Course: ECON 150 - Sports & Economics

Instructor: Martin (Marty) B. Schmidt
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Office Hours: 12:00-13:30pm TTH and by appointment.

Course Description: As the title of the course indicates, this is a seminar course whose topic is the intersection of Sports and Economics. As a Freshman Seminar course, the course is designed to give students a chance to explore an academic area of interest through intensive reading, writing and discussion. Accordingly, most classes will be filled by discussion of the assigned reading. You will also have frequent opportunity to write. The topic for the course is to examine sports, or what many believe about sports, under the economist’s microscope.

Course Objectives: There are two primary objectives for the course. The first is to improve your writing skills. The course is designed to cultivate your talents as writers, one who can effectively communicate ideas through writing. The second is to increase your understanding of economics. Economics is a discipline whose focus is on decision making. Most (All?) of life requires choices to be made. Economics provides a framework within which the choices can be made.

Course Topics: Sports Economics crosses over a number of distinct areas of Economics. We will, for example, cover topics which fall into:

1. Industrial Organization
2. Labor Economics
3. Public Finance
4. Amateurism


Class material: The class material (reading assignments, homework, . . . ) will be placed on the course’s blackboard site. All readings, homework, and most of the material for this class will be handled through this means.

Prerequisites: None

Grade Policy: Your grade in the course will be determined by your performance on the following assignments:

- Class Attendance/Participation .............................................................. 20 points
- Topic Response Papers (3; 1-2 pages) .................................................. 30 points
- Term Paper/Presentation (6-8 pages) .................................................... 20 points

Class Participation: You will be graded on the level of participation you provide during the course. The size of the class is small and so it will not be difficult to track how much each of you adds to the discussion. Around midterm, I will provide you with an intermediate score for class participation. This will give you an idea of where you stand and allow you to make changes if necessary.

Obviously make-up participation will not be accepted.
**Response Papers:** During the term you will be required to write several response papers. The style of these short papers will not always be the same. Some will require that you write an OpEd on the weekly subject while others may require that you write a letter to your congressman. These are intended for you to work on your writing.

**Term Paper:** Finally, you will be required to write to a more formal and lengthier piece on a topic of dealing with Collegiate Athletics and the University. Topics will be chosen near the middle of the semester.

**Writing Resource Center:** The Writing Resources Center, located on the first floor of Swem Library, is a free service provided to W&K M students. Trained consultants offer individual assistance with writing, presentation, and other communication assignments across disciplines and at any stage, from generating ideas to polishing a final product. To make an appointment, visit the WRC webpage www.wm.edu/wrc.

**Important Dates:**

- Add Deadline .................................................. January 28th
- Spring Break .................................................. March 2nd – 10th
- Drop Deadline .................................................. March 15th
- Individual Presentations ......................... April 18th – 25th

**Tentative Outline:**

- **Thursday 1/17 - Introduction**


**Handout - Response Paper #1**


**Due: Response Paper # 1**


**Handout - Term Project**
• Thursday 2/21 - Library Session


• Tuesday 3/5 - Spring Break

• Thursday 3/7 - Spring Break


Handout - Response Paper #2


Due: Response Paper # 2


• Tuesday 4/2 - Economic Impact Studies ... Nationals Park

• Thursday 4/4 - Economic Impact Studies ... Baade, Robin A. "Stadiums, Professional Sports and Economic Development: Assessing the Reality," Heartland policy study, No. 62. ISSN 0889-8014

Handout - Response Paper #3


Due - Response Paper #3


• Thursday 4/18 - Individual Presentations

• Tuesday 4/23 - Individual Presentations

• Thursday 4/25 - Individual Presentations