Syllabus for

Business of Sports Communication

JMC 3181:0001 • SPST 3181:0001

Spring Semester 2018
2:00 – 3:15 pm Tuesday/Thursday
TILE classroom 469 VAN

Note: this class is designed for the TILE classroom; it is not lecture based. TILE is an acronym for “Transform, Interact, Learn and Engage” [http://tile.uiowa.edu]. The classrooms are designed with seating in small clusters (that I refer to as “circles”) that promote the concept of student collaboration to discover and discuss course learnings. This emphasizes critical thinking, collective discussion and debate. Additionally, classroom technology promotes sharing visual presentations with the larger class. Since the objective of the classroom architecture is to challenge students to cover course material organically - both through individual and group participation – the course plan (at the end of this syllabus) will likely change during the semester. Also note that some assignments are “group graded,” which means the performance of your classmates can affect the evaluation of your work. Please see me if you have question about how this may apply to your overall course grade.

Instructor and contacts
Charles Munro, Instructor
- Phone: 319 862-1739. (Leave voicemail.)
- E-mail: charles-munro@uiowa.edu.
- Office: E328 AJB
- Office hours: Tuesday 3:30–5:00 pm/ Thursday 11:00 am–12:30 pm or by appointment.

Textbook (required)

Periodicals and journals (recommended)
- Industry publications with links at the following site will provide discussion material: http://www.thebusinessofsports.com/required-reading. Many of these are available through the UI library “Libguide.”

Course description
As an industry sports is more than just content that fills pages, screens, blogs, and posts on social media. Sporting events are packaged for consumption through sophisticated processes that court sponsors, cater to specific audiences, and compete for market share. Commercially driven companies, some of them powerful billion dollar businesses, play a key role in shaping sport’s cultural meanings. Divorced from business considerations like marketing, branding, and public relations, sport would look very, very different. This course provides a critical and practical introduction to the business of contemporary sport communication.
Why take this course
This course is designed for the student who aspires to work in the sports industry whether it be in covering events for media, promoting a team, or just being playing a part in one of a sports organization that makes it all happen. Experience has shown me that students who have the best understanding of how sports businesses operate and – most important – how effectively communicate their products and services are those most likely to succeed in sports professions.

What this course is not
This is not a sports skills course. You will not be covering fields of play. You will not be asked to analyze individual games, bouts or matches. Instead you will be studying the big picture – the relationship between business practices, messaging and the success (or failure) of sports products and organizations. Topics not covered include recreational (non-competitive) sports, health, or fitness. Other courses offer excellent opportunities to study those topics. Not this one.

Course learning outcomes
The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment we have identified particular learning outcomes that every student should obtain by the time they earn an SJMC degree. We regularly assess the curriculum to determine whether students are achieving these outcomes. You can find more information about these learning outcomes at the following link:
https://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/undergraduate-programs/sjmc-assessment-plan

This course is designed to reinforce your understanding of media history in the context of industries and identify transformations in audiences, engagement, and business practice over time. Parts of the course are also designed to help you
- grasp the significance of advances in mass communication technology for cultural production in domestic and global media markets;
- trace the production of cultural meanings across historical periods as well as connections between business models and news/sports consumption.

This course also contributes to these learning outcomes by helping you achieve proficiency in understanding of writing and storytelling by demonstrating your ability to:
- gather factual story elements, and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple media,
- access and analyze data, report facts accurately, research and edit information responsibly and in a manner commensurate with professional standards,
- apply above concepts in a manner that is sensitive to audiences across all media.

This class has other specific outcomes in which you will display how well you:
- understand that major sports organizations operate as businesses regardless of size and, thus, seeking a professional position with these organizations requires the ability to see the business environment in which they operate;
- identify marketplaces in which organizations complete for audience (e.g. fans);
- understand how to define, research and develop an audience (e.g. fan base);
- understand how disruptive technologies affect the success of sports business;
- recognize what a brand is and the place it plays in communicating the features and benefits that market a sports organization;
• critically analyze the success (or failure) of sports organizations by applying measures commonly applied in the entertainment market sector that include as reference points product, content, distribution and value.

How you will earn your course grade
You course grade will be based on how well you perform in the five areas that represent a mix of presentations, tests, reports, and weekly research. Some of your grade comes from “circle collaborations” in which you develop course topics with a team of classmates. (Note that in such collaborations you are subject to collective grading.)

1. PRESENTATIONS (30%)

   Team Presentation. You will work with two-three teammates to research an industry issue and present a 10-minute summary in class for discussion and critique. You will be graded collectively on a 100-point scale for your contribution. (10% of presentations grade.)

   Circle Project. You will work with your circle on a topic that impacts a sports business and its products (radio, TV, online content) paying special attention communication practices and how they reflect the goals of organization. You will pitch researched recommendations for a strategic plan for their future. You will be graded collectively as a circle on a 100-point scale for your contribution. (20% of presentations grade.)

2. TESTS (20%)

   You will take two “tracking tests” designed to 1) ensure that you are tracking with course content to that point; and, 2) to give you an indication of how well you are understand and are applying learning concepts. Your point score will be equivalent to the percentage of correct responses over all test questions. (Each is 10% of the test grade.) No final exam.

