

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

SPMT 430—Sport Communication (3)  
Fall 2011

DAY/TIME:	TR 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	LOCATION:	Occoquan Building 302
PROFESSOR	Dr. R. Pierre Rodgers	EMAIL ADDRESS:	prodgers@gmu.edu
OFFICE LOCATION:	Recreation and Athletic Complex (RAC) 2109 (FFX); Bull Run Hall 201F (PW)	PHONE NUMBER:	703.993.8317
OFFICE HOURS:	T 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. FFX R 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. PW Other times by arrangement	FAX NUMBER:	703.993.2025
PREREQUISITES:	60 hours, including SPMT 201, PHED 200, and the General Education communication requirement; or permission of instructor		

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a senior-level exploration of the role of sport communication in contemporary cultures. Readings and discussions will address questions about how communication about/in sports highlights the importance of sports, the cultural identities of those who engage in sport communication, and the pervasiveness of sport communication practices in industry.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. recognize the connections among sport communication practices and cultures;
2. develop analytical abilities in application of theories and concepts to sport communication practices;
3. watch, analyze, critique, and discuss the media's portrayal of the community of sport;
4. analyze the discourses surrounding sports issues; and
5. gain an awareness of the pervasiveness of sport communication in other venues.

### COURSE OVERVIEW: POLICIES

1. **Participation.** Attendance and punctuality are essential for success in this class. Much of your work is based on information from the lectures and participation in class discussions. Your absences and/or tardiness will affect your general progress and that of your classmates. Zero to two absences will result in no penalty unless they occur on a day when you are assigned to present a project or complete an assignment. Students who arrive late or leave early will be counted as absent. Some absences may be excused provided **prior** arrangement is made with me. Examples of excused absences may be for medical reasons or field trips in other courses and will be allowed only at my discretion. Students who stop coming to class without discussing with me will receive a failing grade. Should you miss an assignment due to absence, you will be allowed to make it up provided that you have written documentation regarding the nature of the absence. If you miss an oral presentation, it is up to me as to how and/or if you will make up the assignment.
2. **Written Assignments.** Written assignments will be expected to demonstrate college-quality writing. In-class writing will not be stringently evaluated, but ALL work prepared outside of class (papers) will be assessed for content AND for presentation. While a variety of qualities may pass for "college level," at a minimum it means writing is appropriately concise and clear; words are properly spelled; punctuation is appropriate; sentences are complete; and subject/verb, pronoun/antecedent agree.
3. Papers submitted to the instructor must be typed, and attention should be paid to form (including grammar, punctuation, spelling, and general appearance) as well as to content. Use standard APA documentation consistently.

4. Papers/abstracts/written assignments not turned in on the specified day will be given a grade lower than the one deserved. For example, an “A” assignment submitted late will be given a grade of “B.” No written work will be accepted later than one week after it is due.
5. **Honor Policy.** George Mason University takes its honor policy quite seriously. Examinations, papers, and other assignments must be your own work (except where you hire a typist or proofreader) with only the exception of group projects.
6. **Plagiarism** is representing another’s work as your own or recycling your work and representing earlier work as new work. Remember to use proper source citations in citing the evidence you use in your research. Failure to do your own work, or not to give credit where necessary, may result in failing the course and a report to the honor committee.

Further, upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional accreditation standards:

*SMPRC: NASSM-NASPE Standards*

Standard	Content
7	Interpersonal communication; small group communication; media and sport; electronic media; e-mail, web sites, graphics, desk-top publishing; print media; public speaking; mass communication and sport; computer application; customer service; team building; meeting management; sport journalism/broadcasting; ratings and shares; organizational communication; writing press releases

REQUIRED READINGS

Billings, A. C., Butterworth, M. L., & Turman, P. D. (2011). *Communication and sport: Surveying the field*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brown, R. S., & O’Rourke, D. J., III. (Eds.). (2003). *Case studies in sport communication*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Additional required readings (e.g., journal/magazine/newspaper articles) will be available via Mason’s eReserves and the Mercer Library circulation desk.

