

**Issues in Sport and Media**

JRSM 4704/6704-001.501

Spring 2018

10:20-11:15AM MWF

100 MJ

Dr. Roxane Coche (Office: MJ324)

Office Hours: T-TH, 1-2:15 p.m.; TH, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.; and by appointment.

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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS****CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

Examines the ongoing relationship of sports and media. Students will think more critically about the role of sports in the contemporary media landscape and vice-versa.

**TEXTBOOK:**

Henderson, S. (2013). *Sidelined: How American Sports Challenged the Black Freedom Struggle*. University Press of Kentucky. ISBN-13: 978-0813141541 / ISBN-10: 0813141540.

**CLASS INSTRUCTION:**

This course is designed to explore the complex interrelationship of sports and the media, including various ethical and social questions raised through mediated sports, such as racism, gender issues, nationalism, and journalism ethics. This exploration is a deep examination of what people believe, desire, and expect their society to be – forming a cultural mythology that we are all embedded within. In this course we will immerse ourselves in this mythology, unpacking the notion of sports in the media as a reflection of our culture and ourselves.

We might discuss current sporting events but this course is not a forum for exchanging sport trivia. We won't spend time in class talking about the latest scores or trades.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Develop critical thinking skills in relation to issues in the realm of sports and the media.
- Engage in discussions about contemporary issues related to sports and the media.
- Find, read, and summarize scholarly research on sports in the media.
- Understand the ways in which sports journalism frames our understanding of sports.
- Synthesize the difficulties that minor sports face to get media coverage.
- Evaluate how much new media technology changes sports.

## **GRADING – UNDERGRADUATE:**

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Issues Paper	20%
Sports Journalism Paper	15%
Role Model Presentation	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	15%
Quizzes	10%
Participation and Involvement	5%

### Issues Paper – 25%

The Issues Paper is a 7- to 8-page paper. Written in pairs, it explores a contemporary issue in the world of sports and the media. You must research what has been said about that topic and take a stand on that particular issue. Your position must be accompanied by supportive research and evidence to lend credence to your position. Some sample topics include: bullying, amateurism and compensation, representations of brain injury, depictions of masculinity/femininity, etc. All topics must be approved by the instructor prior to writing the paper.

### Sports Journalism Paper – 15%

For this 3-page paper, you must select one prominent sportswriter and research their career. What sports do they write about? What sort of issues are they interested in? How does their journalism contribute to the public perception of that sport (or those sports) in our culture? Does this person weigh in on issues pertaining to sport, or are they more of an “objective” observer? Some prominent examples to choose from include: Bill Simmons, Peter King, Bob Ryan, Bomani Jones, David Epstein, etc.

### Role Model Presentation – 15%

You must select one athlete to follow on Twitter. Over the course of the semester (and you may go back to up to three months of the athlete’s tweets), prepare a 5-minute presentation on how this athlete is considered a role model and how his/her twitter persona fits into this public image. How do they relate to followers? How does the Twitter account coincide or contradict the athlete’s public persona as a role model?

## **GRADING – GRADUATE:**

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Research Paper	20%
Issues Paper	15%
Sports Journalism Paper	15%
Role Model Presentation	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
Quizzes	5%

### Research Paper – 25%

Graduate students will write an original research paper (approximately 20 double-spaced, typed pages) for their final paper in the course. You should decide on a general area of interest early in the semester. I will guide you throughout the semester, breaking down this study in 4 sequential assignments (an annotated bibliography, a method explanation, a proposal, and the final paper). Students will also need to investigate possible conventions and publications to which they could submit their papers or how

their papers might be used in future projects. There is no restriction on the theoretical perspective or methodological approach taken. Papers will be presented the last week of class, and each student will have 10 to 15 minutes to present the findings of his/her research project. Of course, students are expected to attend all of their classmates' presentations.

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### **ATTENDANCE & CLASS CONDUCT**

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time, make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider school to be your job and be on time just as you would for a “real” job.

To allow for illness and other unforeseeable misfortunes, you are permitted five absences in the semester. Any additional absence will result in a penalization of one grade level (e.g., from B+ to B for four total absences, from B+ to B- for five total absences, etc.). Missing a total of seven classes will result in the student failing the course. University policy for excused absences applies to this course. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to get in touch with me and/or your peers to ask about course content and possible assignments. Any tardiness of 10 minutes or less counts as half an absence. Any tardiness of more than 10 minutes counts as an absence.

### **Classroom Etiquette**

This course is heavily geared towards class discussion. It is expected that everyone treat each member of the class with respect. In this course there is no such thing as stupid questions or answers. Respect your classmates' views. Everyone is entitled to his/her own beliefs. Listen to your classmates' opinions before voicing your own. Also,

please silence all cell phones and electronic devices when class is in session. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, you are expected to consider your work through a diverse mind.

Late work: You are responsible for turning in all projects on the dates they're due, as indicated on eCourseWare. If you cannot make it to class that day, upload your project online and send me a link. In this day and age, there is no excuse.

**No late work will be accepted**, regardless of the reason(s).

Assignments: If you do not follow every single instruction on any given assignment, you will receive a grade of zero. Detailed instructions are available on eCourseWare.

Plagiarism: Note that plagiarism is unforgivable in journalism. It essentially ends a journalist's career and could also end a student's career. Any plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course and the responsible student may be referred to the university's Academic Integrity Committee for discipline.

Weather policy: Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, you may still be responsible for that day's work. Check your emails.

Emails: As a journalism student, you are required to write an extensive amount and adhere to the Associated Press style guide.

When writing an email to the instructor, you should always follow the basics of email etiquette, available on eCourseWare. I may not respond otherwise. Emailing is not texting.

## **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Deviations might be necessary.

### **PART I: Introduction**

#### **Week One**

No class on Wednesday, Jan. 17. Course Introduction on Friday, Jan. 19.

#### **Week Two**

Communicating sport  
For next class: C&S – Ch. 2

### **PART II: The Political Economy of Sports Media**

#### **Weeks Three**

History, Sport Promotion & Sportainment

#### **Week Four**

Law & Politics: Broadcast Rights & Stadium Subsidies

#### **Week Five**

Mega events

**Week Six**

The manufacture of sports news

**Week Seven**

Politics and nationalism in sports media

**Week Eight – SPRING BREAK****PART III: Social Justice and Sports Media****Week Nine**

Women's sports in the media

**Week Ten**

Race and ethnicity in sports media coverage

**Week Eleven**

Disability in sports media

**Week Twelve**

Minorities in sports media

**PART IV: Audience and Market Research****Week Thirteen**

Sports and Fan Cultures

**Week Fourteen**

Sport Analytics

**Week Fifteen**

Growing the sport audience internationally

**Final exam on Monday, April 30 from 8 to 10:00 a.m.**

## DEPARTMENT POLICIES

### **PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:**

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and contribute to it from every course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from his/her courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their majors.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. The department requires students to use WordPress to build their portfolio sites. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail or Yahoo.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files, and Storify pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

### **EMAIL:**

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

### **MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS:**

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Your instructor will set the policy for her/her specific class.

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in

the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

### **CHEATING:**

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

Further, as this is a journalism/mass communication class, students are expected to comply with copyright law, and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

"Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

### **ONLINE SETEs:**

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

### **DEADLINES:**

Remember there's a reason "DEAD" makes up half the word "deadline." All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. If you get into trouble, talk to your instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

### **AP STYLE AND GRAMMAR:**

All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don't know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.

**DISABILITY:**

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact your instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**DIVERSITY:**

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Mass communications reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

**WEATHER POLICY:**

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.