New Course Request

Indiana University

Check Appropriate Boxes: Undergraduate credit [✓] Graduate credit [ ] Professional credit [ ]

1. School/Division: School of Journalism
2. Academic Subject Code: JOUR-J
3. Course Number: 150 (must be cleared with University Enrollment Services)
4. Instructor: Franklin, Timothy
5. Course Title: Controversy, Conflict & Characters: Introduction to Sports Journalism
   Recommended Abbreviation (Optional): Intro to Sports Journalism
   (Limited to 32 Characters including spaces)
6. First time this course is to be offered (Semester/Year): Fall 2009
7. Credit Hours: Fixed at ___3___ or Variable from ___________ to ___________
8. Is this course to be graded S-F (only)? Yes [ ] No [✓]
9. Is variable title approval being requested? Yes [ ] No [✓]
10. Course description (not to exceed 50 words) for Bulletin publication:
    This course will explore the state and practice of sports journalism through a variety of
    avenues including case studies, prominent sports journalists, executives and athletes.
    The course will provide an opportunity for students to learn the craft of sports media
    by examining some of the most controversial sports stories of this decade. And, to ask the
    questions about fairness in coverage, economics behind story, societal issues, and
    portraying characters as real people.
11. Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at ___3___ or Variable from ___________ to ___________
12. Non-Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at ___________ or Variable from ___________ to ___________
13. Estimated enrollment: ___100___ of which ___0___ percent are expected to be graduate students.
14. Frequency of scheduling: F/S semesters
15. Will this course be required for majors? Yes in sport track
16. Justification for new course: Part of proposed new sports journalism curriculum, no course like this currently exists.
17. Are the necessary reading materials currently available in the appropriate library? Yes
18. Please append a complete outline of the proposed course, and indicate instructor (if known), textbooks, and other
    materials.
19. If this course overlaps with existing courses, please explain with which courses it overlaps and whether this overlap is
    necessary, desirable, or unimportant.
20. A copy of every new course proposal must be submitted to departments, schools, or divisions in which there may be
    overlap of the new course with existing courses or areas of strong concern, with instructions that they send comments
    directly to the originating Curriculum Committee. Please append a list of departments, schools, or divisions thus
    consulted.

Submitted by:

Department Chairman/Division Director

Date ____________________________ Date ____________________________

Dean

Date ____________________________

Chancellor/Vice-President

Date ____________________________

University Enrollment Services

Approved by:

Date 2-25-09

After School/Division approval, forward the last copy (without attachments) to University Enrollment Services for initial processing, and the remaining
four copies and attachments to the Campus Chancellor or Vice-President.

UPS 724

University Enrollment Services—White; Chancellor/Vice-President—Blue; School/Division—Yellow;
Department/Division—Pink; University Enrollment Services Advance—White
JOUR-J 150
Controversy, Conflict and Characters: Intro to Sports Journalism
Indiana University at Indianapolis and Bloomington
Fall 2009
Tuesday and Thursday, Noon-1:30 p.m.
IT 152
Instructor: Timothy A. Franklin
Phone: 317-278-5335 or 812-855-9249
E-mail: timfrank@indiana.edu

1. Course Description: Sports journalism chronicles the seemingly immortal prowess of the games’ brightest stars. It trumpets the titanic showdowns between the best of its gladiators. And, journalists do it all in an attempt to feed America’s insatiable appetite for sports.

This course will explore the state and practice of sports journalism, through case studies of some of this decade’s most controversial sports stories -- from the firing of Bob Knight to baseball’s steroids scandal to the Indiana Pacers’ brawling with fans in the stands to one newspaper’s attempt to make auto racing safer by having doctors review drivers’ autopsy records.

Were sports journalists fair? Did they report these stories with context? Did they explore the larger societal issues? Did they explore the economics behind these stories? Did they portray the characters in these sagas as real people?

We will explore these issues through evaluating coverage, reading related texts and talking directly to prominent sports journalists, executives and athletes.

2. Course Objectives: This course is designed to provide an opportunity for undergraduate students to learn the craft of sports media through examining some of the most controversial sports stories of this decade.
3. Course Content and Format: This course will consist of group projects and individual analysis of the quality of sports journalism. We will begin by taking a big picture examination of the role of sports journalism in America. Then, we will break into four segments in which we will examine coverage of four controversial stories in depth. We will examine whether coverage of these stories is a metaphor for sports journalism writ large. Students will be chosen to debate the media’s performance in coverage of these stories.

4. Reading material:

Newspaper, magazine and television coverage of these stories. “Game of Shadows,” by Mark Fainaru and Lance Williams. Other materials instructor provided.

5. Methods of Evaluating Student Performance: Course grade will be based on class participation, debate participation, and a final paper analyzing coverage of one of these stories and its import on society.

6. Specific course requirements: There are four evaluated elements to this course.

A. Participation in one debates, both in the preparation and debate itself.
B. Book review: Each student will be assigned to read the Barry Bonds book.
C. Each student will be required to write a one-page paper analyzing each debate.
D. Term paper: Each student will submit a term paper 5-7 pages analyzing sports journalists’ performance in one of the four case studies.
E. Grade distribution: Debate participation, 20%; Debate papers: 20%; Book review: 20%; term paper, 60%.

