



SYLLABUS: COMM 3414 (35457)

Sports Media Relations

Spring 2024

T/R 11:10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. ET

In-Person Class Location: Journalism Bldg 342

Instructor

Instructor: Professor Timothy Miller

Email: miller.8354@osu.edu

Office Hours:

Virtual

Tuesday/Thursday 9:35 a.m.-10:55 a.m. ET (Virtual timeslot booking page available on course's Carmen page)

Additional windows by appointment: virtually on Zoom
(email to set-up)

Course overview

This course will serve as an introduction to sports media relations, exploring theories and developing skills needed to pursue a career in the field. This will include developing skills as a media relations professional, the person who facilitates and manages the communication needs of a varied constituency. This course will also guide students in developing understanding of social scientific concepts around relationships that exist in the sports media landscape, including coaches, media, student-athletes, fans, athletics department staff.

In this course, you will learn the history and goals of sports media relations, as well as how to serve in that role for a collegiate, amateur or professional team or organization. Sports media relations combines sports journalism with strategic communication to serve the needs of both athletic organizations and the media at large. This class will foster a workshop environment in which students can build appreciation and skill sets for this particular craft.

The course will feature an analysis of public relations frameworks that guide decision making for sports communications professionals. We'll specifically look at the framework of RPIE (pronounced "R-Pie"), which covers research, planning, implementation and evaluation stages of public relations development supported by the Public Relations Society of America. Often, the outside world focuses on tactics taken by sports teams and within this course we'll certainly discuss implementation tactics for executing impactful communications. However, said tactics alone, without research, strategic planning and a method of evaluating actions for a virtuous cycle is less likely to create sustainable success.

Students enrolling in the course will quickly learn this is not a traditional media course a la a broadcast or print journalism class, but will instead focus on the sports public relations professionals that interact with members of the media. We'll touch on the backgrounds, constraints and goals of using media as a theoretical channel to reach target audiences and how excellent media relations is at the core of any sports organization wishing to shape its narrative.

Strong writing and understanding the importance of grammar and AP Style in public relations is critical and therefore the course teaching and evaluation of work will be through the lens of both. Many assignments require knowledge of Associated Press style (it is recommended, but not required, that you take this class after Comm 2321). Students who have not worked with AP Style before are responsible for the extra efforts required to write in this format and are encouraged to leverage resources listed within. Learning AP Style – or improving one's execution of the format – will be beneficial throughout a student's time as a communications-seeking professional and well into their career. Like any new skill, it takes practice and time and students completely new to AP Style will need to supplement discussions of AP Style in class with their own practice and self-mastery.

Skill Development

Students will also leave this class with projects that exhibit skill development, including in-house publicity writing, social and multimedia projects and applicable action steps in learning to understand communications challenges faced within sports through the lens of RPIE.

- Press releases
- Crisis communications statements
- Industry-standard frameworks
- Audience-specific objective creation
- Research, measurement and evaluation selection
- Media training
- Game notes
- Target audience messaging creation
- Working with media (print, online, radio, television)
- Social media
- Formulating angles to pitch player/coach/team features (written/video)
- Game coverage
- Award nomination/promotion
- Writing (AP style)
- InDesign/Photoshop

Catalog course description

This hands-on, active-learning course will teach the theory and practice of sports media relations, developing strategic communication skills including writing, social media and multimedia, which will prepare students for sports media careers at the collegiate or professional sports levels.

Expected learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students should successfully be able to:

1. Understand the development of the sports media relations field and its theoretical purpose.
2. Recognize and engage in media relations skills to managing the needs of various constituents, including coaches, media, athletes, fans and athletics department staff.
3. Create and distribute media relations materials that can be adapted across platforms and channels such as mass media, public relations/publicity, advertising, digital and social media, direct marketing, and support media employed for strategic communication and promotion.
4. Understanding of the social and ethical dimensions of sports media relations.

Course materials

Required book:

Available in the bookstore

Press, A. (2022). Associated Press Stylebook 2022-2024 And briefing on media law. New York, N.Y.: BASIC Books. *ISBN: 9781541601659*.

Please see “Readings” section for supplemental context on additional reading for the course which will be provided to you via Carmen.

Teaching Philosophy

My background and experience have provided me with wonderful opportunities to share insights in your introduction to sports media relations. In order to succeed in sports media relations, students – and later, professionals – must hold themselves accountable to engage in and drive their own education. I am here to guide and support but it also means students must take a greater responsibility for an engagement in what happens in their classes. The course has been structured so that we follow what is known as the “inverted learning” model, which means you read and watch short videos at home BEFORE the first class of the week.

Our class time is then dedicated to engaging with the material through a variety of “active learning” activities and assessments to determine and build your comprehension. With this active class model, students establish the foundation as part of that home pre-work, and then we build the structure of learning together, allowing us to see and correct weaknesses in the foundation and the structure.

The workload is the same—meaning for a three-credit class for every hour of work you do in class you will spend three hours working at home.

For the most part, our first class of the week will be lecture and discussion based and will be held in-person (unless otherwise noted), focusing on a particular topic and introducing you to necessary knowledge, skills and frameworks you will need to be able to apply in a career in sports public relations and media relations.

