

COMM 3415

Sports, Mass Media & Society
Summer 2024 (8-week session 2 term)
3 credit hours
Online

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About the instructor

Jorge Cruz Ibarra, M.A. he/him/his

Email address: cruzibarra.1@osu.edu (preferred contact method)

Office hours: Online by appointment. Please email me with the following subject: "COMM 3414 Office Hours". Include 3 days/times you are available to meet.

Zoom link:

<https://osu.zoom.us/j/7634444036?pwd=d1FRbTNKcU9SRXVKUXJpbi90REd6dz09>

Course description

Sports communication is a growing area of study within the communication discipline, as scholars recognize the increasingly important role media play in conveying and shaping sports and society. This course will examine the intersection of sports, society, and the media, by exploring historical and current issues in sports that shape our ideas, perspectives, and assumptions about the U.S.

The course will use an empirical social-scientific perspective to better understand sports' impact on society, as well as the role media coverage of sports plays as a vehicle to report on and communicate about important societal issues. The course will place special emphasis on how audiences psychologically respond to, and are

affected by, strategic communication messages embedded in sports media. This course will be delivered entirely online through Carmen.

Course outcomes and objectives

- Define and explain stereotypes and how stereotypes impact people's impressions of themselves and others in the context of sports
- Understand and apply social-scientific communication and social psychological theories including priming, framing, stereotype threat, mediated intergroup contact theory, social comparison theory, and cultural voyeurism - to predict and explain communication phenomena in the context of sports
- Identify and understand how sports media coverage of race/ethnicity, and gender shapes society and the importance and value people place on specific political issues and social categories

How this online course works

Mode of delivery

This course is 100% online. There are no required sessions when you must be logged in to Carmen at a scheduled time.

Pace of online activities

This course is divided into **weekly modules** that are released one week ahead of time. Students are expected to keep pace with weekly deadlines but may schedule their efforts freely within that time frame. The professor will provide a welcome video for the week that will include information about the week's content, updates about the course, and reminders for material that is due in the upcoming week.

Credit hours and work expectations

This is an 8-week session 3-credit-hour course, which [according to the registrar](#) corresponds to 15.75 total hours of class + outside study time each week. Typically, in-person classes meet 5.25 hours per week and then require 10.5 more hours of independent work outside of class. In this online, asynchronous class, all 15.75 hours require self-guided instruction. Every student will move through the material at their own pace. If you feel you are spending far more than 15.75 hours with materials every week, please make an appointment to discuss your approach to the class with me.

Attendance and participation requirements

Because this is an online course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation, this includes watching the video lectures, completing assignments, and participating in discussions. More about participation requirements and guidelines will be provided on page 5.

Structuring your week

In online classes, it is especially important to maintain a high level of attention to deadlines and hold yourself accountable to the course schedule. I strongly recommend using a calendar or planner, as well as setting up a regular schedule for this class and maintaining it throughout the semester. Here is a structure I recommend for organizing coursework over a week (of course, make adjustments as you consider appropriate):

Monday:

- New module and welcome video (WV) become available by 8 am.
- Watch WV to get a sense of the week's materials and topics.
- Open and review weekly assignment (note: make notes of topics or concepts covered in the assignments so you recognize them in the weekly materials).

Tuesday or Wednesday:

- Watch the first lecture video.
- Read/watch the first half of the materials in the module.
- Take notes as you watch the lecture video and complete readings. Take notes of how the materials might help you complete the weekly assignment.

Thursday or Friday:

- Watch the second lecture video.
- Read/watch the second half of the materials in the module.
- Take notes as you watch the lecture video and complete readings. Take notes of how the materials might help you complete the weekly assignment.

Friday, Saturday, or Sunday (or any other day after you've completed the other module materials – remember all assignments are due on Sundays at 11:59 pm):

- Complete the weekly assignment.
- Review your notes and organize them in a way that would help you easily navigate them eventually for the midterm or final exam.

