



COMM 4383 783
Current Topics in Sports Comm
Summer 2024 Session 7W1
Delivery Method: Online

Instructor Information

Name: William Harlow
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Office Location: MB 4156
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

An exploration of current topics in sports communication. Students will apply lessons learned in other communication courses to current events in sports.

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UTPB Bookstore

[Bookstore link](#)

This link will take you directly to the official UTPB bookstore page for this course. Please note, you are welcome to make purchases from any supplier of your choice.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Explain the leading current topics in sports communication.
- Apply leading theories of communication to sports media.
- Critically analyze popular sports media.
- Demonstrate mastery of leading theories of media and communication.

Course Materials

Multiple formats of identical course materials may be contained in this list (i.e. Hardcover book, Electronic Text, etc.). You may only need one of these materials. Please follow the "bookstore link" under the material to go to the official online UTPB bookstore to ensure you are selecting the format which best suits your needs.

Title: Please check the UTPB book store

ISBN: Bookstore link

Faculty - This list reflects your selections in the Follett bookstore website.

Important Academic Dates

UTPB [Academic Calendar](#)

Graded Material

Please see the course schedule for detail on when these assignments are due, and closely monitor the announcements for any changes. Full details on each assignment are available inside Canvas. Your grade in this course will be earned as follows:

Discussion Boards (37.5%)—You will have 7 discussion boards—one for each week of the course. They are weighted equally in your grade. Please see the rubric in Canvas for full details on how I will grade those assignments.

Quizzes (37.5%)—You will have seven quizzes—one for each week of the course. Each will cover the reading for that week, and each quiz will be weighted equally in determining your semester grade.

Secondary ID Verification (5%)—You will upload a photo of yourself holding your government-issued ID in order to verify your identity as an online student.

Term Paper (20%)—You will write a term paper where you apply concepts from the course to a current situation in sports communication. Please see the rubric in Canvas for full details.

Grading Scale

Please note that I do not curve grades. For example, a grade of 92.999% is an A- rather than an A. At the end of the semester, I will assign grades as follows:

A 93-100

A- At least 90, but less than 93

B+ At least 87, but less than 90

B At least 83, but less than 87

B- At least 80, but less than 83

C+ At least 77, but less than 80

C At least 73, but less than 77

C- At least 70, but less than 73

D At least 60, but less than 70

F Less than 60

In addition, I will sometimes assign a letter grade rather than a numerical grade to your work. Please note that when I do so, I will assign a grade of C to work which fully complies with the standards listed in the assignment. A grade of D or F will apply for work which falls short of those standards, and grades of A or B are for work which exceeds those standards. I almost never assign a grade of A+ as that is reserved for work of particular distinction. If I do assign a letter grade, it will translate in the grade book as possible:

A+ 100. This is exceptionally rare.

A 95

A- 92

B+ 88

B 85

B- 82

C+ 78

C 75

C- 72

D 65

University Policies

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities: The University of Texas Permian Basin in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities. Only those students, who an Instructor has received an official Letter of Accommodation (LOA) sent by the Office of ADA for Students, will be provided ADA academic accommodations.

ADA Officer for Students: Mrs. Chermae Peel

Address: Mesa Building 4242/4901 E. University, Odessa, Texas 79762

Voice Telephone: 432-552-3395

Email: ada@utpb.edu

For the accessibility and privacy statements of external tools used within courses, go to [Accessibility and Privacy Statements](#).

Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct Policy

The University of Texas Permian Basin (the University) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and Clery Act. Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation, and other conduct prohibited under this Policy will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.

The University will promptly discipline any individuals or organizations within its control who violate this Policy. The University encourages you to promptly report incidents that could constitute violations of this Policy to the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct Policy can be found [here](#).

You may report incidents of sexual misconduct to any University employee. They are obligated to report any incident to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator.

You may also contact:

- The UTPB Police Department at 432-552-2786
- The Title IX Coordinator at 432-552-2697 or TitleIXCoordinator@UTPB.edu.
- The Dean of Students at 432-552-2600
- Reports can also be made via the University Complaint Portal: [UTPB Complaint Management](#)

A **confidential reporting option is available**. Please contact UTPB's Counseling Center at 432-552-3365 or 432-552-2367 or stop by MB 1150.

