

**UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
WHARTON SCHOOL**

LGST 8090 Spring '24 M&W 12:00PM

Location TBD

Instructor: Rob DiGisi

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SPORTS BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Office Hours MW 9AM-10AM or

by Appointment

Cell: 302-379-0848

SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION :

The sports industry has become so much more than selling tickets, media rights, sponsorships and merchandise. Combined with its global economic significance, the excitement and competitiveness embodied in the business are unmatched. The focus of this course is two-fold: to provide students with a framework for understanding the dynamics, structure, delivery systems and marketing strategies that shape the sports industry and to examine how non-sports organizations leverage sports and entertainment properties to achieve separate and distinct marketing objectives. Through understanding the unique elements of the sports industry, students will have an appreciation for the unique business dynamics a product that evokes so much passion as well as have a point of reference for understanding the core structure of other industries.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Through classroom presentations, discussions, and completion of course assignments, the student will be acquainted with a varied number of important concepts in the study of business as they apply to the sports industry. Special attention is given to the organizational structure of sports leagues, college sports and associations, labor issues, media strategies, emerging leagues, sponsorship, licensing, sports gambling and the application of strategic principles to sports.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Lecture Slides: All lecture slides on PPT will be posted on the course website on Canvas.

An Sports Industry Trade Publication:

A 16-week subscription to [Sports Business Journal – Daily Edition](#). To subscribe, please visit their website at www.sbjcollege.com/subscribe you'll find University of Pennsylvania-Wharton School in the drop-down menu then my name and it will direct you to an order form. The [SBJ Sports Atlas](#), an electronic database linked to this publication and available via Franklin/Lippincott. It contains a significant amount of data and an archive of SBJ past articles. This information is particularly useful as a resource for researching your group project and your individual research paper.

Sportico: There are many articles on the reading list from Sportico. In order to access them, you should subscribe to Sportico and during that period, you should take the time to access all required articles. Sportico subscriptions are available at no charge to all people with an @upenn.edu email address.

John Wall Street: The most influential people in sports, media and finance start their day with JohnWallStreet. AND IT'S FREE <https://www.johnwallstreet.com/subscribe>

Readings: Articles and other required documents are available on a reading list, organized by class number on the Canvas site. Many actual articles can be found by accessing the links under the canvas section "Course Materials @ Penn Libraries." Access to the articles from Sports Business Journal and Sportico require the student subscriptions for each publication.

Daily reading of the trade publications is essential to provide context to the concepts discussed and serve as the basis for a current events discussion. Trade publications can be supplemented with any number of sources including Forbes, ESPN, Wall Street Journal, etc. Students will be called on during class for questions on the readings. Please see the section on "Participation" below.

COURSE METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:

Each class begins with a 15-20 minute discussion of current sports business topics, not wins/losses or athletic performances. The topics covered will come mostly from the SBJ Daily. Students will form **Study Groups** of four or five to discuss assigned current events and assigned readings **before** each class. Students who want to be in the same group should email the Professor by January 26. Students will be notified of their group by January 28. Beginning Mon Jan 29, a group will be selected each class using an random number generator mobile app. Such groups will bring up a current event topic of their choice and all members are expected to contribute. Other class members are encouraged inject their viewpoint and address questions from the professor.

Class sessions will follow a lecture/discussion format. As the class moves along a number of guest speakers have been arranged to provide practical industry insights to the topics reviewed in class. Guest speaker information is not supplemental and will be included on exams.

Each semester, I host a series of **student breakfasts**. This brief time together provides an opportunity for students to get to know each other and dig deeper into specific sports business topics. I am a big fan of building and nurturing relationships as one advances in their careers. I will provide great flexibility in scheduling these get togethers.

PARTICIPATION:

Class participation is vital to success in this course. Students are expected to attend and be prepared for **every** class. Study groups should discuss assigned readings **before** each class. From time to time, study groups will be selected (random number generator app) to comment on/address questions from the professor. Participation, emanating from careful reading and thorough analysis of the assigned materials, is vital to the quality of the course. It is also important to build upon other students' comments so attentive listening is part of quality participation. **MANDATORY ATTENDANCE IS A GIVEN and registering your attendance with the app is required.** Wharton policy is that only absences for personal illness, personal and family emergencies, and religious holidays for observant students are excused. All other absences are not excused.

Absence or failure to be prepared will be recorded and results will be reflected in your final class grade. Make yourself known!

Students will fail the course automatically (even if they are able to earn enough points on the exams and papers to otherwise pass the course) if their attendance is deemed poor by the professor.

GRADING:

Group Project	20%
Examination #1	25%
Examination #2	25%
Term Paper	30%
Class Participation	Will make a difference if you are close to next grade up, or down.

