each other. Do not assume that two of your professors are not close collaborators on a research project or see each other socially.

Don't expect an immediate response to your email. Emailing your professors at 2 a.m. is fine. But don't expect an answer by 8 a.m. Each professor has a different work schedule, and probably has a personal life as well. Email is a great way to get your question to your professor, but realize they may not be able to answer until they have time. In some cases, they may not have access to information about your question, unless they are in the office. 24 hours is a standard window for an email response.

You are what you email. Your emails to your professor help shape their professional opinion about you. In some settings, email is the dominant opportunity for the professor to form an opinion about you. You may be someone who is quiet and respectful in person, but a flame troll behind the keyboard (look it up). Every email adds to the professor's profile. Read each email twice before sending.

When in doubt, your professor will delete. If professors receive emails they don't feel is appropriate, the standard response may be to simply delete it. So if you send an email that you don't hear back from quickly, reread what you sent, then visit the professor face-to-face to get an answer. The professor may have simply been out of the office.

When in doubt, email. When you have a question, email – after reviewing the above guidelines. Immediate feedback may be more beneficial than any possible misinterpretations.