The second session of the week, often held virtually in our hybrid format, will allow you to immediately build off of what you've been reading about and hearing from me on. You will then be engaged in actively learning the material through discussion, exercises, activities and assignments and we will frequently utilize small break-out rooms on Zoom. A schedule of in-person and virtual dates are tentatively listed on the course schedule within and of course should any circumstances change for that date's format, I will communicate that as soon as possible to allow for appropriate accommodations. To clarify, attendance is required regardless of that day's listed format and there are not options to utilize an "either-or" option on a specific date (i.e. we need you in-person for an in-person date).

Some of the topics will feature discussions led by myself with reflections from my personal experience while other special guest visitors will shed light on material from real-world and valuable experience. I am a believer in asking you to spend time with what I call "thought provokers" and we'll use weekly questions to kick off conversation usually in our second session of the week to reinforce the material and prompt meaningful "on the hot seat" thinking, done in a learning environment.

All in all, it is my aspiration that you'll feel comfortable in our space to ask questions, no matter your previous background in communications or sports. As such, as you listen to your peers or those leading discussion, I ask you to embrace the motto as Apple TV's Ted Lasso would say, "be curious, not judgmental." You will all, as individuals, eventually develop your own style wherever your communications career takes you and I believe you can always learn from others – even if you file it away in your brain for later as something you might want to approach differently should a similar situation arise professionally. I am hopeful that you'll learn and consider opportunities within sports media relations. It's a rewarding profession in which truly no two days are the same!

Course technology

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

Carmen:

- Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit [Carmen.osu.edu](https://carmen.osu.edu). Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit my.osu.edu.
- Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>
- This course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.
 - [Carmen accessibility](#)

Zoom:

- The webinar tool Zoom will host our virtual class dates, with a link available for the specific date on Carmen.
- Zoom will also be used to host online office hours by appointment.
- Help guides on the use of Zoom can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started>

Baseline technical skills necessary for courses

Basic computer and web-browsing skills

Navigating Carmen

Necessary equipment

Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection.

Necessary software

OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. To install, please visit https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=kb04733

Word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs including Microsoft Word and Mac Pages have these abilities.

Computer: Friend or Foe?

This course, like communications as a whole, relies heavily on access to computers, specific software, and the Internet. At some point during the semester you will likely have a problem with technology. Your laptop will crash; your iPad battery will die; a recording you make will disappear; you will accidentally delete a file; the wireless will go down at a crucial time.

These, however, are inevitabilities of life, not emergencies. Technology problems are not excuses for unfinished or late work. Bad things may happen, but you can protect yourself by doing the following:

- Plan ahead: A deadline is the last minute to turn in material. You can start--and finish--early, particularly if challenging resources are required, or you know it will be time consuming to finish this project.
- Save work early and often: Think how much work you do in 10 minutes. An option to give yourself extra peace of mind: set-up or enable auto save.
- Make regular backups of files in a different location: Between Box, Google Drive, Dropbox and iCloud, you have ample places to store and back up your materials. Use them.
- Deadlines, you will find, are a critical component of success in the sports communications industry. Issues uploading to Carmen at the deadline are not accepted accommodations for late work. Please factor in that at times, an upload may stall or need to be re-submitted based on what the system tells you. Successful deadline meeting requires you to factor those types of variable obstacles in timeline so please plan accordingly. Self troubleshooting, connecting with campus IT and then reaching out well in advance of the deadline regarding a tech issue that appears insurmountable on day of deadline is a much stronger approach than missing a deadline and then reaching out to share your issue.
- Make regular backups of files in a different location: Between Box, Google Drive, Dropbox and iCloud, you have ample places to store and back up your materials. Use them.

Grading

Assignment or category	Points and Percent
Class participation and professionalism	30/7.5%
Discussion Posts (6 @ 5 points each)	30/7.5%
Mini Assignments (6 @ 10 points each)	60/15%
Major Assignments (3 @ 40 points each)	120/30%
Exams (2 @ 50 points each) (Halfway point and end-of-semester)	100/25%
Final Project (40 points) and Presentation (20 points)	60/15%
Total	400 /100%

See course schedule for project due dates and exam dates.

These points tallied together will give you your final grade of the following (100-93=A; 92-90=A-; 89-88 B+; 87-82=B; 81-80=B-; 79-78=C+; 77-72=C; 71-70=C-; 69-60=D; 59 and below=E).

I am not able to negotiate grades, either during or after the semester. If you have a specific question on a particular scoring item and would like to learn more about the scoring during the semester (but prior to finals), please set-up a virtual office hours appointment and send me an email in advance specifically noting which items you'd like to have a dialogue about. Conversing via a brief virtual office hours (either through the booking link during standard office hours or a time that mutually works for us) allows me to come prepared into the discussion (thanks to your email) as well as quickly providing context and/or resolution to your inquiries. I will not be able to accommodate these requests immediately before/after class or simply via email. In return, I promise to be expeditious in setting up some time and being mindful of the value of your time and question(s).

If you believe a scoring error has been made on my manual uploading in Carmen on assignments (i.e. I marked you incomplete when it was complete or I put a 1 instead of a 10), please simply reach out via email so I can look into and no office hour session would be necessary for that.