Submissions and deadlines

Since this is an online course, you are required to have online access on a frequent basis. All updates to the course will be announced via email and/or on Carmen. It is your responsibility to check these platforms regularly. Please carefully read the syllabus to keep up with due dates and responsibilities. For consistency over the summer term, **every graded assignment will be due on Sundays before midnight (11:59 pm Eastern Time). Exams and the final project will be due on days other than Sunday, please refer to the course schedule on pages 12-15 for the dates.**

Instructor feedback and response

The instructor will respond to all emails and the Course Q&A discussion board within 24 hours on weekdays. Assignments are generally graded and returned within 7-10 days of submission. It may take a bit longer to grade papers.

Email and communication etiquette

I prefer to communicate through email, so please use that instead of Carmen mail/messenger. **Using Carmen messenger may result in delays in getting a response.** To make our communication more efficient, I kindly ask that you follow these simple steps:

- Please check the syllabus and discussion boards for information before sending an email. I may have already answered your question in one of these locations, and you can get your answer without delay.
- Please use your OSU email address and put the course (COMM 3415) in the subject line and the purpose of your email (e.g., “COMM 3415 question about discussion”).
- I might have a lot going on outside of this class, but I'll do my best to respond to your emails as soon as possible. I really appreciate it when students are proactive and reach out with their questions or concerns. If you have any deadlines coming up, it's a good idea to email me by Friday mornings, as I don't always check my email on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Finally, when you're writing emails, please keep standards of courtesy in mind. That means being sure to address your recipient respectfully, using the proper tone, and including a signature.

Late assignments

No late assignments will be accepted. Every graded item will be due on Sundays before midnight (11:59 pm Eastern Time). However, I know that sometimes unexpected things occur so if you have any exceptional situation coming up, please let me know as soon as possible. I am more than willing to make adjustments, provided that I see genuine interest and commitment from your side.

Student participation requirements

Because this is a distance-education course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of everyone's expected participation:

Viewing lectures

Recorded lectures and supplemental lecture materials will be generally posted 2-3 weeks at a time. The complete listing for the week will be found in the weekly overview. More than one lecture may appear in the upload. The lecture videos attempt to provide the most optimal viewing experience and to increase attention and engagement.

Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are the course expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

Tone and civility: Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online. The instructor works very hard to provide a positive learning experience. Please keep this in mind and remain civilized and respectful in your email and discussion board communications.

Citing your sources: When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. (For the textbook or other course materials, list at least the title and page numbers. For online sources, include a link.)

Class grading/requirements

Description of major course assignments

Weekly assignments (25%). Throughout the term, the instructor will post activity guidelines on five different weeks (see course schedule on pages 12-15). The activities will vary each week, ranging from discussion questions that could be answered in a short paper or video, to presentations and infographics. To earn full credit, students must provide clear and well-thought-out responses, incorporating content from the lectures and readings. They must also adhere to the instructions and format guidelines provided for each assignment. **Assignments are due at 11:59 pm on Sunday of each week.**

Midterm (25%). Will be available from 12:01 am until 11:59 pm on Monday, June 24th and will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. **Once you access the exam you will have approximately 80 minutes to complete it.** You are not able to start, stop, and then restart the exam.

Paper or video project (25%). Due Friday, July 19th at 11:59 pm. Students will complete EITHER a video project OR class paper as described below:

- The **paper** will address a topic area discussed in class that is related to stereotypes and media. Students are expected to integrate course readings, theories, and concepts in the paper. The paper should be primarily based on course readings and lectures and include at least 6 different references from the course syllabus. Outside sources are welcome as long as they complement the required minimum of 6 sources from the required readings. Theories, literature, and other information from the course must be used to support paper arguments! Must use APA Style format.
- For the **video project** students will create a short 15-minute documentary similar to and inspired by the ESPN 30 for 30 documentary series, which highlights intriguing and controversial people and/or events in sports. This video project will focus on a specific issue from the course This project can be done in groups of up to three students with the instructor's approval. **If you wish to work as a team, please notify me by the end of Week 5 (Sunday,**

July 7th). After this week, I am unlikely to approve new groups. Feel free to use whatever video software/hardware (e.g., iPad, video camera, etc.) you like to complete this project.

