

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



**SPMT 462 – Sports Business Law**  
**3 Credits – Spring 2024 Digital Learning Courts (Online)**

**Professor Information**

Name: Rebekah Ansbro  
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Monday - Friday

**Prerequisites/Co-requisites**

60 Credits

**University Catalog Course Description**

Students in this course will receive instruction in the major areas of the law that impacts the sport industry. Students will also see how knowledge of sport law can make them better sport managers. There will be an introduction to the legal system in the United States and then we will see how the law has shaped the management of sport organizations and the playing and staging of the games.

**Course Overview**

The learning experiences in this course will be a hybrid approach combining the case method used in law school with the more traditional power point, lecture approach used in undergraduate education. Because the course is online we will have participation through blogs and discussion boards. Much of the material will be interesting and relevant to current events in the sports industry. Students will gain far more from the course if they remain engaged and share their viewpoints with fellow students.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online via Blackboard. There will be 15 modules that detail the coursework for a given week. Students will be expected to read the textbook each week, watch short lecture videos, answer questions about the lecture/reading, and participate in blogs, discussion boards, and journals. To log in to the Blackboard course site, students will use their Mason email name (everything before @gmu.edu) and email password.

## **Technical Requirements**

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements. The following software plum-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player:  
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

## **Expectations**

Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a fixed meeting day, our week will start on Monday and finish on Sunday.

Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussion, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.

Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.

Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

Workload: Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet specific deadlines and due dates listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students should always re-read their responses carefully before posting them so others do not consider them as personal offenses. Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words. Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but rather sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### **Learner Outcomes and Objectives**

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

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the American legal system.
2. Demonstrate an ability to apply legal principles to the sports business.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the critical role the law plays within youth sports, the NCAA, and professional sports; and how it can impact the bottom line.
4. Understand the importance of sports on the social and cultural landscape, and the positive impact a student can have in that area.
5. Improve critical thinking and analytical reasoning as students apply case law and statutory regulations to sports specific fact patterns.
6. Become more comfortable articulating a clear, concise message through written work.

### **Required Texts**

Mitten, M., Davis, T., Osborne, B., Duru, N.J. (2021). Sports Law: Governance and Regulation, Third Edition. New York: Wolters Kluwer. ISBN: 978-1-5438-1082-0.

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor. Students' performance will be graded based on two exams, one paper, and class participation.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Midterm Exam	250
Final Exam	250
Research Paper	300
Class Participation	300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1100</b>

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and listen to all lectures. Students must participate in the weekly blogs, discussions, and questions during each module. Brief videos will make up the class lectures followed by questions to ensure the lectures/reading were completed. These will primarily be graded on a completion basis. 150 of the 300 participation points will be awarded for sufficient completion of the discussion board, blog, journal, and quiz assignments.

150 of the 300 participation points will be awarded based on effort, quality of response, and overall demonstrated active participation. When determining the participation grade, the professor will take into account any extenuating circumstances that may affect a student's ability to participate on a given day.

Two exams will consist of a midterm exam covering Chapters 1-6 of the required text, and a final exam covering Chapters 7-13 of the required text. Exams will have multiple types of questions, including true/false, multiple choice, and short answer.

The research paper will cover a sports law topic chosen by the student and approved by the professor. Students must submit topics and papers before the deadlines listed in the "Assignments and Examinations" table of this syllabus.

The research paper is meant to be an open-ended assignment on a sports law topic that the student is passionate about. The topic can be based on classroom discussion/reading or an unrelated sports law topic. The paper must be between 5-6 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman, size 12 font. Proper citations should be used where necessary. More information on the paper and grading rubric will be provided later.

\*\*\*\* DO NOT USE ChatGPT as a source to help with your research paper or any graded course assignments. The GMU honor code defines plagiarism as "presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement (this includes material appearing on the Internet); and borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment" – Do not use ChatGPT as a source and do not plagiarize. \*\*\*\*

### Assignments and Examinations

Dates	Topic	Reading	Assignments
Jan 16 - Jan 21	Introduction to Sports Law and the American Legal System	Ch 1: 1-14	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Jan 22 - Jan 28	Regulating High School/Youth Athletics	Ch 2: 15-59	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Jan 29 - Feb 4	NCAA Internal Governance/Limits on NCAA Authority	Ch 3: 61-114	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Feb 5 - Feb 11	Legal Relationship Between Universities and College Athletes	Ch 4: 115-151	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Feb 12 - Feb 18	Gender Equity Issues in Athletics	Ch 5: 151-191	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Feb 19 - Feb 25	Racial Equity Issues in Athletics	Ch 6: 193-226	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.

Feb 26 - Mar 3	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b> (Due March 3 at 11:59PM)		
Mar 4 - Mar 10	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC (Due 3/10 at 11:59PM)
Mar 11 - Mar 17	Health, Safety, and Risk Management Issues in Sports	Ch 7: 227-269	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Mar 18 - Mar 24	Sports Medicine, Concussions, Impairment (ADA)	Ch 8: 271-294	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Mar 25 - Mar 31	Intellectual Property	Ch 9: 295-328	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Apr 1 - Apr 7	Coaches' Contracts and Related Issues	Ch 10: 329-352	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Apr 8 - Apr 14	Professional Sports League Governance/Antitrust Law Limits	Ch 11: 353-388	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
Apr 15 - Apr 21	Professional Sports Labor Law	Ch 12: 389-425	Watch lectures, post in discussion board. RESEARCH PAPER (Due 4/21 at 11:59PM)
Apr 22 - Apr 28	The Athlete Agent Industry	Ch 13: 427-472	Watch lectures, post in discussion board.
[DATE]	<b>FINAL EXAM [Date]</b>		

**Other Requirements**

All of the assigned reading must be completed prior to the class date listed above. Professor reserves the right to alter readings during the semester and will notify students in a timely fashion.

There will be no make-up work and late assignments will not be accepted.

Students who miss modules, exams, or other assignments as a consequence of religious holidays or for participation in intercollegiate athletic competitions, or other legitimate university-sponsored activities will be provided a reasonable alternative opportunity to make up missed work. Students who do not notify the instructor in advance of missed modules or exams will not be able to complete make-up work. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty, within the first two weeks of the semester, with the dates of major religious holidays on which they will be absent, and the dates for which they are requesting an excused absence for participation in any university-sponsored activity scheduled prior to the start of the semester, and as soon as possible otherwise. Students requesting an excused absence for participation in a university-sponsored activity must provide their instructor with a letter from a university official

stating the dates and times that participation in the activity would result in the student missing class or an exam. (See full GMU policy: <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/registration-attendance/#text>)

## Grading

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

Students' grades will not be rounded up. Therefore, in order to receive an A-, a student must have a 90% average. For example, an 89.9% will result in a B+.

## Professional Dispositions

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

## Class Schedules

Class will be presented online in weekly modules that run from Monday through Sunday. Students should refer to these modules for any specific deadlines within a given module. The specific class schedule is incorporated in the "Assignments and/or Examinations" section of the syllabus.

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

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://oai.gmu.edu/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://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
- *Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:* As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu)

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