3. CASE STUDY (20%)

   You will research, analyze, and report on a sports organization’s success or failure as a business and include your conclusion about its competitive outlook for the future.

   Peer Review. You will first submit a draft of your report to classmates for peer review against an established rubric, then given a change to revise it before final submission. (20% of case study grade)

   Case Study Report. After revision you will submit a 1500-word written report with bibliography, properly annotated and (80% of case study grade.)

4. ENGAGEMENT (20%).

   You will be expected to engage in class sessions by posting and replying to weekly items in the news called “Hot Happenings” for discussion.

   Posts/Replies. Search sports news, trade or business sites for immediately-occurring happenings that you believe are relevant to course content and of to the whole class. Post them on ICON>“Weekly Hot Happenings” using the posting guideline. In addition to you will need to reply to classmates’ posts. Posts and replies from fully engaged students are
thoughtful not perfunctory, and refer directly to course topics. Opinions and perspectives are encouraged. Posts that fall short of this standard are subject to deletion. Fully engaged students will submit 30 weekly posts/replies during the semester, which is just less than one post plus reply per week. (Posts/replies comprise the entire engagement grade but circle challenges often offer opportunities to add engagement points.)

**Circle challenges.** You will work with members of your circle to earn points for confronting a sports business situation presented in class and, after a designated period of time, offering a solution in class. Points are awarded in class based upon the quality of the circle’s solution.

5. **ATTENDANCE (10%).**

The TILE classroom is designed to provide valuable information through class discussions. Two bad things happen when you miss or are late to class: 1) you lose the experience of collaborating with classmates in the discovery of key learning points; and 2) you let down your circle-mates who must increase their efforts to cover your absence. You will be expected to notify your circle in advance of any absence and recover notes on points covered in class. *Ultimately, you are responsible for class material in any class you do not attend for any reason.* (Accommodations are available for disability, attendance at UI sanctioned events, and for religious obligations.) Your grade is a percentage of classes you attend during the semester. You must sign in for each class to get full attendance credit.

**Standards for earning your grade:**
Tests and attendance are scores as percentages. I will post grading standards for how to earn points for presentations, the case study and circle challenges. Application of these standards in grading must necessarily include a degree of subjectivity. *If you have questions about any of the grading standards or concerns about my application of them, please contact me to discuss.*

**Final grade calculation:**

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Communicating with the instructor:
You should feel free to communicate with me at outside of class about course content, procedures, standards, or to discuss matters of personal concern. I do not want a student ever to feel constrained, intimidated, or in any way discouraged from using any of the following means to reach me.

- Remain after class session. I will leave the classroom until I have addressed all student issues.
- Schedule an appointment for a personal call at my direct number or by email. See the first page of this syllabus for contact details. Please do not leave voicemail messages at the university phone extension listed for me.

If you feel I have not resolved your complaint or concern, you should then feel free to contact Dr. David Ryfe, Director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, in person at E305 AJB by arranging an appointment with SJMC Administrator, Rebecca Kick, at 319 335-3390.

Rules and Policies:
This course is subject to rules and policies established by the UI College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. I have excerpted several of the more important ones on the next page. Please take a moment to review them on the next page.

If you have questions or need clarification, please ask.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences rules and policies:
On the following page you will find the important rules and policies that follow apply to all of us who teach, learn, and administer in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. They also describe your rights to accommodation and the complaint procedure beyond that contained in the above paragraph.

Please take time to review them.
Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences (Operations Manual, III.15.2 k.11).

Accommodations for Disabilities
The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor’s office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for information.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, and religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

Academic Honesty
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar’s web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student’s responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Department of Public Safety website.
Course plan

Since an objective of the TILE classroom concept is to let topics grow organically from collaboration, this list of topics is highly subject to change as class dynamics evolve throughout the semester. *You are responsible for changes announced in class or posted on our ICON site.*

