

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**School of Sport, Recreation and Tourism Management**

SPMT 430.001—Sport Communication  
3 Credits, Fall 2019  
MW 3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. Robinson Hall B105 – Fairfax

**Faculty**

Name: Dr. Kelly Morgan  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

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

**University Catalog 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 Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered using a lecture format with class discussion.

**Learner Outcomes or 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.

**Professional Standards**

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

*National Flashes of Insight Association (NFIA)*

8.21	Understanding of and the ability to analyze thought processes
8.22	Understanding of procedures and techniques for assessment

### Required Texts

Billings, A. C., Butterworth, M. L., & Turman, P. D. (2015). *Communication and sport: Surveying the field* (3<sup>rd</sup> 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 Blackboard.

### Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time through Blackboard.

Assignment	Due Date	Points Possible
Participation	Every class	280
Weekly Billings readings quizzes on Blackboard	Every Monday, 2:59pm	150
Weekly case studies/articles readings quizzes on Blackboard	Every Wednesday, 2:59pm	55
Blog set up with a title/link submitted	Monday, 9/4, 2:59pm	10
Short paper on your understanding of Sport Communication	Monday, 9/9, 2:59pm – submitted on Blackboard	100
Weekly blogging project	Every Monday, 2:59pm (starting 9/9)	260
Midterm Exam on Blackboard –	Tuesday, 10/15, 2:59pm –	50

Assignment	Due Date	Points Possible
covers all material from Weeks 1-6	submitted on Blackboard <i>This exam opens on Monday 10/1</i>	
Sport advertisement brief presentation	Monday, 12/2 in class	25
Final Exam on Blackboard – covers all material from the semester	Monday, 12/9, 12:00pm ( <b>NOON</b> ) – submitted on Blackboard <i>This exam opens on Monday 11/26.</i>	50
Term paper	Monday, 12/9, 12:00pm ( <b>NOON</b> ) – submitted on Blackboard	200
<b>Total</b>		<b>1180</b>

### Assignments and Examinations

- Weekly Billings readings quizzes (10 points per quiz, 150 points possible):** You are responsible for completing weekly quizzes on Blackboard that help you with the assigned reading in our main text, Billings et al. These quizzes will be due every **Monday by 2:59pm**. The quizzes are open book, but they are timed, which means you need to be familiar with the chapter content so you can flip to that section of the textbook if you need help answering a question. Once the quizzes close on Blackboard, they will not be re-opened.
- Weekly case studies/articles readings quizzes (5 points per quiz, 55 points possible):** You are responsible for completing weekly quizzes on Blackboard that help you with the assigned reading in our case studies/articles. These quizzes will be due every **Wednesday by 2:59pm**. The quizzes are open book, but they are timed, which means you need to be familiar with the content so you can flip to that section if you need help answering a question. Once the quizzes close on Blackboard, they will not be re-opened.
- Blog set up/link submitted (10 points):** Create your blog using the platform of your choice. I find Blogger to be simple to use if you are looking for an option. Be sure that it is named. Submit the link in the “Quiz” on Blackboard.
- Short paper on your understanding of Sport Communication (100 points):** You will write a 2-4 page paper on what sport communication is and how it applies to your interests, due **through Blackboard**. APA style is REQUIRED. If you are not proficient, find help from someone who is. You will be graded on your thoughtfulness, your use of the readings, how well the paper is written, and correct format. Please do not turn in a paper that you have not proofread. This paper must have:
  - Title page **\*\*This does not count in the 2-4 pages**
  - Section 1: Describe your understanding of sport communication from the readings (45 points)
    - At a minimum, you should cite (1) the Pederson et al. article and (2) our textbook, Billings et al. You are welcome to cite additional sources.
    - If your information in this section is guided closely by the readings, lecture, and class discussion, you will have no trouble answering this correctly.
  - Section 2: Applying sport communication to yourself (45 points)
    - This section is all your original thoughts.