Scholastic Dishonesty

“Scholastic Dishonesty” is any form of cheating or plagiarism that violates the Student Code of Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty or academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two [2] courses without the prior permission of the instructor, and providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act. The Student Code of Conduct provides students fair notice of conduct considered unacceptable at The University of Texas Permian Basin and which may be the basis for disciplinary action. This policy provides the procedures to be following when student disciplinary action may need to be implemented and outlines the appeals process. The Student Code of Conduct is available online at: <https://www.utpb.edu/life-at-utpb/student-services/dean-of-students/student-code-of-conduct>

Student Success at UTPB

UT Permian Basin offers numerous services to help you reach your academic goals. Available both in the Success Center on the 2nd Floor of the Mesa Building (<https://www.utpb.edu/academics/advising-and-support/student-success-center/index>), and online, UTPB Student Success offers the following services to all students:

- O.W.L. (Online Writing Lab) - Submit essays that need to be revised by one of our tutors to owl@utpb.edu.
- Tutoring – For both online and in person tutoring, please use EAB to create an appointment. (Utpb.campus.eab.com) Sign in using UTPB credentials.
- SI/PLTL Sessions - If available for your class, will be communicated to you by the mentor assigned to your class section and students can communicate to their SI or PL through Canvas.
- Peer Mentoring - Incoming freshmen can be paired with a peer mentor who will help you navigate your first year on campus.

- SSC Computer Lab - Come take advantage of the state-of-the-art computers available at the Student Success Center.

Please email success@utpb.edu for more information.

Student Support Services

For more information on academic, technical, and support services for UTPB students, please see the [Online Student Services](#).

Course Modalities

Both the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) provide standard definitions for basic course types/modalities that have informed the following adopted course definitions.

Online Courses are those in which more than 85 percent of the planned instruction occurs online/virtually (asynchronously) when students and faculty are not in the same place. A fully online course is one in which mandatory in-person meetings occur no more than 15% of the planned instructional time.

Remote Courses are ones in which students, while not required to physically come to campus to attend in-person classes, are required to “attend” virtually/remotely (synchronously) during scheduled days and times, with students expected to log in and participate in the lecture via video conferences.

Hybrid Courses are courses in which the majority (more than 50% but less than 85%) of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are not in the same place. This form of instruction offers a mix of on-campus/in-person and remote/online/electronic learning.

HyFlex Courses are those which, like hybrid courses, offer a mix of on-campus/in-person and remote/online/electronic learning. These courses, however, do not require student authentication since at least 50% of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are in the same place.

Face-to-Face/In-Person Courses are those in which more than 85 percent of the planned instruction occurs when students are in the same place with an instructor(s).

End-of-Course Evaluation & Instructor Evaluation

Every student is encouraged to complete an end of course evaluation survey provided by UTPB. During the last two weeks of class, there will be an announcement in Canvas, an email, and a button in your course navigation that will take you to any available surveys.

The survey is anonymous and your responses are confidential. Your feedback is critical to us and to your instructor as we strive to improve our offerings, and our support of you, the students.

Disclaimer & Rights

Information contained in this syllabus was to the best knowledge of the instructor considered correct and complete when distributed for use in the beginning of the semester. However, the instructor reserves the right, acting within the policies and procedures of UTPB to make changes in the course content or instructional techniques without notice or obligation. The students will be informed about the changes, if any.

Distance Education Policy

Preparation for Emergencies

Computer Crash

Not having a working computer or a crashed computer during the semester will NOT be considered an acceptable reason for not completing course activities at a scheduled time. NOTE: Identify a second computer before the semester begins, that you can use when or if your personal computer crashes. Limited Loaner Laptops are available through the J. Conrad Dunagan Library.

Complete Loss of Contact

If you lose contact with course connectivity completely (i.e. you cannot contact me via Canvas or email), you need to call the instructor, and leave a message regarding connectivity loss and your contact information.

Lost/Corrupt/Missing Files

You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external drive, UTPB Outlook 365 OneDrive, or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g. virus infection, student's own computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any contradictions or problems, you may be required to resubmit the files.