RECOMMENDED (OPTIONAL) READING

Hacker, D. (2010). *A pocket style manual* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s.

EVALUATION

Grades will be assigned on the basis of two tests, both at 20%; an in-class presentation based on one of the discussion units at 20%; a short paper—a critique of a print sports commentary—weighted at 15%; and a final term paper/project makes up the remaining 25%. You will be notified about any additional readings. Specific guidelines pertaining to presentation and paper content will be provided.

Final grades and individual assignments will be recorded with “plus/minus” letter grade annotations. You can use the table below to do your own grade calculation. Convert letter grades to numerical equivalents using this scale: A=10, A-=9, B+=8, B=7, B-=6, C+=5, C=4, C-=3, D=2, F=1. Multiply the numerical equivalent by the weight to get the weighted value. Add the weighted values and use the conversion scale to convert the total back to a letter grade. (Note: No credit towards graduation accrues from a failing grade or from a grade that is replaced by a retaken course. For more information, please consult the current edition of the university catalog.)

	Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Weight	Weighted Value
Test 1			.20	
Test 2			.20	
Unit Discussion Presentation			.20	
Short Paper (critique of			.15	

	Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Weight	Weighted Value
sports commentary)				
Term Paper/Project			.25	
TOTAL				

### Grading Scale

A = 10.0-9.5	B+ = 8.9-8.0	C+ = 5.9-5.0	D = 2.9-2.0
A- = 9.49-9.0	B = 7.9-7.0	C = 4.9-4.0	F = 1.9-0.0
	B- = 6.9-6.0	C- = 3.9-3.0	

### TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE		ASSIGNMENT	READING
August	30	Introduction to sport communication; defining sport communication	Billings et al., chapter 1; Pedersen et al. (eReserves)
September	1	Defining sport communication	Billings et al., chapter 1; Pedersen et al. (eReserves)
	6	Community in sports	Billings et al., chapter 2
	8	NO CLASS	
	13	Mediating sport	Brookes (eReserves)
	15	Sports fans culture	Billings et al., chapter 3
	20	Gendered media coverage of sport; gender in sport	Billings et al., chapter 5; Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 2
	22	Gendered media coverage of sport; gender in sport	Billings et al., chapter 5; Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 3
	27	Communication and the move of a sports franchise	Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 4
	29	Communication and the move of a sports franchise	Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 4
October	4	Video: <i>Bleeding orange and brown</i>	Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 4
	6	TEST 1	
	11	COLUMBUS DAY (OBSERVED): NO CLASS	
	13	Sacred Saturdays*	Steffensmeier (eReserves)
	18	Sport and personalities: CoachSpeak*	Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 8
	20	NBA Draft and mediated image*	Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 10
	25	Sport and personalities: Player-as-hero*	Vande Berg ( <i>MediaSport</i> , circulation desk)
	27	Race, media, and sport; race and ethnicity in sport*	Rodgers & Drogin Rodgers (eReserves); Davis & Harris ( <i>MediaSport</i> , circulation desk); Billings et al., chapter 6
November	1	Sport and personalities: Player-as-NASCAR-driver?*	Hugenberg & Hugenberg (eReserves)
	3	NASSS CONVENTION, MINNEAPOLIS, MN (NO CLASS)	

DATE		ASSIGNMENT	READING
	8	Violence and media sports*	Bryant, Zillman, & Raney ( <i>MediaSport</i> , circulation desk)
	10	Sport and the media marketplace*	Bellamy ( <i>MediaSport</i> , circulation desk)
	15	Erotic gaze in the NFL Draft*	Oates (eReserves)
	17	Athletes and mediated image: Billie Jean King; crisis communication in sports organizations*	Nelson (eReserves); Billings et al., chapter 12
	22	Athletes and mediated image: George Foreman; crisis communication in sports organizations*	Engen (eReserves); Billings et al., chapter 12
	24	THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)	
	29	FINAL PREPARATION OF CASE STUDIES	
December	1	FINAL PREPARATION OF CASE STUDIES	
	6	ORAL PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDIES	
	8	ORAL PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDIES	
	14	TEST 2 (WEDNESDAY) 10:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.	

