

MCOM 2315.060
SPORTS COMMUNICATION
Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Terry L. Britt
Office hours: M 12:30-1:30 p.m., Th 2-4 p.m.,
and by appointment via Zoom
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I. Course Description:

An exploration into the theory and practice of communication across specialized contexts sports professionals face and the development of journalistic and strategic communication skills needed to succeed in them, including areas such as the press conference, sports feature content, and sports reporting.

II. Student Learning Objectives Students will be able to:

Competency: Public Speaking

1. Display and master invention, disposition, style, and delivery skills in the presentation of informative, persuasive, and invitational messages to effectively impact a given audience. (Program Learning Objective – Public Speaking)
 - a) To analyze and practice communication that creates or results from complex social organizations.
 - b) To understand, analyze and practice informative and ethical written and oral communication in forms and styles appropriate for various situations, purposes and audiences.
 - c) To identify, understand and practice various professional communication roles in sports.

Competency: Analysis and Systemic Inquiry

2. Access and analyze appropriate scholarly sources necessary to understand and analyze communication-based research questions and problems.
 - a) To identify, access, and comprehend appropriate scholarly and journalistic sources necessary to answer communication-based research questions, problems, or issues.
 - b) To utilize appropriate scholarly and journalistic sources in group discussion and analysis of topics particular to the social and cultural dimensions of sport, its participants, and its organizations.

Competency: Mediated Presentation

3. Gather and effectively communicate information to targeted audiences in a variety of mediated formats.

a) Demonstrate skills essential to media professionals and the development of content for dissemination to identifiable audiences.

b) Produce content appropriate to specific media channels, including print or digital news, audio-based media, and public relations.

III. Course Evaluation

Sports event game story or feature article	20%
Audio Podcast Feature	20%
Press Release assignment	20%
Readings and discussion board participation	15%
Final Exam	25%
TOTAL	100%
A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C=70-79% D=60-69% F=0-59%	

IV. Required Texts

A. Required:

1. Pedersen, Routledge Handbook of Sport, 2nd edition. (Free, provided by Muntz Library)

1. Associated Press Stylebook 2024-26 or AP Stylebook Online subscription

V. Assignments

A. (20%) Sports event game story or feature story (various due dates): You will cover one live UT Tyler sports event this semester (the sport and contest is up to you, but you **must** provide me at least 24-hour notice prior to the start of the event). Non-UT Tyler sports events are acceptable if you are willing to make a request for and receive a press credential for the event. Alternatively, you may, with prior approval from me, write a sports feature story on a local athlete or sports-related group or organization. In either case, you will notify me upon the completion of the event (or completion of interviews for a feature), from which time you will have 24 hours to produce and submit a 500-750 story. Work will be evaluated based on quality of content, story structure, and proper

grammar and punctuation. **This assignment addresses learning objectives 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 3(a), and 3(b).**

- B. (20%) Audio podcast feature interview (Due Sept. 28): This audio assignment will have you interview a current UT Tyler student-athlete of your choice or other sport- related interview subject. You will produce a 5-6 minute audio spotlight which will be graded on knowledge of the subject, narrative building with identification of your subject's main theme and supporting details, and expression and organization of ideas. You will also be assessed on storytelling content, your delivery and technical elements of the audio production. **This assignment addresses learning objectives 1(b), 1(c), 3(a), and 3(b).**
- C. (20%) Press release (Due Nov. 2): Select an online video of a sports press conference (announcement, pre-game or post-game) and write an original 250-300-word press release based on that press conference **This assignment addresses learning objectives 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 3(a), and 3(b).**
- D. (15%) Readings and discussion board participation: Each week, you are expected to complete the assigned readings and participate in the Canvas-based discussion board about each week's readings. Full participation will consist of posting one thoroughly written topic and posting at least one substantive response to another person's post – simple, one-sentence responses will not be counted. **This assignment group addresses learning objectives 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 2(a), and 2(b).**
- E. (25%) Final exam (Online via Canvas, Dec. 7-11.): The final exam will cover materials discussed in class, readings from throughout the semester, and terms and concepts from your media production assignments. The format of the final exam will be finalized no later than Dec. 1 but is likely to include multiple choice or true/false questions, short answer questions, and 1-2 short concept explications. I will post a study list for the final exam in mid-November. **This assignment group addresses learning objectives 1(a), 1(b), and 1(c).**

VI. Extra credit opportunities: I will offer each student in this course 5 points added to the lowest assignment grade(s) for the semester for the following:

- 1. Patriot Talon published story, video, or audio story** – For the first time in the publication's history, the Patriot Talon is moving to an all-digital format. This is an excellent time for you to get involved with student media and put your media production skills to work. You must successfully pitch a story idea to the editor-in-chief, produce the story, and have it published on the Patriot Talon website or e-newsletter.
- 2. Participation in media research project** – During the semester, there may be a media research project conducted by myself or another Department of Communication professor. To encourage participation in these projects, I will offer extra credit for documented participation prior to the week of final exams.

