



HUSSMAN SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA

Fall 2024 – MEJO 476.001 - Ethical Issues in Sports Communication

Tuesday & Thursday = 8:00 am – 9:15am

Instructor: Shaun Marq Anderson, PhD

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Office: Carroll 235

Office Hours: By appointment only

Classroom: Carroll Hall Room 283

Syllabus Changes

As your professor, I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible. Also, please forgive and point out any spelling or grammatical errors you find on this syllabus.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to examine the ethical dilemmas facing the sports field at a time of extraordinary popularity. Some issues are covered daily in the press while others may seem completely obscure. In all cases, the goal is to understand, debate and then attempt to develop appropriate procedures to deal with the most controversial subjects in sport, particularly as it relates to justice within sport. This course will run the gamut of relative to topics including ethics, gambling, violence, media, commercialization, and environmental sustainability through sport.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identity and/or develop central tenets to the Sport Justice Movement
2. Understand the evolution of sport communication within the United States and globally
3. Analyze and critique developing issues in sport communication
4. Recognize the connection of sport to larger social, cultural, and environmental concerns

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK, etc.

Champion, Jr., W. T., Karcher, R. T., & Ruddell, L. S.(2020). *Sport ethics for sport management professionals*. (2nd ed.). Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Anderson, S. M. (2023). *The black athlete revolt: The sport justice movement in the age of #blacklivesmatter*. Landham: Rowman and Littlefield

These books are in the bookstore. Alternatively, you can purchase from any outlet such as Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or wherever books are sold.

Additional readings will be available on Canvas.

Both books are available via the bookstore or other outlets such as Amazon.

Staying in the Know!

In this class, we will examine various issues and challenges faced by today's Sports Communication professionals. You'll need to keep up with what's going on in the world and in your profession, as current events and issues will play a large role in the class. Take some time each week to check out the news in



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papers, magazines, TV and/or online – a few resources I like are: The Athletic (<https://theathletic.com/>), The Sports Business Journal (<https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Daily.aspx>), *The Skimm* (<http://www.theskimm.com/>), ESPN (<https://www.espn.com/>), Front Office Sports (<https://frontofficesports.com/>) and Bleacher Report (<https://bleacherreport.com/>). Keep an eye out for issues facing professionals in your field and I encourage you to raise topics in class to discuss!

Canvas/Email:

Additional important course information can be found on Canvas and will be emailed to you. **Updates will be frequent, so check the announcements section of Canvas often and your email for important course information.** You are responsible for any course changes that may be made on Canvas or via email, including changes to the syllabus or assignments. Your grades are posted in Canvas only so that you can stay updated on your progress; overall grades on Canvas are rough approximations of your overall grade in the course.

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE:

NO right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from ANY class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences (<https://uaao.unc.edu/>):

1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC).

I will take attendance for every class (even if it's not obvious). *It is your responsibility to communicate with me promptly (within 24 hours) if you are experiencing issues that fall outside of university guidelines (listed above) that might cause you to miss a class.* I understand that emergencies happen (i.e., illness, family matter, personal matter). Therefore, your first two absences will not count as unexcused. **However, three or more unexcused absences will result in your final grade being lowered by half a letter grade. The more classes you miss, the lower your grade will be.** If you must miss class, excused or unexcused, it is also your responsibility to meet with your classmates and gather the information on what you missed. Missed in-class assessments and activities cannot be made up unless you were absent due to a University Approved Absence and those that fall within the two absences threshold.

The "Quality Control" Policy

You are media practitioners, and as such I expect that you will write and present yourself with great professionalism because that is what you have been trained and educated to do. Therefore, your course assignments and presentations will be scrutinized for their vernacular and presentation. **Assignment submissions must be grammatically correct and free from spelling errors.**

Assignments and Grades Policies

Grade Questions/Challenges: If you have concerns about a grade, please inform me via email. I ask that you wait 24 hours after receiving your grade. Please outline your concerns and provide evidence to support your claim.

Graduate Students

Graduate students enrolled in this course will be held to a higher standard and required to complete at least



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one additional assignment. **Each graduate student must set up a meeting with me to discuss the assignment.** Grading for graduate students will be done according to the HPLF grading scale (High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Fail).

HONOR CODE

All students are expected to follow the guidelines of the UNC honor code. Students are expected to refrain from “lying, cheating, or stealing” in the academic context. If you are unsure about which actions violate that honor code, please consult honor.unc.edu. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor’s responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Julie Dixon, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

ARS

Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS – ars@unc.edu) receives requests for accommodations, and through the Student and Applicant Accommodations Policy determines eligibility and identifies reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or chronic medical conditions to mitigate or remove the barriers experienced in accessing University courses, programs and activities.

ARS also offers its Testing Center resources to students and instructors to facilitate the implementation of testing accommodations. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu.

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

To initiate services with the Hussman Embedded Counselor, Carolyn Ebeling, email them at cebeling@email.unc.edu to schedule. Carolyn meets with students by appointment only and works exclusively with Hussman students. Available services include an initial assessment of needs, individualized planning for reported concerns, initiating engagement in brief therapy, connection to group therapy services, medication management, and referral coordination. Services are offered both in-person and by telehealth. Same-day, walk-in services are available at CAPS (3rd floor, Campus Health) Monday-Friday, 8AM-5PM. For crisis or 24/7 support, call CAPS at 919-966-3658 or call/text 988 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

TITLE IX

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall – titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals’ abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University’s [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.