F. GRADE SCALE (in percent of total possible score)

93-100 A  
73-76 C
90-92   A-   70-72   C-
87-89   B+   67-69   D+
83-86   B   63-66   D
80-82   B-   60-62   D-
77-79   C+   59 and below   F

ATTENDANCE

You are expected to attend all classes. If you miss one, discuss the circumstances with the instructor in advance. This allows you to work out how you will meet class objectives for that week without your presence in class. As a matter of firm policy, unexcused late work will not be accepted. If you will be absent from any class where work is due, you MUST contact me IN ADVANCE. We start class ON TIME. Since late arrivals disrupt class, do not be late.

DEPARTMENT WRITING STATEMENT

Writing performance and language usage proficiency are essential to the satisfactory completion of journalism courses. Moreover, writing and speaking skills are essential to the successful practice of being a media practitioner. Therefore, I will monitor writing performance and language usage and you will be graded on your writing, including spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.

SCHOOL POLICY ON DIVERSITY

The School of Journalism is committed to creating an awareness of diversity issues as they relate to society, to the workplace and to the classroom.

DISABLED STUDENT POLICIES

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of disability, or if you have any emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please discuss with me ASAP.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
It is expected that all students will adhere to University standards of honesty. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Nor will cheating of any kind. All appropriate text citations must be appropriately annotated and properly credited with in-text citations, footnotes/endnotes and bibliographic references. Discovery of any instances of academic dishonesty will be immediate grounds for failure in the class.

COMMUNICATION AND E-MAIL

I will use OnCourse extensively, including the Gradebook so you can track your success. I will post assignments and supporting documents on OnCourse for your use, in addition to any additional reading assignment I may make outside of the assigned textbook. In addition, all e-mail communication will be by standard IUPUI e-mail addresses. If you do not use yours, either start, or set up your address to automatically forward to the address you normally use.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE: Introduction to course, course objectives, projects and debate assignments. Overview of the four major case studies comprising the course. Assign reading material for the first case study.

WEEK TWO: Overview of the first case study: The media’s coverage leading up to the firing of Indiana basketball coach Bob Knight in 2000. Discussion of newspaper, magazine and television coverage of the Knight investigation and Neil Reed choking incident. A particular focus will be The Indianapolis Star’s months-long coverage.

WEEK THREE: Guest speakers discuss the coverage of the Knight investigation and firing. The speakers will include journalists involved in the coverage, as well as faculty and administration. Was the coverage balanced? Was it overly aggressive? Was the university’s investigation sufficiently open?
WEEK FOUR: A review of the guest speakers’ perspectives. The first debate between students, focusing on the coverage of the Knight firing.

WEEK FIVE: One-page papers are due reviewing the debate of the Knight coverage. Overview of our second case study: The Orlando Sentinel’s NASCAR racing safety investigation, and its pursuit of the autopsy photos of racing legend Dale Earnhardt.

WEEK SIX: A review of The Sentinel’s investigation of NASCAR drivers’ deaths. A discussion of its subsequent legal actions to obtain Earnhardt’s autopsy records and have a leading doctor determine his cause of death? Was his death preventable if NASCAR had higher safety standards? Was the paper’s investigation an invasion of privacy by the media? Which values do we hold dearest: public service journalism or a family’s right to privacy.

WEEK SEVEN: Guest speakers discuss the paper’s coverage of Earnhardt’s death and NASCAR racing safety. The speakers will include journalists involved in the coverage, a First Amendment attorney and experts from the racing community.

WEEK EIGHT: A review of the guest speakers’ perspectives. The second debate between students, focusing on the Orlando Sentinel’s coverage of NASCAR drivers’ deaths and Dale Earnhardt’s autopsy photos.

WEEK NINE: One-page papers are due reviewing the debate of The Sentinel’s coverage. Overview of our third case study: the coverage of Major League Baseball’s steroids scandal.

WEEK TEN: Book reports for “Game of Shadows” are due. A review of the newspaper, magazine, book and television coverage of the steroids scandal. Was it responsible and fair? Did journalists overuse anonymous sources? Did the coverage help purge drug abuse in the sport? Were some players’ reputations unfairly tarnished? Did the coverage pursue a greater good, or was it sensationalistic?

WEEK ELEVEN: Guest speakers discuss the coverage of baseball steroids scandal. The speakers will include journalists involved in the coverage, and players and officials from the baseball community.
WEEK TWELVE: A review of the guest speakers' perspectives. The third debate between students, focusing on sports journalists' coverage of baseball's steroids scandal.

WEEK THIRTEEN" One-page papers are due reviewing the debate on coverage of the steroids' scandal. Overview of our fourth case study: "the brawl" in Motown in the stands between members of the Indiana Pacers and fans. THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK FOURTEEN: A review of the coverage of the Detroit brawl. Did journalists unfairly portray the Pacers' players as thugs? Were the fans scrutinized as harshly as the players? Did journalists pursue the root causes behind the incident? Was there a tint of racism in the coverage? Did journalists write about the potential long-term impact this incident had on the sport?

WEEK FIFTEEN: Guest speakers discuss journalists' coverage of the brawl in Detroit. The speakers will include journalists who covered the incident and members of the Indiana Pacers' community.

WEEK SIXTEEN: A review of the guest speakers' perspectives. The fourth debate between students on coverage of the brawl in Detroit.

WEEK SEVENTEEN: Term papers analyzing one of the case studies are due. Wrap up course.