Final Exam (25%). Will be available from 12:01 am to 11:59 pm on Friday, July 26 and will consist of multiple-choice questions. Like the midterm, you will have approximately 80 minutes to complete it and you cannot re-enter the exam once you have left the page.

Approximate grade breakdown

A = 100–93%	B = 86–83%	C = 76–73%	D = 66–63%
A- = 92–90%	B- = 82–80%	C- = 72–70%	E = 62–0%
B+ = 89–87%	C+ = 79–77%	D+ = 69–67%	

Resources & guidelines

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>

Writing Center

All students, especially those who have difficulty writing, are encouraged to visit the OSU Writing Center. Their web address is <https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center> and their phone number is 688-5865. The Writing Center offers two kinds of tutorials: 1) Scheduled, 50-minute tutorials in 4120A Smith Lab and 2) Drop-in, 20-minute tutorials at our satellite centers (First floor Thompson Library and 114 Smith-Steeb Residence Hall)

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.

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.

This classroom is a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every other member of the class

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.

Academic integrity policy

Written assignments: Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow APA 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 have explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

Academic misconduct

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on

Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Artificial Intelligence and academic integrity

There has been a significant increase in the popularity and availability of a variety of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, Sudowrite and others. These tools will help shape the future of work, research and technology but when used in the wrong way, they can stand in conflict with academic integrity at Ohio State.

All students have important obligations under the [Code of Student Conduct](#) to complete all academic and scholarly activities with fairness and honesty. Specifically, students are not to use unauthorized assistance on a course assignment unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor. In addition, students are not to submit their work without acknowledging any word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of writing, ideas or other work that is not your own.

To maintain a culture of integrity and respect, these generative AI tools should not be used in the completion of course assignments unless an instructor for a given course specifically authorizes their use. Some instructors may approve of using generative AI tools in the academic setting for specific goals. However, these tools should be used only with the explicit and clear permission of each individual instructor, and then only in the ways allowed by the instructor.

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

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: sllds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; sllds.osu.edu ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Technology guidelines

This is a fully asynchronous course, so continuous access to a computer and high-speed internet is essential. If you encounter any issues that limit your access to these resources or anticipate that you won't have access to them, please inform me as soon as possible. I will do my best to help you find a solution through university resources or provide accommodations until you regain access to a computer with internet.

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. 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>

Zoom

Office hours will be held through Ohio State's conferencing platform, Zoom. A separate+ guide to accessing Zoom and our office hours is posted on the course Carmen page under the Student Resources Module. Students may use the audio and video functions if a webcam and microphone are available. If not, there is still a chat function within Zoom for the student to live chat with the professor in the virtual office hours room. Help guides on the use of Zoom can be found at:

- Self-Service and Chat support: <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
- Phone: 614-688-HELP (4357)
- Email: 8help@osu.edu
- TDD: 614-688-8743

Baseline technical skills necessary for online 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.
- Web cam and microphone.

Necessary software

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. 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

Course schedule

Week	Topics, readings, and activities
<p>Week 1 (6/3-6/9)</p>	<p>Introduction, Overview of Course and Syllabus</p> <p>The Role of Communication and the Media: <i>Understanding social scientific communication theories and how to apply them to predict and explain sports media reporting, message content and their impact on audiences</i></p> <p>Mediated Interracial Interaction and Sports Media: <i>How does interracial interaction through sports media impact our understanding of race and racial groups?</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Griffin et al. (2022) – pages 492 to 499 only. 2. Lewis & Weaver (2015) 3. Tankard (2001) 4. Appiah (2018) <p>Assignment 1 due 6/9</p>
<p>Week 2 (6/10-6/16)</p>	<p>Mediated Interracial Interaction and Sports Media (Cont.): <i>How does interracial interaction through sports media impact our understanding of race and racial groups?</i></p> <p>How the Media Contextualize Race and Social Justice Issues in Sports: <i>Sports media is becoming an increasingly important source of information about race and social justice issues. What is the significance of context, and what are the potential implications/consequences of failing to contextualize social issues when reporting on them?</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Park (2012) 2. Pettigrew (2008)