Assignment submissions

All assignments are due at the date and time listed on the syllabus. In journalism, stories that miss the deadline often do not make it to publication, and yours will not be graded (i.e. you will receive a zero for that graded item). Assignments will be submitted to Canvas and grades will be provided there.

*If you are absent a day an assignment is discussed or assigned, it is your responsibility to get details from me or a classmate. **I do not accept late work.** If you will be absent the day an assignment is discussed or due, contact me in advance for details and/or to coordinate your submission. Under no circumstances are assignments accepted via email unless explicitly stated otherwise. Be sure to check the required format of submissions via Carmen – there are specific points occasionally allocated to submitting the required format; this replicates a real-world situation. If a client wants or requires a PDF and you send a word document, more work has been created and attention to detail is paramount in this profession.*

Assignment guide

Class Participation and Professionalism

These points are assigned at the discretion of the professor, based on your attendance and level of engagement participating in class activities. Please consider this class like work experience opportunity. Professionalism means being in attendance at our session, or contacting your professor BEFORE class about an absence and making sure to catch up on missed materials. In this class, we ask you to dress in a way that would be respectful to meet anyone at the university or in sports, from Gene Smith to the Blue Jackets social media team. Coming on time and not leaving early are additional signs of professionalism, as is working constructively with others in class.

Your participation in class and activities is paramount for your success throughout college. To that end we encourage your participation through the points that come with attending and taking part in class, and acting as professionally as possible with all of the activities we have planned. Your engagement in the “Thought Provokers” will also be reflected in these points.

Reading Reflection Questions (“Thought Provokers”)

Throughout the semester, you will find a question prompt(s) on the material required to have reviewed before class. These questions will be submitted via Carmen and are meant to prompt thinking of how you might handle certain situations. We will weave these questions into in-class discussions as well, so students are encouraged to review their submissions to prepare for engaging with the professor and peers on their understanding and application of key concepts. We will often discuss one or more thought provoker at a time and will usually discuss these to open the second session of the week (although some weeks it will be the first session of the week based on schedule flow – please see the calendar for those dates). Each student is asked to take a turn in presenting their response to kick-off the discussion as this will factor into the overall participation grade.

I understand that life happens and sometimes simply showing up is a victory. In that case, if you did not complete the thought provoker(s) before the class, are not prepared or are not adequately comfortable that day sharing, please simply message me or see me before class and I will respect that as I do not seek to

embarrass. Otherwise, I will assume that if you are present and prepared, that you are ready to participate in the discussion and that I can ask your thoughts, opinions and feedback on topics related to reading/learning modules.

Once the thought provoker is open, it will remain open for the remainder of the weeks of classes. The submissions are worth one point each and while your best answers are likely while the material is fresh and will help you be prepared for that day's class, the provokers being kept open until the final in-class date allows students who may have missed a date to go back, earn points and supplement their learning of the materials covered that led to the prompts.

A total of 25 thought provokers are to be completed and we will cover as many of them as possible on the allotted days based on the course date flow. Regardless of whether the provoker is formally discussed in class, your responses are still due.

While each thought provoker is worth just one point for satisfactory completion of the assignment as determined by the professor, these points add up as 25 of the 30 overall participation/professionalism section of points. That 30 out of 400 marks nearly eight percent of the overall grade.

Exams

This semester will feature two examinations: one midterm and one final exam, administered to assess each student's knowledge of the concepts and techniques presented in the course books and materials, in-class lectures and discussion. The exams will not be cumulative and additional details on format and length will be announced and discussed.

Exams will be taken as individuals and collaboration with peers or other materials will not be permitted. The exams will be closed book and will be administered electronically on set scheduled dates. The default option is using Proctorio for proctored examination during our class scheduled time but additional accommodations for testing center locations are available with additional details below.

Because we are using Proctorio in this course, I am also able to provide in-person proctoring options for students as well. Potential options include the Student Testing Center, Consortium of College Testing Centers, an Ohio State regional campus, Clark County Extension Office, Ohio State Extension Operations (Caldwell Office) or certified proctors.

Students may request an in-person proctoring alternative to Proctorio or other online proctoring tools. The student is expected to contact the instructor as soon as possible to coordinate the accommodation. Students will not be permitted to take remotely proctored exams in their homes or residence halls unless they are willing to conduct a room scan. By choosing to take the exam in their home or residence hall, the student is consenting to the room scan of the area in which they take the exam.

The examination dates are listed on the schedule. If you know in advance that you will be unable to take the examination on the scheduled examination date, please arrange with me for an arranged administration at least two weeks prior to the scheduled examination date. The first alternative time is to take the exam during the window of the other section of COMM 3414.

I expect each student to take the examination at the scheduled or arranged times. Otherwise, you will receive a score of zero, unless you are ill or have an unforeseeable conflicting activity such as a family emergency. See exam absence language for further instructions. In the event of an unforeseeable

conflicting activity, you should contact me prior to the exam, if practical. A make-up exam may be scheduled; alternatively, the weight of future exam may be adjusted. The choice rests with the instructor.

Honesty and integrity are at the foundation of working in sports and sports communications and just as you would expect that from me, I require the same especially on academic integrity in this course Please see additional details in the “Academic Integrity” policy.