Chapters marked with an \* are group-led presentations.

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary.*

#### Additional Course Readings

Copies of our primary course texts, *Case Studies in Sport Communication* and *Strategic Sport Communication*, are on 2-hour reserve at Mercer Library, Prince William Campus. Other required readings should soon be available via eReserves and print versions at the circulation desk. Here are the citations:

Bellamy, R. V., Jr. (1998). The evolving television sports marketplace. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 73-87). London: Routledge.

Boyd, T. (1997). The day the Niggaz took over: Basketball, commodity culture, and Black masculinity. In A. Baker & T. Boyd (Eds.), *Out of bounds: Sports, media, and the politics of identity* (pp 123-142). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Brookes, R. (2002). Mediating sport. In R. Brookes, *Representing sport* (pp. 19-48). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bryant, J., Zillman, D., & Raney, A. A. (1998). Violence and the enjoyment of media sports. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 252-265). London: Routledge.

Butterworth, M. L. (2007). Race in “the race”: Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa, and heroic construction of whiteness. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 24(3), 228-244.

Congalton, K. J. (2009). Competitive eating as sport: A simple recipe for everyone. In Barry Brummett (Ed.), *Sporting rhetoric: Performance, games and politics* (pp. 175-195). New York: Peter Lang.

Davis, L. R., & Harris, O. (1998). Race and ethnicity in US sports media. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 154-169). London: Routledge.

Engen, D. E. (1995). The making of a people’s champion: An analysis of media representations of George Foreman. *Southern Communication Journal*, 60, 141-151.

- Hugenberg, B. S., & Hugenberg, L. W. (2006). The NASCAR fan as emotional stakeholder: Changing the sport, changing the fan culture. In J. A. Vlasich (Ed.), *Horsehide, pigskin, oval tracks and apple pie: Essays on sports and American culture* (pp. 166-179). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.
- Kassing, J. W., Billings, A. C., Brown, R. S., Halone, K. K., Harrison, K., Krizek, B., Mean, L. J., & Turman, P. D. (2004). Communication in the community of sport: The process of enacting, (re)producing, consuming, and organizing sport. *Communication Yearbook*, 28, 372-408.
- Matthews, G. (1995). Epideictic rhetoric and baseball: Nurturing community through controversy. *Southern Communication Journal*, 60, 275-291.
- McDaniel, S. R., & Sullivan, C. B. (1998). Extending the sports experience: Mediations in cyberspace. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 266-281). London: Routledge.
- Nelson, J. (1984). The defense of Billie Jean King. *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 48, 92-102.
- Oates, T. P. (2007). The erotic gaze in the NFL Draft. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 4(1), 74-90.
- Pedersen, P. M., Laucella, P. C., Miloch, K. S., & Fielding, L. W. (2007). The juxtaposition of sport and communication: Defining the field of sport communication. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 2(3), 193-207.
- Rodgers, R. P., & Drogin Rodgers, E. B. (2006). "Ghetto Cinderellas": Venus and Serena Williams and the discourse of racism. In D. K. Wiggins (Ed.), *Out of the shadows: A biographical history of African American athletes* (pp. 353-371, 423-428). Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press.
- Steffensmeier, T. R. (2009). Sacred Saturdays: College football and local identity. In Barry Brummett (Ed.), *Sporting rhetoric: Performance, games and politics* (pp. 218-234). New York: Peter Lang.
- Vande Berg, L. R. (1998). The sports hero meets mediated celebrityhood. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 134-153). London: Routledge.
- Wenner, L. A., & Ganz, W. (1998). Watching sports on television: Audience experience, gender, fanship, and marriage. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 233-251). London: Routledge.

### *Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### *Campus Resources*

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu/>].