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If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at safe.unc.edu) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#), or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

I value the perspectives of individuals from all backgrounds reflecting the diversity of our students. I broadly define diversity to include race, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation, political background, and physical and learning ability. I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve. I appreciate any suggestions. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

ACCREDITATION

The Hussman School of Journalism and Media's accrediting body outlines several values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here: <http://hussman.unc.edu/accreditation>. No single course could possibly give you all these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI Use Policy)

The following uses of generative AI tools are permitted in this course: *Categories of possible permitted use include, but are not limited to: topic selection, brainstorming and idea generation, research, source validation, outlining and planning, drafting, media creation, peer review, revising, and polishing.*

ASSIGNMENTS (grading rubrics will be provided)

Your Sports Take

On Week 1, you will provide a reflection regarding the sports industry based on the TedX talk with Dr. Andrew Billings and the Deloitte article regarding the 2024 outlook of the sports industry. This is just to get you revved up for the semester. Your thoughts may change at the end of this course!

Reflection Questions

Starting week 2, reflection questions covering the readings for each week and the Spotlight Series (mentioned below) will be administered via Canvas. There will be 10 questions throughout the semester. There are no make-ups for failing to answer the questions without an acceptable reason.

Spotlight Series

Starting Week 3, I will host a spotlight series throughout the semester featuring guests who are top sport leaders. Because many of them are in different cities and time zones, these will be pre-recorded sessions that will be focused on a topic for that week. These will be Zoom recordings that will be available for you each Thursday. A guide as to how to review these will be provided.

Ethical Dilemma Analysis: The Sport Justice Movement

Groups will identify a dilemma based on the Sport Justice Movement platform (to be approved by the instructor in advance). Students will be required to research the dilemma, provide context of similar past ethical dilemmas and write arguments supporting both sides. The main context of this assignment will derive from your assigned reading: *The Black Athlete Revolt: The Sport Justice Movement in the Age of #BlackLivesMatter*. When reading the book, reflect on the history of sport and politics (Chapter 1) and



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all chapters in between. You ultimately end up at the Sport Justice Movement (Chapter 5). Provide a thorough analysis. A rubric regarding length, structure, and other pertinent components of this assignment will be provided.

Final Project

In 2015, the United Nations declared sport as a viable option for the pressing social and environmental issues of our time. However, various practitioners and scholars are still searching for tangible evidence as to how sport is meeting the challenges of today's global society. Thus, the focus of this class is to be a place to both develop analytical rigor and practical tips regarding the pressing issues within sport.

As such, your group will review the United Nations Sport for Development and Peace Document. Then you will develop a strategic communication plan focusing on at least one but no more than three of the 17 SDGs created by the UN. Your strategy will ultimately serve as the development for a central tenet to promote the Sport Justice Movement.

TOTAL SEMESTER GRADING BREAKDOWN

Your Sports Take – 20 Points
Reflection Questions – 10 Points (x10)
Spotlight Series – 10 Points (x10)
Ethical Dilemma Analysis 50 Points
Final Project – 100 Points

Total Points: 370

GRADING DETAILS

Grading guidelines Dec be found here: <https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/>. Grades follow a typical pattern: A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66 and F = below 63.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

*Please see [UNC academic calendar](#) for the official university schedule.

Fall 2024 Semester	Topic	Reading	Assignments
August 20	Introduction Day	Getting to Know, Q&A, and Course Syllabus Explain	
August 22	Further Discussion of Assignments/Group Development	TEDx Talk: Dr. Andrew Billings Deloitte Link: Outlook of Sports 2024 and Beyond	Your Sports Take: Due online via Canvas by August 23 rd @ 11:59PM
August 27	Ethical Concepts of Sport	Chapter 1	Reflection Question #1
August 29		Video: President Nelson Mandela (Laureus Sports Awards)	
September 3	No Class – Wellness Day		
September 5	Group Workday		
		Spotlight Talk: Dr. Aaron Goodson – Director of Mental Health and Performance (Duke University Athletics) via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
September 10	Sportsmanship, Gamesmanship, and Cheating	Chapter 2	Reflection Question #2
September 12		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
September 17	Gambling in Sports and Society	Chapter 3	Reflection Question #3
September 19		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
September 24	Ethical Issues Involving Coaches	Chapter 4	Reflection Question #4
September 26		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
October 1	Ethical Issues Involving Parents and Fans	Chapter 5	Reflection Question #5
October 3		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
October 8	Violence in Sports	Chapter 6	Reflection Question #6
October 10		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
October 15	Group Workday – Meeting Session via Zoom		Ethical Dilemma Analysis Due Friday, October 18th @11:59
October 17	No Class – Fall Break		
October 22		Chapter 7	Reflection Question #7



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	The Ethics of Drug Use and Testing		
October 24		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
October 29	Ethical Considerations of Race in Sports	Chapter 8	Reflection Question #8
October 31		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
November 5	Ethical Duties of Sports Agents	Chapter 9	Reflection Question #9
November 7		Spotlight Talk: TBD via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
November 12	Gender Discrimination and Title IX	Chapter 10	Reflection Question #10
November 14		Spotlight Talk: Paige Diggs – Associate Athletics Director for DEI (San Diego State University) via Pre-Recorded Zoom	
November 19	Commercialization of College Sports	Chapter 12	
November 21		Spotlight: Luke Fedlam – President (Anomaly Sports Group)	
November 26	No Class – Thanksgiving Break		
November 28			
December 3	Last Day of Class		
Finals	Final Project Submission – By December 12th @ 11:59PM		