- This may include the benefits of learning about sport communication in your (future) career or social life and topics that especially interest you within the realm of sport communication (PR, fantasy sports, coaching, etc.). Anything is fair game.
      - A references page citing all of your sources. At a minimum, you will have the textbook and the article. (10 points) \*\*This does not count in the 2-4 pages
5. **Weekly blogging project (10 points per entry, 20 points per week, 240 points possible):** This is your main project for the semester. It will allow you to take your sport communication knowledge and put it into practice. **You may NOT combine this with an existing blog – it must be a new blog set up specifically for this assignment.** You may choose your blogging platform. I suggest Blogger because it is easy to use, but this is your choice. The blog must be set up and named. You will write two posts per week (posted between the end of the previous week’s class and 2:59pm the following Monday), which should be 200-250 words each. Posts can be about anything sport-related; for example, sports news, a personal story, or your commentary on a game. I will check for these weekly and will be actively following your blog. Your posts will be graded based on the thoughtfulness of your work, the ability to relate your post to sport communication, and for the assigned length (200-250 words).
  6. **Midterm Exam (50 points):** This exam will consist of 5 short answer questions that include concepts from your readings and from class from Weeks 1-6. This is an opportunity for you to make some connections and dazzle me with what you know. This exam is open book and open note and will be completed on Blackboard. It is not timed, and you can save and return to it.
  7. **Sport ad presentation (25 points):** Select an example of an advertisement that uses sport to sell a product. This may be an athlete endorsement, sport product, or anything else in advertising that uses sport, an athlete, sport imagery, and/or sport mythology. You may use any media – print, online, etc. You do not need to turn this in. You will give a **brief, informal** presentation to the class describing the ad, the message, and the effectiveness. The ad and presentation are due in class.
  8. **Final Exam (50 points):** Like your midterm exam, this final exam will consist of 5 short answer questions that include concepts from your readings and from class over the entire semester. You will have the freedom to answer the questions in a way that draws on your knowledge from this class, other classes, and your own experience. This exam is open book and open note and will be completed on Blackboard. It is not timed, and you can save and return to it.
  9. **Term paper (200 points):** Your final paper will be a scholarly study of a sport communication topic of your choice. Your paper should be between 10-12 pages long (**not counting title, abstract, and references**). You may go longer if you would like to. The paper should be written in a formal tone using APA style throughout. This paper is due through Blackboard. Your paper must include:
    - Abstract (100-200 words max)
    - Introduction
    - Hypothesis or Research Question (i.e., what are you studying?)
    - Literature Review (i.e., the actual research or what the readings said)
    - Analysis (i.e., your take on the research and application, if appropriate)
    - Conclusion
    - References

This paper should answer a question that you feel is important to sport communication as a study. Examples of appropriate paper topics include, but are not limited to: an analysis of the portrayal of women in sport communication, a review of the evolution of sport communication, and case studies of positive and negative examples of sport communication. Remember, this is a sport communication paper, so your topic must relate to **communication and how it has been used in sport.**

You must use at least 10 sources as references in your paper. Use *quality* sources, such as textbooks, academic articles, and reputable newspaper articles. If you need help with where to find sources or whether a source is of acceptable quality, do not hesitate to ask me.

You will be graded on your thoughtfulness, your use of the readings, how well the paper is written, and correct format. Please do not turn in a paper that you have not proofread. There will be absolutely no late papers accepted.

### Other Requirements

**Participation (10 points per class, 280 points possible):** A significant portion of our class is discussion. Each class, you will be expected to participate in discussion, showing that you are prepared (have read the material) and engaged. You will learn a lot from each other, and I ask that you be generous with sharing your knowledge and experience with the class.

### Grading

Final grades will be recorded with “plus/minus” letter grade annotations. Individual assignments will be marked with points. You will be able to track your grade progress in the Grade Center in Blackboard.

A = 94 – 100	B+ = 88 – 89	C+ = 78 – 79	D = 60 – 69
A- = 90 – 93	B = 84 – 87	C = 74 – 77	F = 0 – 59
	B- = 80 – 83	C- = 70 – 73	

### Professional Dispositions

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

1. **Participation.** Attendance and punctuality are essential for success in this class. Most 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 turn in an assignment. **More than two absences will result in a 5-point deduction per absence from your final grade.** Students who arrive late or leave early without prior arrangements with me will be counted as absent. Some absences, such as university sports-related, may be excused provided **prior** arrangement is made with me. Other 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 it 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. All work prepared outside of class (papers and projects) will be assessed for content AND for presentation. Your assignments must clearly have been planned, researched, and proofread.

3. **Format.** Papers and projects submitted must be typed, and attention should be paid to form (including grammar, punctuation, spelling, and general appearance) as well as to content. Your work should be in APA format. \*\*A helpful online guide can be found at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
4. **Submission.** *No late work will be accepted, no exceptions.*
5. **Honor Policy.** George Mason University takes its honor policy quite seriously, and so do I. Papers, projects, and other assignments must be your own work. Further, only **you** may sign in for yourself on our class sign-in sheet. Having a friend sign you in or doing so for another student will result in an honor violation for both students.
6. **Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is representing another’s work as your own or recycling your work and representing earlier work as new work. I will be checking your work for originality. 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, will result in failing the course and a report to the honor committee. If you need assistance with citation rules beyond the APA style guide or with determining if something should be cited, please ask me!
7. **Technology.** I welcome your use of computers or tablets to take notes during the lecture portion of our class; however, I will require that you put your computer/tablet away during our discussions. **Cell phones should be turned off or silenced.** I will offer you the same courtesy. Those who choose not to follow this policy will be asked to leave and given a 0 for the evening’s participation.