Readings

As you saw in “Course Materials,” there is one required book – the Associated Press Stylebook 2022-2024. It is an excellent resource and will serve you well in this course and over the next several years (a recent edition is on my bookshelf to this day!). We’ll cover material from the book and also encourage you to use it throughout your writing for proper AP Style reference.

There are two other repeated reference materials that will be featured in the class, from which we will read select chapters from and those sections will be provided/available to you at no charge on our Carmen page.

Esherick, C., Caskey, P., & Schulz, B. (2020). *Media Relations in sport (5th edition)*. Fitness Information Tech. ISBN: 9781940067360.

Stacks, D. (2013). *Primer of Public Relations Research (3rd edition)*. The Guilford Press. ISBN: 9781462522705.

I will list out the book title and chapter/pages in the assignment section. I think you will learn a great deal from these select chapters and the books as a whole are excellent supplemental information for expanded, optional learning should you wish. There will be a page on Carmen with “Virtual Texts” where the material will live.

We will also have additional readings and/or select clips to read before class. I will keep a running page called “Carmen Clips” that will be updated by week as a page you can return to often. This way, should any links need editing or pieces be added/removed, I can communicate with you easily and direct you to the same page. On the syllabus, you’ll see a simple entry of “Carmen Clips” which will simply remind you that for that specific date, there are supplemental clips to read/watch and to head to that resource landing page on Carmen.

Discussion Posts

Throughout the semester following learning modules, discussion posts will be required for completion via Carmen. There is a set format for each of these and for the first five modules, the discussion centers around key learnings, recommendations for future students and suggestions for the professor in future iterations of the course. The final discussion is a course-wrap. Please note that modules 4 and 5 are short and so the discussion post assignments are closely due on the calendar as would be the completion of discussion post 3 (after module 3) and discussion post 6 (final course wrap). Additional details are listed on each discussion post.

Mini Assignments

This semester you will have activities intended to build your skills and develop a greater level of familiarity and engagement with techniques. Many of the mini assignments are slated to provide additional practice ahead of a Major Assignment.

The mini assignments will list whether they are individual submissions or group submissions and in addition to mini assignments, there are often in-class exercises done individually or in groups. Completion of in-class activities factor into the participation/professionalism grade while mini assignments have their own point/grade allotment.

Over the course of the mini assignments, you'll gain experience with group work and individual activities, as well as working with athletic communication professionals to build skills, understand and apply the social and ethical dimensions of strategic communication to skill development, and demonstrate analytical and writing skills commonly employed in strategic communication industries. These activities will include practicing skills we learn through our class materials and lectures.

Mini assignments (all worth 10 points) are below (individual unless listed as 'group'):

1. Press release prep project
2. "What makes good game notes"?
3. Media pitching exercise (group)
4. AP Style game recap
5. Designing a graphic
6. Taking part in a crisis communications simulation (group)

Major Assignments and Final Group Project

Throughout the course of the semester, you will have assignments to create items that would be part of sports communication and media relations, often times for the team you have identified as your focus for the semester. More information on specifics of each assessment will be available in Carmen.

Major assignments are all worth 40 points. The final group project of 60 points across the project [40 pts] and presentation [20 pts]). A brief list of the projects is below with additional individual or group designation listed in parenthesis:

Major Assignments (40 points each):

- 1) Press release project (individual)
- 2) Mid-semester team research project (group)
- 3) Game Notes (individual)

Final Group Project (60 points total):

1. Final deliverables on selected team [40 pts] with group presentation [20 pts] (group)

Additional information

Extra Credit

Everyone will have the opportunity throughout the semester to attend events or complete additional assignments for extra credit, up to eight total points. Additional details are listed on Carmen on up to four-point possible activities.

Two additional points (thereby reaching a total of 10 extra credit points for the entire semester) are available should the 80 percent of the class complete each of the two milestone surveys. These two surveys include an unofficial midway point professor evaluative check-in assessment (available via Carmen) and then the completion of the university's formal Student Evaluation of Instructor (SEI) at the conclusion of the semester. One point of extra credit is available to the entire class in each of the two surveys should the class reach the participation threshold identified above.

All extra credit will be reported in Carmen. The deadline for completion and reporting to me all of the extra credit is 11:59 p.m. ET on the last day of classes.

Syllabus

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as deemed necessary. By staying enrolled in this class, the student agrees to abide by the policies described herein.

Every effort has been made to create a syllabus that is as comprehensive and accurate as possible, but each class is a living entity and changes may arise. Please know I will notify you by email and in our next class session as soon as any syllabus change may arise.

