

COM 341: Media, Society, and Sport (3 Credit Hours)

Section 1: MWF, 9:00-9:50 AM

Section 2: MWF, 10:00-10:50 AM

Fell 275

Office Hours: MWF, 8:00-8:50 AM and by appointment

Prerequisites: COM 111

Catalog Description

Students will learn about the role of sports media content in the social construction of reality. As sports content is ubiquitous, its reach into commerce, education, and civic life and racial justice will be examined.

Course Overview

This course will examine mass-mediated sport as a creator and reflection of cultural expectations and social performance. Of course, much communication about sport reduces it to mere entertainment and diversion. However, even the most seemingly unimportant sporting event asks us to subscribe to static notions about citizenship, race, gender, religion, sexuality, class, occupation, etc. Students will become more critical observers of sports and culture.

Questions of Diversity and Inclusion will be central to much of this course material!

Specific Student Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate the reach of sports media into our social lives far beyond the role of mere amusement.
2. Identify patterns of ideology and professional practices which influence society's ideas about race, gender, religion, class, sexuality, and social priorities.
3. Identify several theoretical frameworks useful for understanding media, sport, and society.
4. Write a scholarly paper using library sources and a commonly used style book.

Topical Outline and Tentative Schedule

Week 1: Chapter 1, Intro

Week 2: Chapter 2, Theoretical Approaches

Week 3: Chapter 3, Interpersonal Interactions

Week 4: Chapter 4, Small Group and Team Interactions

Week 5: Chapter 5, Legacy Media Interactions

Week 6: Chapter 6, Social and User-Generated Media

Week 7: Chapter 7, Sports Storytelling (**Abstract Due**)

Week 8: Chapter 8, Sport and Mythology (**Midterm Exam**)

Week 9: Chapter 9, Media Representations of Sport Identity

Week 10: Chapter 10, Performance of Sports Identity (**Research Board Assignment Due**)

Week 11: Chapter 11, Sport and Politics

Week 12: Chapter 12, Sport and National Identity

Week 13: Chapter 13, Sport and Commercialism

Week 14: Chapter 14, Sport, Reputation, Crisis, and Image
Week 15: Chapter 15, Sports Gaming (**Final Exam**)

Your Final Paper will be due at the finals week scheduled period for the class (TBD).

Required Texts

Billings, A., Butterworth, M., and Lewis, N. (2025). *Communication and sport: Surveying the field*. (5th edition). Sage. (BOOK IS AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY THROUGH MILNER LIBRARY AT LINK BELOW)

https://i-share-isu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_ISU/kt5co6/alma9921862081105845

Also see CANVAS under Files for Additional Reading.

Required Tasks

1. A detailed comparison of a published abstract and an AI-generated summary of a scholarly article. (10%)
2. A final paper of 2500 words. (20%)
3. Students will take two tests: a midterm and final examination. (25% each)
4. Students will participate in the School of Communication Research Announcement Board (5%)
5. Students will be required to participate with class discussions based on reading prompts given before class. (15%)

Student Performance Evaluation Methods/Grading Scale

90% and above=A
80% to 89%=B
70% to 79%=C
60% to 69%=D
Below 60%=F

Attendance and Other Course Policies

While attendance will not technically be calculated into the final grade, the student's participation is most closely tied to being physically present. *Being late to class or not attending will result in no participation earned for the day.*

I love teaching and want to make your learning experience as fun and as enjoyable as possible.

Let's all maintain good humor and respect for each other in the course of our discussions. In recent years, discussions of issues with economic and social ramifications have a tendency toward controversy and strongly held opinions. Charity and empathy should guide our discussions, always with an end toward better understanding of communication phenomena.

The best way to reach me is via email. I typically return email within an hour or two, but always within 24 hours.

Academic dishonesty will result in failure for the course. Turning in papers on time with content as requested and reading assigned material will likely lead to a positive grade outcome.

Student Access and Accommodations

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit Student Access and Accommodation Services (http://studentaccess.illinoisstate.edu/faculty_staff/academic/).