## Class Schedule

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

WEEK		ASSIGNMENT	ITEMS DUE ON DATE LISTED
1	M 8/26	Introduction Defining Sport Communication	
	W 8/28	Cleveland Browns Case Study	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 1 and Ch. 2</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 2 only (Bb&gt;Assessments)</li> </ul>
2	M 9/2	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS	Go to the pool, eat a hot dog, play with friends
	W 9/4	Community in Sport Information Democracy in Sport	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pederson et al. article (Bb&gt;Articles)</li> <li>• Clark article (Bb&gt;Articles)</li> <li>• Gay article (Bb&gt;Articles)</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pederson, Clark, and Gay articles (Bb&gt;Assessments)</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blog set up/link submission “quiz” on Blackboard</li> </ul>

WEEK		ASSIGNMENT	ITEMS DUE ON DATE LISTED
3	M 9/9	Sports Media	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 3</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 3 (Bb&gt;Assessments)</li> </ul> Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> <li>• Short Paper submission (Bb&gt;Assessments)</li> </ul>
	W 9/11	Television Coverage of Men's and Women's Basketball	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 2</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 2</li> </ul>
4	M 9/16	Sports Fan Cultures	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 4</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 4</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 9/18	Team and City Identity	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 4</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 4</li> </ul>
5	M 9/23	Sports and Mythology	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 5</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 5</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 9/25	NBA Draft as Ritual	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 10</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 10</li> </ul>
6	M 9/30	Gender in Sport	<i>FYI: Your midterm exam opens today on Bb (Bb&gt;Assessments)</i> Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 6</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 6</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 10/2	Announcer Bias	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 3</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 3</li> </ul>

WEEK		ASSIGNMENT	ITEMS DUE ON DATE LISTED
7	10/7	Race and Ethnicity in Sport	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 7</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 7</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 10/9	The Continuing Redskins Debate	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headbloom article</li> <li>• Jensen article</li> <li>• Connolly article</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles</li> </ul>
8	***T 10/15	<b>FALL BREAK – CLASS MEETS TUES</b>  Politics and Nationalism in Sport	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 8</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 8</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul> Exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your midterm exam closes today at 2:59pm</li> </ul>
	W 10/16	Sport and Moral Controversy	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 6</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 6</li> </ul>
9	M 10/21	Performing Identity in Sport	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 9</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 9</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 10/23	Sport and Disability	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 5</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 5</li> </ul>
10	M 10/28	Sport Communication in Parent-Child Interactions	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 10</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 10</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 10/30	Why Children Need Sports	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Straight Talk article</li> <li>• Wallerson article</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles</li> </ul>



WEEK		ASSIGNMENT	ITEMS DUE ON DATE LISTED
11	M 11/4	Player-Coach Relationships in Sports	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 11</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 11</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 11/6	Coach Talk	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 8</li> <li>• Coach Wooden's Pyramid of Success (Bb&gt;Articles)</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 8</li> </ul>
12	M 11/11	Small Groups/Teams in Sport	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 12</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 12</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 11/13	Cohesion and the Meaning of Teams	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teehan article</li> <li>• Cox article</li> <li>• Clements article</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles</li> </ul>
13	M 11/18	Crisis Communication in Sports Organizations	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 13</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 13</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 11/20	Sport Apologia	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 1</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown &amp; O'Rourke Ch. 1</li> </ul>
14	M 11/25	Sports Gaming Image and Name Use The Commodification of Sport	<i>FYI: Your final exam opens today</i> Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 14</li> <li>• Billings Ch. 15</li> <li>• Holthaus article</li> </ul> Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billings Ch. 14</li> <li>• Billings Ch. 15</li> </ul> Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blog posts</li> </ul>
	W 11/27	THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)	Eat, watch football, eat, be nice to your relatives
15	M 12/2	Examples of Commodification of Sport	Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport ad presentation in class</li> </ul>

WEEK		ASSIGNMENT	ITEMS DUE ON DATE LISTED
	W 12/4	Putting it All Together	None
16	M 12/9	NO CLASS  <b><u>NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS!!!</u></b>	<i>Extra Credit Deadline</i> Exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your final exam closes today at NOON.</li> </ul> Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Term paper submission (Bb&gt;Assessments) no later than NOON.</li> </ul>

### **Sport Management Events:**

**September 5** Welcome Week social The Pilot House (behind Hampton Roads dorm)  
4:00-6:00pm Food, drinks, meet with faculty, staff and students

**September 9** Sport Psychology Symposium Merten Hall 1204 6:30-8:30pm  
Pizza and great discussion about athletes and motivation in today's internet age

**September 27** GMU Day at Nats Park Washington Nationals v Cleveland Indians  
Panel discussion for the School of Sport, Recreation and Tourism Management 5:30pm Game at 7:05pm

### **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](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.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/>.**