Resources

During the course of this class and throughout your university career, you may find the following helpful:

- **The Writing Center.** This may be the last time in your life that you have easily accessible, free help available for your writing skills—use it. Being a good writer will give you an advantage in every walk of life, and if you are a Communication major, it is expected. Visit <http://cstw.osu.edu/writingcenter> to learn more or to schedule an appointment.
- **Strunk & White's The Elements of Style.** If you are uncertain of what constitutes good writing, this classic book is very straightforward and extremely helpful. The advice and direction offered in this book applies to writing in all fields. Find it at the campus bookstore or at a used bookstore for cheap.
- **AP Style and Communications-Specific Publications**
AP Style Guide Resources - Beyond the AP Style Guide book (available in bookstore), please see below.
 - Online Practice quizzes:
<https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780199846412/student/apresources/apquiz/>
 - Quizlet flash cards:
<https://quizlet.com/2046964/ap-style-quiz-flash-cards/>

- You can look online for others. Be aware, AP makes updates every year, so watch the dates.
- Be sure to review/learn/know the basics - all listed in the AP Style Guide:
 - Dates
 - Numerals
 - Dollars & percents
 - Times
 - Addresses
 - States
 - Titles
 - Names
 - Composition titles
 - Abbreviations

PR/Communications-Specific Publications

- www.ragan.com
- www.prdaily.com
- <http://adage.com>
- www.socialmediaexaminer.com
- <http://mashable.com>
- www.prweek.com/us
- www.prnewsonline.com
- www.odwyerpr.com

Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Only students enrolled in this section are permitted to attend class. Attendance (both physical [in-person or virtual as denoted in syllabus for specific dates] and mental) is key to your success in this class. Your grade is largely contingent on your presence and participation in class. Listen, take notes and ask questions. Much of the material presented in class is not found in your readings. If you miss class for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate; the instructor will not provide notes in any circumstance. If you miss class, you will not be able to make up any in-class work or extra credit opportunities.

Attendance

Student participation requirements

We have a lot of material to learn in a short period of time. It is important that you attend all of our class sessions. All of the material is available on Carmen at the beginning of the semester. Readings and videos must be consumed before our live class session so we can work on active learning experiences. Since we meet just twice a week, missing more than two classes in the semester without documentation will result in the final grade being dropped a letter grade.

As previously stated, if you are absent a day an assignment is discussed or assigned, it is your responsibility to get details from me or a classmate. **I do not accept late work.** If you will be absent the day an assignment is discussed or due, contact me in advance for assignment details and turn it in early in class or in my office. Under no circumstances are assignments accepted via email unless explicitly stated otherwise.

It is your responsibility to review attendance tracking within Carmen related to number of dates attended, excused or absent (unexcused).

Since we meet just twice a week, missing more than two classes in the semester without documentation will result in the final grade being dropped a letter grade.

Excused Absences - General Guidelines

NOTE: For any of the scenarios in this section, if you come across a schedule conflict that would see you have to miss class, please reach out to me via email to communicate so we may, as the top part of this section notes, work together.

Students have a responsibility to:

- Attend each and every class meeting scheduled during the normal meeting times, including final exams
- Meet all of the requirements for each course for which they are registered
- Know an instructor's course policy regarding absence and make-up work at the start of the semester.
- Notify faculty/instructor of any preplanned absences within the first week of class or as soon reasonably as possible.
- Make a timely request that an unforeseen absence be excused
- Take reasonable efforts to avoid schedule conflicts
- Work collaboratively and transparently with your course instructor

Faculty have a responsibility to:

- Establish and disseminate a consistent course absence policy that explains expectations and the process for seeking an excused absence
- Provide a syllabus on the first day of the course that includes information regarding examinations, scheduled experiential learning activities, or other requirements to the extent possible
- Develop reasonable curriculum adjustments where applicable and track student engagement
- Consider all points of view when exercising judgement in applying course policies in non-standard situations
- Work collaboratively and transparently with your students

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Faculty members [may excuse student absences](#) for a variety of circumstances and adjust curriculum requirements as appropriate. Students, faculty, and other instructional staff are expected to work together with respect and integrity to define and enact the appropriate curriculum adjustments.

These reasonable and common situations may include, depending upon the circumstances:

- Illness, physical or mental, or injuries of the student or a student's dependent

Note: See "illness" policies in next section

* Situations covered by Title IX, including medical conditions related to pregnancy

- Participation in intercollegiate athletic events and other university-affiliated academic events as stated in Faculty Rule 3335-9-22 Group Absences.
- Subpoenas
- Jury duty
- Military service
- Bereavement, including related travel
- Religious observances; holidays observed by many members of the university community include, but are not limited to: Rosh Hashanah; Yom Kippur; Sukkot; Passover; Shavuot; 'Id al- Fitr; 'Id al-Adha, and Good Friday

o A calendar of commonly observed religious holidays can be viewed at: https://registrar.osu.edu/participationroster/religious_holidays.pdf [Links to an external site.](#)

Note that some of these situations are covered by Federal, State, or other applicable laws. If you have concerns or questions, you may contact the Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Legal Affairs, or Office of Institutional Equity.

If you are to miss an exam date for illness, please see the section specific to that below. If you are to miss an exam date for additional the reasonable and common situations leading to an absence from class that date as outlined above, please reach out: Faculty members may reasonably require [documentation](#) to support a request for an excused absence.

Illness Policies

All students, faculty and staff are required to comply with and stay up to date on all university safety and health guidance (<https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu>).

Non-exam day

I take attendance each class as part of our regular procedures. As shared earlier, it is your responsibility to review attendance tracking within Carmen related to number of dates attended, excused or absent (unexcused).

