

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

SPMT 430.001—Sport Communication
3 Credits, Spring 2017
R 4:30 p.m. – 7:10 p.m., Robinson Hall A105, Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Office Hours: T 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Thompson; R 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Thompson;
and by arrangement
Office Location: Recreation and Athletic Complex (RAC) 2109 (Fairfax Campus);
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Prerequisites/Corequisites

60 hours, including SPMT 201, SRST 200, and the General Education communication requirement;
or permission of instructor

University Catalog Course Description

Provides a senior-level exploration of the role of sport communication in contemporary cultures. Readings and discussions 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 Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture, discussion, and group work format and will require active participation of all students.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

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.

Professional Standards (Sport Management Program Review Council [SMPRC]: North American Society for Sport Management [NASSM], National Association for Sport & Physical Education [NASPE])

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional 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 Texts

Billings, A. C., Butterworth, M. L., & Turman, P. D. (2015). *Communication and sport: Surveying the field* (2nd ed.). 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 library circulation desk.

Recommended Texts

Hacker, D. (2015). *A pocket style manual: APA version* (7th ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

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; subject/verb, pronoun/antecedent agree.

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.

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.

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.

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 assignment, the course, and/or a report to the honor committee.

- **Other Requirements**

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.

- **Grading**

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: a solo or group-led discussion of an assigned class reading. Minimal of 1 pp. overview to be distributed to class; choice of presentation method; evaluated on introduction, body, conclusion; must invite class participation.			.20	
Short Paper (critique of sports commentary or film): typed, double spaced with 12 Times News Roman font; must include an introduction, body, and conclusion.			.15	
Term Paper/Project: solo or group paper on a sport communication-based topic with an argumentative point of view; typed, double spaced with 12 Times News Roman font; must include an introduction/justification/thesis, mini review of literature, body/analysis, and conclusion.			.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	

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Class Schedule

Date		Assignment	Reading
January	26	Introduction to sport communication; defining sport communication	Billings et al., chapter 1; Pedersen et al. (eReserves)
February	2	Defining sport communication	Billings et al., chapter 1; Pedersen et al. (eReserves)

Date		Assignment	Reading
	9	Community in sports; mediating sports	Billings et al., chapter 2; Brookes (eReserves)
	16	Sports fans culture	Billings et al., chapter 4
	23	Gendered media coverage of sport; gender in sport	Billings et al., chapter 6; Brown & O'Rourke, chapters 2, 3
March	2	Communication and the move of a sports franchise; VIDEO: <i>Bleeding orange and brown</i> ; SHORT PAPER DUE	Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 4
	9	TEST 1	
	16	SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS)	
	23	Athletes and mediated image: George Foreman*, Pete Rose*	Engen (eReserves); Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 1
	30	Athletes and mediated image: Pete Rose*; Competitive eating as sport?*	Matthews (eReserves); Congalton (Brummett, ed.) (eReserves)
	6	SOUTHERN STATES COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION (SSCA) CONVENTION, GREENVILLE, NC (NO CLASS)	
April	13	Athletes and mediated image: Billie Jean King*; NBA Draft and mediated image*	Nelson (eReserves); Brown & O'Rourke, chapter 10
	20	The athlete-as-hero-as-celebrity*; Violence and media sports*	Vande Berg (<i>MediaSport</i> , circulation desk); Bryant, Zillman, & Raney (Wenner, ed.) (eReserves)
	27	Sport and the media marketplace*; Watching sports on television*	Bellamy (Wenner, ed.) (eReserves); Wenner & Ganz (<i>MediaSport</i> , circulation desk)
May	4	TERM PAPER DUE/ORAL PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDIES	
	11	TEST 2 (THURSDAY) 4:30 p.m.-7:15 p.m.	

Chapters/articles marked with an * are group-led presentations. Others may be added.

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- The Writing Center 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/>).
- The 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 Student Support & Advocacy Center staff helps students develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through confidential one-on-one support as well as through interactive programs and resources. Some of the topics they address are healthy relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health (see <http://ssac.gmu.edu/>). Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone at 703-993-3686. Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express

concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://ssac.gmu.edu/make-a-referral/>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.



Additional Course Readings

Other required readings should soon be available via Blackboard. Print versions *may* at the circulation desk. EBook versions may also be available; check book listings at library.gmu.edu. 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.
- Harrison, K., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2003). Women's sports media, self-objectification, and mental health in Black and White adolescent females. *Journal of Communication*, 53 (2), 216-232.
- 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.
- Hutchins, B. (2011). The acceleration of media sport culture. *Information, Communication & Society*, 14 (2), 237- 257.
- 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.
- Meân, L. J., & Halone, K. K. (2010). Sport, language, and culture: Issues and intersections. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 29(3), 253-260.
- 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.
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