Distance Education Courses and Student Identity Authentication Requirements and Policy

SACSCOC defines a distance education course as one in which more than 50 percent of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are not in the same physical place. Distance

education courses, therefore, include online, remote, and hybrid courses as defined above. Per SACSCOC and University policy, all distance education courses are required to follow our Distance Education Student Authentication Policy procedures (please see below), and these requirements and policies must be stated in the course syllabus. Further, any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity must be indicated on the courses schedule and course syllabus.

The Distance Education Student Authentication Policy does not apply to Hyflex Courses--those in which at least 50% of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are in the same place--and Face-to-Face/In-Person Courses--those in which more than 85 percent of the planned instruction occurs when students and instructor(s) are in the same place. Student authentication and identity verification in these courses may be accomplished by in-person attendance monitoring as well as through in-class instructor proctored examinations and other assessments. These same "in-class" authentication procedures also may be employed in hybrid courses, but in the case of these defined distance education courses, they must be documented on the course syllabus as described below.

Distance Education Student Authentication Policy and Syllabus Requirements

UT Permian Basin's Distance Education Student Authentication Policy requires the University to employ processes (documented in each distance education syllabus) to verify that each student who registers for a distance education course is the same student who participates in, completes, and receives credit for the course.

The policy requires faculty members teaching distance education courses to employ at least two methods of verification to ensure student identities. The first method of verification is accomplished by the student logging into Canvas, our learning management system. To access all UTPB courses, students must login to Canvas uniqueness personal identifying username and secure password. This is the primary method of student identity verification. The Distance Education Student Authentication Policy requires at least one additional student identification method within the distance learning course that has been determined and approved by the faculty or academic program. The second method of authentication must be explicitly stated in the syllabus. The second method of student authentication maybe:

- Proctored exams using an approved photo ID*.
- Presentation of approved photo ID through a webcam and optional levels of proctoring during assessment.
- Field or clinical experiences using an approved photo ID.
- Synchronous or asynchronous video activities using an approved photo ID.
- In hybrid distance education courses, which have an in-person meeting component, the secondary method of student authentication may be accomplished (as is it may be done in

hyflex and face-to face-courses) by in-person attendance monitoring as well as through required in-class instructor proctored examinations and other assessments.

- Other Technologies or procedures, etc. (which must be detailed in the syllabus).

If faculty require secondary method of verification for which students are charged a fee(e.g. face-to-face proctoring at an off-campus site that charges a fee), this notification must be stated on the course schedule and in the course syllabus as well.

*Approved photo identifications include passports, government issued identification, driver's licenses, military ID from DoD; dual credit and early college high school students use school district identifications.

In this course, we will provide secondary identification of student ID through provision of a government ID as a distinct assignment.

Course Policies

In the event of conflicts between this section of the syllabus and any other section of the syllabus, this is the controlling section for course policy.

Canvas: You must be conversant with common computer technologies and platforms to be successful in this course. You should log in to this classroom on Canvas every day and are responsible for all announcements and materials posted there.

Current Events: Discussion of current events will be a regular part of this class. Students should stay well informed on national and international news and should come to class prepared to discuss those events in a civil manner. You must read www.realclearpolitics.com every day and will be held responsible for the material posted there. I also encourage you to review www.economist.com for additional information, although it is not required.

Communication: Students should expect to receive a response to their e-mails within 48 hours during the regular workweek (Monday at 8 a.m. until Friday at noon). The best way to contact your instructor is via e-mail. If you would like to speak with your professor and cannot physically attend office hours, please place a call in Microsoft Teams.

Computer Skills, Technical & Software Requirements: This is a web-based course which will require students to have stable, persistent access to the internet using a connected device comfortable to them. The device should have sufficient power to browse the web, view and post videos, and conduct word processing and other routine software operations. Students will also need

access to the Microsoft Office suite of products. Students can use cloud version of Word, PowerPoint and other Microsoft products through use of their UTPB Outlook 365 and UTPB email address. For more information refer to [UTPB Office 365 Page](#). Please see [Technical Requirements](#) for additional details.