Most students should be able to complete a successful semester despite illness-induced absence. If you are too ill to participate in this course due to illness, please contact the instructor as soon as

you are able. If you are absent due to illness or scheduled medical appointment, I will give you a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work other than any in-class assignments that are not able to be replicated by an individual student after the fact due to the nature of the assignment. This course offers extra credit to allow students to recoup lost points for situations such as these.

You do not need to provide a physician's document of illness or scheduled medical appointment for a one-off illness/medical absence, but you should advise me via email preferably before class but as soon as you are safely able to do so. This will allow me to properly connect with you on next steps (if any) related to your absence as well as permitting me to update an absence designation in Carmen. If you are expecting to miss multiple classes due to medical appointments and know such in advance, please contact me so we may have dialogue on what you may miss.

If you prefer to not reach out to share you are missing or had to miss a class due to illness or scheduled medical appointment, please simply utilize a flex absence as outlined in the next section.

Exam day illness

Faculty members may reasonably require [documentation](#) to support a request for an excused absence. However, requiring doctor's notes, police reports in case of injury, and other such documentation in the event of physical/mental illness or injuries can cause an unintended hardship for students who may not, for example, have financial means or the ready ability to obtain such a note. Furthermore, this kind of documentation often contains highly sensitive information that needs to be managed in special ways to protect the privacy of the individual and to maintain compliance with institutional data policies. Students in special situations or those requiring specific, long-term, or other accommodation should seek support from appropriate university offices including but not limited to: Student Advocacy, Student Life Disability Services, the Office of Institutional Equity.

Additional Absences - General Guidelines

Guidance for absences beyond the above scenarios

Flex absences (non-excused absences)

Outside of the examples in the section immediately above, if you must miss an in-person class for another reason, here is my guidance:

In this particular scenario, because we meet two times a week, you would not need to formally document an absence with me for up to two in-class periods (equivalent of one week). You can simply do what you need to do and use the day as a flex absence but you'll still need to review and abide by the bottom section of this page ("Missing a Class"). From a formality perspective, I'll mark it in my log as an absence (unexcused) and, as I shared in the preceding sentence, for this course you would have up to two of those to flex-utilize. Can you provide me a courtesy heads-up? Absolutely, but it is not required and for transparency it would not change how I would code it in the system for the up to one week (here: two classes) of absences.

As a reminder, please work with any outside jobs/internship supervisors to let them know of your class commitments as they should not overlap with our course. If an unavoidable one-off conflict was to arise, please see the above paragraph. Please also make sure you are in regular contact with any class-related groups/partners should you need to miss a class.

Beyond the one week, any scenario in which you potentially anticipate missing more than one week of class - excluding scenarios outlined by the university in the section above ['excused absences'] must be proactively discussed with me in advance. I will take time to review for approval and will do so on a case-by-case basis. In this case, should the situation be approved by me, you would be marked as an excused absence for that date beyond the one-week of previously mentioned 'flex' unexcused absences (in which no documentation needed for that).

As a reminder from the very top section of this note: since we meet just twice a week, missing more than two classes in the semester without documentation will result in the final grade being dropped a letter grade.

MISSING A CLASS? IMPORTANT FOR ALL ABSENCES:

If you are absent a day an assignment is discussed or assigned, it is your responsibility to get details from me or a classmate. I do not accept late work. If you will be absent the day an assignment is discussed or due, contact me in advance for assignment details and turn it in early in class.

Under no circumstances are assignments accepted via email unless explicitly stated otherwise.

It is your responsibility to review attendance tracking within Carmen related to number of dates attended, excused or absent (unexcused).

QUESTIONS/THOUGHTS/CONCERNS?

Let's talk!

Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Please note that all contents are may be subject to copyright protection and belong to the author. Audio/Video recording of lectures and posting or other unauthorized uses of digital and/or print material are prohibited.

Managing Stress

College can be a stressful time, and I am always here to help you—in this class and beyond. If, however, you feel you need more support, I encourage you to reach out to the Student Advocacy Center at 292.1111. They will always work with professors on your behalf.

Safe and Healthy

Keeping students healthy and preventing the spread of illness is important to The Ohio State University—and to me. Students are encouraged to stay home if they are sick and may be asked to leave class if they are coughing/sneezing. Students who are sick and cannot attend class must contact me *BEFORE class* to receive any class materials and turn in assignments via the drop box or e-mail. If you do not notify me, your assignment will not be accepted.

Diversity

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu

Academic integrity policy

Policies for this course

Written assignments: Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **AP** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.

Reusing past work: In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with

examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

Requesting accommodations

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu ; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Religious accommodations

It is Ohio State's policy to reasonably accommodate the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of all students. The policy permits a student to be absent for up to three days each academic semester for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief.

Students planning to use religious beliefs or practices accommodations for course requirements must inform the instructor in writing no later than 14 days after the course begins. The instructor is then responsible for scheduling an alternative time and date for the course requirement, which may be before or after the original time and date of the course requirement. These alternative accommodations will remain confidential. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all course assignments are completed.

Creating an environment free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

1. Online reporting form at equity.osu.edu,
2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or Email equity@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

Campus Free Speech policy

Ohio State's [Shared Values](#) include a commitment to diversity and innovation. Pursuant to these values, the university promotes a culture of welcoming differences, making connections among people and ideas, and encouraging open-minded exploration, risk-taking, and freedom of expression. As a land-grant institution, the university takes seriously its role in promoting and supporting public discourse. To that end, Ohio State is steadfastly committed to protecting the First Amendment right to free speech and academic freedom on its campuses, and to upholding the university's academic motto — "Education for Citizenship." The [Campus Free Speech policy](#) adopted in May 2023 supports this commitment.

