

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
COMM_265-201_RMinkoff
Sports broadcasting: SPRING SEMESTER 2023
SOC 015 M-W-F 1235-125p

Instructors: Randy Minkoff
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Overview

This course is designed to be practical and interactive, covering all aspects of 21st century sports broadcasting. Randy Minkoff is a former nationally established journalist who spent his career in radio journalism as reporters, anchors, play-by-play announcers, and talk show hosts. You will learn how to write cohesively and concisely, how to cover a variety of sporting events, how to conduct and edit interviews into sound bites and gather information under pressure, how to deal with athletes and sports executives at all levels, how to separate the personal from the professional when covering a story, and how to enhance your personal style and improve your overall delivery. You will also witness firsthand the business of sports and how it affects issues at the collegiate and professional levels. Professional guest speakers will visit the class to share insights on sports broadcasting including the latest trends in the field and how best to secure employment in the various facets of the profession. You will also receive personalized speech coaching from speech professor Sue Castorino. Assignments will be outlined and there will be some “group” assignments as well as a semester-long project. With that in mind, please consider this syllabus as a general tool, SUBJECT TO CHANGE, depending upon news events and trends as well a guest speaker availability. Journalism is adaptation and please do not view this overview as a class schedule that is etched in granite.

What you need

The latest AP stylebook is mandatory. In lieu of other textbooks you are expected to take extensive notes during all classes as a different topic will be addressed each week. You are strongly encouraged to actively participate in all dialogue and discussion. We will move quickly through the semester.

Required equipment: A digital audio tape recorder or other device for audio recording such as a smart phone with recording capability (microphone optional but STRONGLY recommended) and the capability to download editing software (Audacity, Wave Pro or similar.) I also highly recommend that you are actively aware of what’s current in local and national sports events and sports news each week as we will discuss those issues and your participation will be a vital part of your overall grade.

Grade

Graded assignments will be lettered A-F. These will be based upon the following criteria: Active participation in class and in the field, interaction with classmates and instructors, demonstration of a thorough understanding of each of the elements of sports broadcasting, clean and creative writing and delivery, fulfilling assignments *on time* and completion of a written and oral mid-term and practical final exam.

Important note: It is *imperative* that you are present and on time for *all* classes online. To create a realistic journalistic environment, all power points, videos and assignments will be provided only in class; if you have an excused absence, it will be up to you to obtain the material you missed from another student. We will be covering a tremendous amount of information in a compressed time frame and there will be no exceptions.

Assignments that allow you to e-mail your report must be in by the prescribed time; assignments to be handed in class come with a deadline of the start of the class.

ATTENDANCE: It is vital to your grade and to your understanding of the goals of the class. If you must miss a class, it will be up to you to get materials from a classmate regarding material covered and you will have to submit assignments per the deadline given. You **MUST** notify me **AHEAD** of time if you miss any or part of a class. Unexcused absences will lead to a significant reduction in your overall grade (as well as making it difficult to complete assignments and exams). Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites here: LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa; phone number 773-508-8840, email deanofstudents@luc.edu

All assignments as well as selected printed material will be posted on Sakai for review. Selected videos may be posted on Sakai, but it is up to you to take notes on **ALL** videos and discussions in class. Materials will usually stay on Sakai for **ONE** week and will be taken down before quizzes and exams.

SCHEDULE: It is extremely important you follow the schedule as we will have field trips and other assignments that are subject to change. In many instances throughout the semester, you will be given Fridays OFF to work on assignments and the compensate for extra work the previous week.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

Week 1-Jan 16-18th. Overview and introduction.

Introduction and overview of sports broadcasting including how the media works today and how it has changed; the role of social media and its challenges; a demonstration of effective techniques and examples for discussion; the importance of concise writing and economy of words; proper story positioning and correct formatting; the elements of good production; various professional styles and how they connect to various audiences—what works and what doesn't; the importance of being correct.

Week 2 Jan. 23rd All-spots radio and semester podcast assignment. Putting together a podcast, writing and delivery. *Assignment:* Listen to one hour of the two sports stations (WMVP, WSCR) and compare the quality of the work, listenability, journalistic quality, and prepare a critique of each station.

Week 3—Jan 29th. Sports broadcast style Writing and delivering a sports feature for broadcast. Choosing topics and research. .

Week 4—Feb. 5—Super Bowl feature assignment. Putting together a feature story in broadcast style to be delivered the following Monday.

Week 5-Feb. 12th— . Field trip to the United Center. Guest speaker Curtis Baddley. Reading and writing sports promos and commercials. **Breaking sports news.** Covering a college basketball game for broadcast later in the month-- Loyola game options Feb. 24-25th. How to do a wrap on a breaking sports story

Week 5-- Feb 19th Field trip to WSCR Chicago and interview with General Manager Mitch Rosen How to get a job in sports radio and the impact of business in sports broadcasting. Prep for covering Loyola basketball game.

Week 6 Feb. 26th –Review of Loyola game coverage. Midterm quiz. No class Friday March 1st due to extra work the previous week.

Week 7 March 4-10 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Week 8 Mar 11th The talk show assignment. AI in sports broadcasting

You will participate in simulated sports talk shows with a partner, debating issues, reading breaking news copy and other ‘real time’ issues. You will also take questions from callers (classmates). Research must be done ahead of time on selected sports topics as well as research done by ‘callers’ who will ask realistic questions.

Week 10 March 18th Presenting the talk show Individual voice work

Practical lab: Advanced individual sessions with Prof. Sue Castorino to help you improve your overall vocal delivery—tone, volume, vocal melody and sound.

Week 11 March 25th Field trip to Chicago Bears training facility. Guest speaker: Scott Hagel, Vice President Chicago Bears. Covering the National Football League. Documentary: The Mysterious Case of Sidd Finch

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Week 12—April 3 Covering a live news conference Athletic Director Steve Watson. Sports jeopardy assignment.

Week 13—April 15th Sports Jeopardy. Teams vying in sports categories, research and doing a breaking sports story.

Week 14—April 17th Jeopardy review. Field trip to WGN Television. Guest speaker sports anchor Chris Boden. Techniques on the modern television studio. Blog updates due.

Week 15—April 25th In-class oral final exam and assignment.

Each person will deliver a ‘live’ comprehensive sportscast of a specific day, combining all elements of news, commentary, and commercial content. You will be assigned a specific starting time and will be ‘on the clock’. You will be videotaped for style, substance, overall delivery, accuracy, and time.

Week 16—May 2ndh—Semester project sports podcast is due.