Attendance: Active course participation is necessary for success in the class, and student participation and logins will be monitored. Your participation record has at least three consequences. First, you need to be present to gain the full benefit of the material presented and discussed in this course. Second, there may be unannounced assignments and announcements in this class and you will not have the opportunity to make it up if you miss due to an unexcused absence. Finally, it is extremely unlikely that I will curve grades at the end of the semester. However, you are explicitly warned that if I do curve grades I will consider your participation as a factor in that decision.

An absence from this online course is any time you will not be logging in on a daily basis or completing assignments at the required time. Absences will be excused for the following reasons:

1. Participation in a University sponsored event. If your coach or sponsor provides an official list, you are still expected to discuss the absence in advance with your instructor. That list is necessary, but not sufficient. In addition, given the online nature of this class and that all assignments are known in advance, you may be required to submit the assignment prior to departing on your trip.
2. A medical condition which is sufficiently serious to have documented medical care during the time of the class. Please note that this does not excuse any medical appointment which was or reasonably could have been anticipated in advance. You are expected to schedule such appointments outside class time.
3. Attendance at the funeral of your spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, or the spouse of any of the people listed above.
4. Attendance at a bona fide religious observance with documentation provided to your instructor in advance.

No other absences will be excused. Specifically excluded are absences for child care, foreseeable medical appointments, and work—none of those events constitutes an acceptable reason for missing class or failing to complete work. If you are going to miss a class activity or lesson due to any foreseeable event (sporting events or any other event planned in advance), please provide appropriate documentation to your instructor as soon as possible and in all cases at least one week prior to the event. He will provide details of what constitutes appropriate documentation for a given case.

Make-Up/Late Submission Policy: All course activities must be submitted before or on set due dates. Work submitted even one minute after the deadline will not be graded and will receive a zero unless you have received permission from your instructor in advance.

Grades: All the course activities will be graded one week after the set due date. You can check your grades by going to the Grades tab in Canvas. If there is any discrepancy in the grade, you must wait at least 24 hours after the grade has been posted before contacting me, and you must bring the issue to my attention within one week of the time the grade has been posted.

Academic Integrity: This course will adhere to the scholastic dishonesty policy as outlined in the "University Policies" section of this document. In addition to the formal university response to academic dishonesty, I will make an academic judgment about the grade you deserve on the assignment and for the course based on work submitted in my course. That academic judgment will quite frequently result in you receiving a zero for the assignment, and it may result in you failing the course.

Course Incomplete/Withdrawal/Grade Appeal: All students are required to complete the course within the semester they are enrolled. Incomplete grades for the course are rarely given and will only be granted if the student has complete at least 75% of the course with a grade of 'C' or better and provided a valid, documented excuse for not being able to complete the course on time and has contacted the instructor prior to the scheduled last class to request an extension. Valid excuses will only consist of difficult circumstances that the student could not have reasonably foreseen, and specifically excludes being busy with work, other classes, or the various responsibilities you have outside of class. The student will sign a contract that includes the incomplete course activities and the new due dates. Find information and dates regarding drops and withdrawals consult the University Handbook: [Drops and Withdrawals](#) and [Appeal Process](#).

Discussion Board Best Practices: Anything you type in the discussion area on Canvas is public – which means that every student in this class (including your instructor) will see what you write. Please pay attention to the language you use and adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Do not post anything too personal;
2. Do not use language that is inappropriate for a classroom setting or prejudicial in regard to gender, race, or ethnicity;
3. Do not use all caps in the postings (it is considered shouting)
4. Be courteous and respectful to other people on the list
5. Do not overuse acronyms like you would use in text messaging. Some of the list participants may not be familiar with acronyms.
6. If the posting is going to be long, use line breaks and paragraphs
7. Fill in the Subject Line
8. Write your full name at the end of the posting
9. Be careful with sarcasm and subtle humor; *one person's joke is another person's insult.*

NOTE: If you do not adhere to the guidelines for posting, you will lose the points that would have been granted, and the instructor reserves the right to remove your posting and to deny you any further posting privileges. Loss of posting privileges could result in your failure in the class.