Weather or other short-term closing

Should in-person classes be canceled, I will notify you as to which alternative methods of teaching will be offered to ensure continuity of instruction for this class. Communication will be via email/CarmenCanvas announcement.

OTHER RELATED RESOURCES

Food Security: (<https://www.buckeyefoodalliance.org/>, 614-688-2508) The Ohio State University is committed to ensuring that all students have access to adequate and healthy food. Any undergraduate or graduate student with a BuckID may confidentially use the Buckeye Food Alliance food pantries. No proof of need is required. The pantry is located in Lincoln Tower, Suite 150 (1800 Cannon Dr., Columbus, OH 43210). Check the website or call for current hours.

PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF (Mental Health Statement):

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614--292--5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24-hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445)

Who can I talk to?

Where can I go for help
with emotional distress?

Counseling and Consultation Service
614-292-5766
1030 Lincoln Tower, 1800 Cannon Dr.
Younkin Success Center, 1640 Neil Ave.

"Let's Talk"

Thursday evenings, 6-8 p.m.
Multicultural Center, Ohio Union

Psychology Services Center
614-292-2345
105 Psychology Building, 185 Neil Ave.

Stress Trauma & Resilience
614-293-STAR
Harding Hospital, 1670 Upham Dr.

Who can I talk to?

Where can I go for help
with emotional distress?

Student Wellness Center
614-292-4527
RPAC, 337 Annie & John Glenn Ave.

**Sexual Assault Response Network
of Central Ohio**
614-267-7020

Buckeye Peer Access Line (PAL)
8 P.M. – Midnight (only)
614-514-3333

Suicide Prevention Lifeline
614-221-5445 or 800-273-8255
Text 4hope to 741741
Or call 911 for immediate assistance

School of Communication Cares

School of Communication Cares

SCHEDULE AND SCHEDULE DISCLAIMER

I reserve the right to alter the scheduled topics as the semester progresses. These changes will be announced via Carmen announcements or email.

Course Map

As of January 7, 2024

Module 1 – Intro & Foundation	
Week 1	What is sports media relations?
Week 2	Sports media skills and jobs
Week 3	Working with coaches and players
Week 4	Working with media
Module 2 – Skill Building: Writing For Sports PR	
Wks. 5-6	Press releases in sports
Wks. 7-8	Game notes in sports
Module 3 – RPIE (Research, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation) & Writing/Pitching in Sports	
Week 9	Research and planning in sports PR
Week 10	SPRING BREAK – No classes
Week 11	Implementation and evaluation in sports PR
Week 12	Game Previews and Pitching Features in sports
Module 4 – Skill Building: Design	
Week 13	Introduction to InDesign and Photoshop in Sports PR
Module 5 – Crisis Communications and Ethics, Compliance	
Week 14	Understanding and Practicing Crisis Communications; Introduction to Ethics & Compliance
Module 6 – Putting it All Together	
Week 15	Course Wrap-Up and Class Learnings and Findings (Presentations)

Course Schedule

As of: January 7, 2024

Additional Dates of Note (OSU Academic Calendar): <https://registrar.osu.edu/academic-calendar/>

In-Person Class Location: Journalism Bldg 342

Any classes marked "Virtual" will have a Zoom link via Carmen

Module 1 – Intro & Foundation

	To do by 11:59 p.m. ET Monday night BEFORE class	Tuesday Class: [LISTED AS IN-PERSON or VIRTUAL]	To do by 11:59 p.m. ET Thursday night AFTER class [unless noted]	Thursday Class: [LISTED AS IN-PERSON or VIRTUAL]
Week 1 1/9 1/11	Review syllabus	[IN-PERSON] Review syllabus and course expectations with Prof. Miller In-class activity: Ice-Breaker	[Before class Thursday] READ/WATCH: * (Virtual Text) <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> Chapter 1 – intro to media relations in sports * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: What is media relations in sports?
Week 2 1/16 1/18	READ/WATCH: * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> : Chapter 2 – The Print Media * AP Stylebook – News Values & Principles * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: Print Media, Agenda Setting & AP News Values and Principles		[VIRTUAL] Sports Media Relations Job Skills and Pathways THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 1-2
Week 3 1/23 1/25	READ/WATCH: * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> : Chapter 5 – Sports Information Specialists * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: Sports Information Specialists + Working With Players and Coaches Intro to Mid-Semester Group Project	SUBMIT: Group's top 3 picks of available teams	[VIRTUAL] Building Trust With Players and Coaches THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 3-4