VII. All Assignments Are Uploaded to Canvas.

- A. Your analysis papers and other assignments will be submitted to Canvas. Deadlines are vital elements in every form of sports communication and cannot be missed. A missed deadline will result in a 10% deduction per day.

VIII. Policies

- A. **Course Withdrawal:** The last date to withdraw from Fall 2026 classes is **Friday, Oct. 30.**

- B. **Final Examination: Online via Canvas from Dec. 7-11**

- C. **Assignment Policy:**

1. Assignments will be given throughout the semester. Students are responsible for all course materials, including, but not limited to, class lectures, handouts, workbook and textbook reading assignments.
2. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
3. Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. This does not mean that merely completing all assignments guarantees the student will pass the course.
4. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class.
5. All papers must be typed or word-processed using the format required for the assignment.
6. Spelling, grammar, and structure are as important as the content of any written work.

- F. **Late Assignments:** Late assignments are discouraged and will be assessed a penalty prior to evaluation. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified.

- G. **Attendance and Tardiness Policy:** Students are expected to attend class. **If you must miss a class session due to an illness (doctor or health clinic note required), funeral of an immediate family member (copy of obituary or service program required), or university-sponsored activity, please contact me as soon as possible to inform me of your expected absence.**

Five or more absences from class, unless resulting from a prolonged illness that requires the student to remain at home, will result in the deduction of one letter grade from the final course grade. See the current UT Tyler catalog for the university's policy on student responsibility for missed classes and assignments. Be familiar with the university's drop policy. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance or university-sponsored activities should inform the instructor by the second class meeting. **Students over 15 minutes late are considered absent. If a student must be absent the day an exam or assignment deadline is scheduled, he/she must notify the instructor before class time. No make-up tests or assignment deadline extension will be allowed if the instructor is not**

given a legitimate excuse before the time of the exam or assignment deadline.

- H. **Recording of Class Sessions:** Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.
- I. **Artificial Intelligence Policy:** Artificial intelligence (AI) engines, bots, or applications may not be used on assignments without prior approval from the instructor, and only then with substantial justification and specific identification of what will be created through AI and included in the assignment submission. Under no circumstances can AI be used to deceive, significantly alter, or fabricate assignment content; violation of this policy will be treated as plagiarism and will incur penalties as allowed by university policy.

Class Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 24-30 – Read Chapters 4 and 5 in text; participate in discussion board

Due Aug. 31 – Write at least 250 words introducing yourself and your background as it concerns sports, and also include a brief description of a sports media job that would interest you.

Sept. 1 – Labor Day

Aug. 31-Sept. 6 – Overview of audio podcast assignment; Read Chapters 6 and 7 in textbook; participate in in discussion board on readings.

Sept. 7-13 – Read Chapters 8 and 9 in text; participate in discussion board on readings.

Due Sept. 13 – Select two online sports articles (two different topics) or sports columns and write a 300-500-word analysis and response to the articles. In particular, discuss the article lead paragraph, use of researched information, and any direct quotes as to their effectiveness in the article.

Sept. 14-20 – Read Chapters 11 and 12; participate in discussion board on readings.

Due Sept. 20 – Create and upload a short (3-4 min.) video of yourself explaining your personal sport culture – interests, athletic participation, favorite teams or players, people with whom you interact online or in person about sports.

Sept. 21-27 – Read Chapters 13-15; participate in discussion board on readings.

Due Sept. 27 – Audio podcast segment

Sept. 28-Oct. 4 – Read Chapters 16, 18 and 19; participate in discussion board on readings.

Due Oct. 4 – Write a short analysis (250-300 words) of a sports-based social media account of your choosing. Detail how posts are presented and how video and/or audio content enhances the account's content.

Oct. 5-11 – Read Chapters 20 and 21; participate in discussion board on readings.

Oct. 12-18 – Read Chapters 22-24; participate in discussion board on readings.

Oct. 19-25 – Read Chapters 25 and 28; participate in discussion board on readings.

Oct. 26-Nov. 1 – Read Chapters 29-31; participate in discussion board on readings.

Due Nov. 1 – Written press release due: Select an online video of a sports press conference (announcement, pre-game or post-game) and write an original 250-300-word press release based on that press conference.

Nov. 2-8 – Read Chapters 32 and 33; participate in discussion board on readings.

Nov. 9-15 – Read Chapters 34 and 35; participate in discussion board on readings.

Due Nov. 15 – Create and upload a short video (3-4 min.) in “show and tell” style about any piece of sports-related clothing, a souvenir, or memorabilia you have.

Nov. 16-22 – Read Chapter 38 plus online articles TBA; participate in discussion board on readings.

Due no later than Sept. 22 – Sports reporting articles

Nov. 23-27 – Thanksgiving break

Nov. 30-Dec. 4 – Readings TBA

Dec. 7-11 – Final exam available on Canvas; two-hour time limit once you begin the exam.

Deadline for submission of exam is 11:59 p.m., Friday, Dec. 11.