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<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments to stay on track</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Subject to change!</td>
<td>Readings are on ICON. “Text” refers to <em>The Elusive Fan</em></td>
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| 1  | Tue 1/16 | **Introduction and expectations**  
• Divide into “Circles”  
• Requirements and classroom protocols  
• Sports market sector overview  
**The Sports Business Schematic**  
• Understanding terms *(market sector, marketplace, organization, content, product, distribution, marketing audiences, consumer value, measures.* | Go to “Business of Sports Journals” on ICON “Content). [Find and post a “Weekly Hot Happenings.”](#)  
[You will need to post/reply each week for the remainder of the semester.]  
Read “Format and Guidelines for Hot Happenings Posts.” |
|    | Thu 1/18 |  
**Int. and expectations**  
**The Sports Business Schematic** | |
| 2  | Tue 1/23 | **Business structure and management**  
• Ownerships  
• Importance of content  
• Creating a product  
• Determining value  
**Assign team presentation topics.**  
**Challenge: connecting to fans**  
• The specialness of sports fandom  
• Consumers changing behaviors  
• The cost of attendance and alternatives  
**Threats and disruptions**  
• Technology  
• The athletic director’s role | Read text Chapter 1 “The Fan Challenge” (particularly pp. 19-21 and be prepared to discuss p. 14 “Paradox of Commercialism”).  
Read: “The Costs of Being a Fan” and “The Economy of Food at Sports Events”  
Read: “Game On: Disruptive Trends in Sports” and “Middle Class Abandons the Game”  
Read text Chapter 2 “Sports in Trouble” (understand the concept of the “TV Generation” and “Highlight Generation)  
**Meet with your presentation team.** |
|    | Thu 1/25 |  
**Int. and expectations**  
**Business structure and management** | |
| 3  | Tue 1/30 | **The power of media**  
• Narratives  
• The economics of sports rights  
**Integrity**  
• Purity vs. commercialism  
• Sportsmanship | Read text Chapter 3 “How Fans Connect” pp. 53-75 and p. 90. Understand the concepts behind “connection points” and “entryways,” particularly media (p.69).  
Read “Sports Economics - Rights Expenses, Ageing Audience, Ads.” |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<td>1/30 cont.</td>
<td><strong>Distribution battles</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Media (<em>cable</em>, ESPN, streaming)&lt;br&gt;• Primacy of live sports</td>
<td><strong>Meet with your presentation team.</strong></td>
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<td>Thu 2/1</td>
<td><strong>Audiences</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Standards and measurement&lt;br&gt;• Understanding research&lt;br&gt;• Using research to build strategy</td>
<td><strong>Read “Team Presentations Guide”</strong></td>
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<td>4 Tue 2/6</td>
<td><strong>Team Presentations I</strong></td>
<td><strong>See your presentation assignment tasks for all team presentations</strong></td>
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<td>Thu 2/8</td>
<td><strong>Team Presentations II</strong></td>
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<td>5 Tue 2/13</td>
<td><strong>Team Presentations III</strong></td>
<td><strong>See your presentation assignment tasks for all team presentations</strong></td>
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<td>Thu 2/15</td>
<td><strong>Team Presentations IV (finish)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Marketing</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Marketing concepts and buyer behavior (<em>strategic planning</em>, promotion, advertising, sponsorship, sales)</td>
<td>Read text Chapter 4 (pp. 93-top 103).&lt;br&gt;Read “7 Great and Not So Great Sports Marketing Campaigns”</td>
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<td>6 Tue 2/20</td>
<td><strong>Branding basics</strong>&lt;br&gt;• What is it?&lt;br&gt;• The value proposition</td>
<td><strong>Read “Tracking Test 1 Study Guide”</strong>&lt;br&gt;Read “Sports Team Uses Data to Transform Its Brand”&lt;br&gt;Read “Forbes Top Sports Brands”</td>
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<td>Thu 2/22</td>
<td><strong>TRACKING TEST 1</strong></td>
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<td>7 Tue 2/27</td>
<td><strong>Applied brand management I</strong></td>
<td>Read test Chapter 4 (pp. bottom 104-119), Chapter 5 (pp.127-137 and pp. 146-156).&lt;br&gt;Read: “Brand Identity in College Football”</td>
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<td>Thu 3/1</td>
<td><strong>Applied brand management II</strong>&lt;br&gt;Assign Case Study</td>
<td><strong>Begin researching your case study topic</strong></td>
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<td>8 Tue 3/6</td>
<td><strong>Seven habits of a sports fanatic</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Branding circle challenge</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Discuss case study topics</em></td>
<td><strong>Read text Chapter 6 (pp. 158-168 and pp.195-196).</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Research topics for case study.</strong></td>
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<td>Thu 3/8</td>
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<td><strong>Spring Break</strong>----------</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Measuring audiences</td>
<td>Read text Chapter 8 “Sustaining the Fan Connection” pp.231 – 261 to discuss).</td>
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<td>Thu</td>
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<td>Read “Negotiate Like a Sports Agent”</td>
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<td>Case study topic approved</td>
<td>Work on Case Study draft for peer review</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Negotiating: sports deals that succeed and fail</td>
<td>Submit case study draft for peer review</td>
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<td>Thu</td>
<td>Surviving the future</td>
<td>Read Chapter 10 “The Future of Fan Connection”</td>
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<td>Case study: peer review (in class)</td>
<td>Read “A Year of Tremendous Growth for eSports”</td>
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<td>Revise case study based upon peer review comments</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>TRACKING TEST 2</td>
<td>Submit final case study</td>
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<td>Thu</td>
<td>Assign Circle Project</td>
<td>Submit back review</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>The professional presentation</td>
<td>Meet in circles to prepare Circle Project presentation.</td>
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<td>Circle Project in class group prep</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Circle Project in class group prep</td>
<td>Meet in circles to prepare Circle Project presentation.</td>
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<td>Circle Project final presentations I</td>
<td>All project deliverables due</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Circle project final presentations II</td>
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<td>Thu</td>
<td>Circle project final presentations III</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Circle project final presentation IV</td>
<td>Fill out evaluations.</td>
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<td>Thu</td>
<td>Review and challenge quiz</td>
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