Week 4 1/30 2/1	READ/WATCH: * <i>AP Stylebook- AP Briefing on Media Law</i> * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> Chapter 7 – Developing writing skills * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: Working With Media, Press Conferences, Developing Writing Skills	SUBMIT: Group's team selection	[VIRTUAL] Group Work: Building a Press Conference Checklist & Primer Q's THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 5-6
Module 2 – Skill Building: Writing For Sports PR				
Week 5 2/6 2/8	READ/WATCH: * Carmen Clips SUBMIT: Discussion Post Due - #1	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: Press releases: (What, Why, How and Who is Good) Intro to Major Assignment: Press Release		[VIRTUAL] Practicing Press Releases Group Project ½ Session Working Time THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 7-8
Week 6 2/13 2/15	READ/WATCH: * Carmen Clips SUBMIT: Mini Assignment Due - #1 – Press Release Organizing	[IN-PERSON] Discussion & Activity: Creating Messaging Matrix, Reviewing Sample Press Releases	“Let’s Practice” Press Release Exercise	[VIRTUAL] “Let’s Practice” Press Release Exercise Review of Select Outlines Small Group Project Session Working Time THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 9-10

Week 7 2/20 2/22	READ/WATCH: * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> Chapter 8 – Creating Promotional Guides * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: Creating Promotional Guides and Overview of Game Notes (What, Why, How and Who is Good +Purpose & Usage) Intro to Major Assignment – Game Notes	SUBMIT: Mini Assignment Due - #2 – “What Makes Good Game Notes?” SUBMIT: “Let’s Practice: Paragraph and Bullet Point Game Notes	[VIRTUAL] Exam 1 Review “Let’s Practice”: Paragraph and Bullet Point Game Notes + Analysis of Game Notes THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 11-12
Week 8 2/27 2/29	SUBMIT: Major Assignment Due: # 1 – Press Release Study for Exam 1	[VIRTUAL] Exam 1	SUBMIT: Extra Credit Opportunity – completion of unofficial mid-semester professor evaluation survey	[VIRTUAL] Exam 1 Recap Reviewing Practiced Game Notes Game Notes Assignment Work Time THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 13-14
Module 3 – RPIE (Research, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation) & Writing/Pitching in Sports				
Week 9 3/5 3/7	SUBMIT: Major Assignment Due: # 2 - Group Mid-Semester Team Research Presentation SUBMIT: Discussion Post Due - #2	[IN-PERSON] Group Mid-Semester Team Research Presentations	READ/WATCH: * <i>(Virtual Text) Primer of Public Relations Research – Chapters 1-3</i> * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Intro to Final Group Project Lecture: RPIE Model, Research and Planning in Sports THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 15-16
Week 10 3/12 3/14	N/A	Spring Break – NO CLASS	N/A	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 11 3/19 3/21	READ/WATCH: * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> Chapter 1 – Chapter 10: Publicity Campaigns & * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: RPIE Model Revisited/Continued, Implementation and Evaluation in Sports Group Activity: Research and Planning	SUBMIT: Major Assignment Due: # 3 – Game Notes	[VIRTUAL] Group Activity: Implementation and Evaluation THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 17-18
Week 12 3/26 3/28	READ/WATCH: * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> Chapter 4: Social Media, Twitter, and Technology * Carmen Clips	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: Game Recaps/Preview Writing, Leveraging Social Media, Learning Pitching Angles		[VIRTUAL] Group Activity: Game Recaps/Preview Writing Group Activity: Pitching Angles THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 19-20
Module 4 – Skill Building: Design				
Week 13 4/2 4/4	READ/WATCH: * Carmen Clips SUBMIT: Discussion Post Due - #3 SUBMIT: Mini Assignment Due - #3 – AP Style Game Recap	[IN-PERSON] InDesign & Photoshop Workshop THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 21-22	SUBMIT: Mini Assignment Due - #4 – Pitching Exercise SUBMIT: Group Project Final Check-In Status Update Form For Professor (Group Submission)	[VIRTUAL] Group Final Project Working Session Full Timeslot

Module 5 – Crisis Communications and Ethics, Compliance				
Week 14 4/9 4/11	READ/WATCH: * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> Chapter 11 Crisis Management and Chapter 13 Ethics, Law, and Regulations * Carmen Clips SUBMIT: Discussion Post Due - #4	[IN-PERSON] Lecture: Crisis Communications Introduction to Ethics and Compliance THOUGHT PROVOKERS TO DISCUSS: 23-24	SUBMIT: Mini Assignment Due - #5 – Designing Graphic	[VIRTUAL] Group Activity: Crisis Communications Simulation in Sports – Creating Organizational Reaction Statements
Module 6 – Putting it All Together				
Week 15 4/16 4/18	READ/WATCH: * <i>Media Relations in Sport</i> Chapter 1 – intro to media relations in sports * Carmen Clips SUBMIT: Discussion Post Due - #5 SUBMIT: Mini Assignment Due - #6 – Crisis Communications Simulation Recap	[IN-PERSON] Discussion: Course Wrap Exam 2 Review Final Available Time For Group Final Project Work THOUGHT PROVOKER TO DISCUSS: 25	SUBMIT: [Before class] Discussion Post Due - #6 SUBMIT: [Before class] Final group project and presentation SUBMIT: Extra Credit Submissions via Carmen	[IN-PERSON] Group Final Project Presentations
Exam Week	SUBMIT [by TBA University Date]: Extra Credit Opportunity – completion of Student Evaluation of Instructor survey (SEI) [VIRTUAL] TBA University Date: Exam 2			