Course Recording: Audio and video recording of lectures, group discussions, or one-on-one coaching with your instructor are strictly prohibited without prior acknowledgement and approval from your instructor. This includes, but is not limited to the use of audio/video recording devices such as cell phones, laptop computers, digital recorders, tape recorders, or video cameras. Violations of this policy will result in an F for the course and referral to the Dean of Students for further sanctions.

Student Support Services: For more information on academic, technical, and support services for UTPB students, please see the [Online Student Services](#).

Students with Disabilities: I am fully committed to building a welcoming and inclusive classroom, and I will follow the policies outlined under, "Accommodations for Student with Disabilities" in the "University Policies" section of this document. Please know that if I receive a letter of academic accommodations from the relevant office, you need to visit with me about how that letter will be implemented. Please visit with me far enough in advance of any due dates that I have a reasonable opportunity to implement the required accommodations. I want to help you be successful, and will do everything I can to achieve that. Please start that process by visiting directly with me.

Computer Crash: Not having a working computer or a crashed computer during the semester will NOT be considered as an acceptable reason for not completing course activities at a scheduled time. NOTE: Identify a second computer before the semester begins, that you can use when/if your personal computer crashes.

Complete Loss of Contact: If you lose contact with course connectivity completely (i.e. you cannot contact me via Canvas or email), you need to call instructor, and leave message regarding connectivity loss and contact information.

Lost/Corrupt/Missing Files: You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external drive, UTPB Outlook 365 OneDrive, or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g. virus infection, student's own computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any contradictions/problems, you may be required to resubmit the files.

Copyright Statement: Many of the materials that are posted within UTPB courses are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for the purpose of the course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

End-of-Course Evaluation & Instructor Evaluation: Every student is encouraged to complete an end of course evaluation survey provided by UTPB. During the last two weeks of class, there will be an announcement in Canvas, an email, and a button in your course navigation that will take you to any available surveys.

The survey is anonymous and your responses are confidential. Your feedback is critical to us and

to your instructor as we strive to improve our offerings, and our support of you, the students.

Right to Change: This syllabus is accurate to the best of the knowledge of your instructor at the time of publication. However, I reserve the right to make changes as needed to serve the interest of the class. In addition, my decision to not enforce any one part of the syllabus will not impact my ability to enforce other parts of the syllabus.

Course Schedule

COMM 4383 Fall 2023 Schedule

Week	Start/End Days	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	REQUIRED READING
1	May 13-19	Topics: Media Ecology of Marshall McLuhan. Which mediums of communication are most important in conveying sports imagery in the contemporary world, and how has that changed over time? Assignments Due: Week 1 Discussion Board, Week 1 Quiz	Chapter 25 (10 th edition)
2	May 20-26	Topics: Narrative Paradigm (Fisher), Symbolic Convergence (Bormann), and Dramatism (Burke). How do we tell stories about athletes and sports teams? Assignments Due: Secondary ID Verification, Week 2 Discussion Board, Week 2 Quiz	Chapters 18, 23, and 24 (10 th edition)
3	May 27-June 2	Topics: Agenda Setting and Cognitive Dissonance. What determines which topics come on the public agenda, and how do we handle conflicting information? Assignments Due: Week 3 Discussion Board, Week 3 Quiz	Chapters 16 and 30 (10 th edition)
4	June 3-9	Topics: Communication Accommodation Theory. What are some distinct cultural practices of athletes as a group, and when do they seek to either limit or reinforce those differences? Assignments Due: Week 4 Discussion Board, Week 4 Quiz	Chapter 34 (10 th edition)
5	June 10-16	Topics: The Rhetoric and Face Negotiation Theory. What do	Chapters 22 and 35 (10 th

		athletes and athletics organizations need to persuade people of, and how do they maintain their public image when they do that?	edition)
		Assignments Due: Week 5 Discussion Board, Week 5 Quiz	
6	June 17-23	Topics: Social Information Processing Theory. Think about online communities devoted to sports topics and how close members of those communities are. Assignments Due: Final Paper, Week 6 Discussion Board, Week 6 Quiz.	Chapter 10 (10 th edition)
7	June 24-27	Topics: Uses and Gratifications Theory of Elihu Katz. What needs do we fill with our sports media consumption? Assignments Due: Week 7 Discussion Board, Week 7 Quiz	Chapter 28 (10 th edition)

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