Attendance alone does not mean class participation!

EXAM AND ASSIGNMENT POLICIES:

The first examination will be taken during the scheduled examination time. The second examination will be taken during the assigned Final Exam period. Any make-ups (for documented medical and family emergencies only – not job interviews, travel plans, etc.) will be given only during the scheduled LGST departmental makeup period in the Fall of 2024. Both exams will be closed notes and be taken with strict time limitations via canvas. The second exam is not cumulative; it builds upon the first half and covers material addressed since the first examination. Assignments are expected to be submitted or presented on the assigned due date. Late work and missed assignments will receive a zero.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Small Group Project:

Each study group will evaluate and offer a recommendation on an emerging professional sports league. Through 5 pages max, the team should address the major challenges, environmental factors and unique opportunities facing a select nascent league. The analysis should apply concepts introduced from the first half of the class as well as incorporate information gained from independent research. Each group will choose a specific league based on a class-wide random draft on Feb 5, 2024.

Research Paper

Students will write, a business term paper about an issue of current, critical importance to the sports industry. Length must be no more than 10 pages. In graphs/tables/images are used, the length of the paper can exceed 10 pages but definitely be less than 15 pages. Appendices can exceed the 10 page limit, not hard limit at 15 pages. Students are encouraged to challenge the accepted standards of the industry and each paper must demonstrate a professional understanding and a practical applicability of industry issues, practices, concepts and consequences of the sports business. Papers should be well organized **and MUST conclude with a well-supported recommendation.**

- ◆ While the work must be of extremely high caliber, the writing assignments are designed as practical rather than academic exercises. Be concise.
- ◆ Necessary citations and attributions (i.e., footnotes and bibliography) must be made and should be contained either in the text itself or in footnotes.
- ◆ There is a premium on the quality of ideas and their practical application.
- ◆ The quality of thinking and expression are critical factors in grading.

This paper is a chance to excel by displaying depth in comprehension of the subject matter and by expressing new ideas, demonstrating analytical and strategic application and by challenging typical practices.

The entire process of researching and writing this paper is not only valuable to acquiring knowledge and insights into the industry, but it also serves as creation of a tool for forming new relationships. I often use the paper as a means of introduction to influential executives in and outside the industry.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

The Wharton School and the University of Pennsylvania are committed to academic honesty. All cases of alleged plagiarism, cheating on examinations and similar forms of academic dishonesty will be reviewed by the appropriate disciplinary bodies. Please refer to the Student Handbook for guidelines relating to academic dishonesty. **Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will fail the course in addition to any discipline imposed by the University.**

Honesty in all academic work is expected of every student. This means giving one's own answers in all class work, papers and examinations without help from sources not approved by the professor. Written material is to be the student's own original composition. It is expected that ideas that are taken from articles, books, the internet, etc. will be properly noted in all written papers submitted. It is important to remember that to copy or to paraphrase someone else's work, ideas, or language without proper reference is plagiarism.

COURSE OUTLINE/CALENDAR

The schedule below is as of Nov. 13, 2023 and is subject to change. Course topics, assigned reading from the text and course are listed below.

1	17-Jan	Why Sports? / Requirements / History
2	22-Jan	Today's Fan
3	24-Jan	Guest - Lydia Dubuisson – SSRS Solutions
4	29-Jan	Industry Overview
5	31-Jan	Revenues and Expenses
6	5-Feb	Ownership/Franchise Valuation, Group Project League Draft
7	7-Feb	Guest - Lamar Cardinez, Blue Owl
8	12-Feb	Unions and Player Compensation
9	14-Feb	Revenue Sharing/Competitive Balance
10	19-Feb	Emerging Leagues
11	21-Feb	Guest - TBD
12	26-Feb	MID TERM
	28-Feb	MBA Core Test Day
SB	4-Mar	NO CLASS
SB	6-Mar	NO CLASS
13	11-Mar	Media
14	13-Mar	Media/Sponsorship
	17-Mar	Group Paper Due at 11:59PM
15	18-Mar	Sponsorship
16	20-Mar	Guest - Hillary Mandell, IMG Media
17	25-Mar	Golf, Tennis, Motorsports
18	27-Mar	Guest - Mike Whan, CEO, U.S.G.A.
19	1-Apr	Licensing
20	3-Apr	Guest - Lisa Piken Koper, SVP, Global Partnerships, NBA
21	8-Apr	Sports Gambling
22	10-Apr	Guest - Jason Park, CFO, Draft Kings
	14-Apr	Research paper due 11:59PM
23	15-Apr	College Sports
24	17-Apr	College Sports Cont/ Closing Thoughts
	22-Apr	OPTIONAL Guest - Robin Harris, Commissioner, The Ivy League
		Final Exam TBD