	<p>3. Carvalho (2014) 4. Rada (2005)</p> <p>Assignment 2 due 6/16</p>
<p>Week 3 (6/17-6/23)</p>	<p>Gender Inequity and Media Coverage of Women in Sports: <i>Gender inequality and inequities persists in sports. How does media coverage of women in sports contribute to or detract from the problem?</i></p> <p>Sports Media Exposure and the Effects on Women’s Body Image: <i>How might exposure to women athletes in sports media contribute to body-image issues amongst some segments of viewers?</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mastro et al. (2012) 2. Trolan (2013) 3. Bissel et al. (2004) 4. Harrison & Fredrickson (2003) <p>No weekly assignment, study for midterm (Monday 6/24)</p>
<p>Week 4 (6/24-6/30)</p>	<p>A Day in the Life of an Athlete - The Role of Perspective-Taking: <i>Understanding the life of a (high school, college, professional, amateur, special Olympics) athlete using perspective taking techniques.</i></p> <p>Media’s Role in the National Conversation about Sexuality & Sports: <i>How have media played an important role in sparking conversations about sexuality and sports?</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dovidio et al. (2004) 2. Shih et al. (2009) 3. Anderson (2011) 4. Cacciola & Blinder (2016) <p>Midterm exam due 6/24 (Monday) Assignment 3 due 6/30</p>

<p>Week 5 (7/1-7/7)</p>	<p>Media Reporting of Physical and Mental Health in Sports: <i>Historically, physical and mental health in sports have been mis-reported and underreported by media. How have media evolved in coverage of health issues in sports and their effects on athletes and society at large?</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cottler et al (2011) 2. Gleeson & Brady (2017) 3. Cusimano et al. (2013) 4. Glock (2017) <p>Assignment 4 due 7/7 Final day to notify if working in teams for final project (video option only) Sunday July 7th</p>
<p>Week 6 (7/8-7/14)</p>	<p>Sports Communication, Marketing and Branding: <i>The media have played an enormous role in the marketing, promotions, and branding of sports and athletes, as evidenced by endorsement deals, sports broadcasting TV rights, and billion-dollar licensing rights with sports organizations. How has the commercialism of teams, organizations, and athletes impacted sports and its fans?</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. McAllister (2010) 2. Pegoraro (2010) 3. Fidelman (2014) 4. Yukari (2017) <p>Assignment 5 due 7/14</p>
<p>Week 7 (7/15-7/21)</p>	<p>Social Media and Sports: <i>The growth and evolution of social media has had a significant impact on athletes, sports teams, and fans.</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DiMoro (2015) 2. Hutchins (2011) 3. Sanderson & Gramlich (2016) 4. Gibbs & Haynes (2013) <p>Final project (video or paper) due 7/19 (Friday)</p>

<p>Week 8 (7/22-7/28)</p>	<p>Ethics and Social Responsibility: <i>What roles do ethics and social responsibility play in sports media and athletic governance organizations (e.g. NCAA)? Can media facilitate social responsibility in sports?</i></p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ramon-Vegas & Rojas-Torrijos (2017) 2. Littlefield (2017) 3. Whysall (2014) 4. Grimmett-Norris (2015) <p>No weekly assignment, study for final Final exam due 7/26 (Friday)</p>
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Update history

This syllabus outlines the course structure. Consider it a living contract. Minor adjustments to the reading list or schedule may be made based on class progress and student needs. I suggest you refer to the course Carmen for the “last word” in terms of readings and assignments. Likewise, if there are significant changes to the syllabus, I'll inform the class via Carmen announcements and write down the changes and their dates in this section. This way, you'll know if you have the most current version of this document.