

# ETHICAL ISSUES IN SPORT

**SPM3204 | 3 Credits | Spring 2025**  
**Class #15072 | MWF Period 3 | FLG285**

Connect with SPM



## COURSE & INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

### INSTRUCTOR

**Name:** Emily Plunkett, Ph.D.  
**Pronouns:** she/her/hers  
**Office:** Florida Gym (FLG) 312  
**Office Phone:** 352-294-1669  
**Email:** [eplunkett@ufl.edu](mailto:eplunkett@ufl.edu)

### OFFICE HOURS

**Times:** Tuesdays 9:30 am-11:30 am, Wednesdays 10:45 am-12:15 pm,  
and by appointment  
**Locations:** In office, by phone, or on Zoom (contact me for link)

### CLASS MEETING TIME/LOCATION

**Days:** Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays  
**Times:** 9:35 a.m. - 10:25 a.m.  
**Classroom:** Florida Gym (FLG) Room 285

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Offering an applied and industry-focused approach, this course explores ethical issues in sport. The course provides a theoretical overview of ethics, justice, and moral development and requires students to evaluate their own morals, values, and principles. Students will learn to identify current ethical dilemmas facing the sport management industry. Students will practice ethical decision making and moral reasoning through case studies that require students to take on the role of sport practitioners facing ethical dilemmas in various sectors of youth, college, and professional sport.

## COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

The objectives for students in the course include:

- Identify key ethical issues facing primary sectors of the modern sport industry
- Apply teleological and deontological theories to ethical dilemmas in sport
- Develop a personal philosophy of ethics, morals, and values
- Evaluate conflicting sides of ethical issues to form logical arguments
- Assemble research on relevant past ethical choices in sport when faced with an ethical decision
- Communicate rationale for ethical decisions clearly
- Utilize decision-making models and moral reasoning strategies to brainstorm solutions and responses to sport case studies and ethical issues
- Defend arguments in a respectful and persuasive manner when engaging in ethical debate

## REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

There are no required textbooks for this course, but students will be expected to read, watch, and/or listen to course materials posted to the Canvas course website.

## **NOTE TO STUDENTS**

It is important to know that while I care about your learning, I also prioritize your well-being. I may not understand all your personal experiences, nor do I need to know the details, but I recognize life can get hard, and my course is designed to enhance your knowledge, not exacerbate any hardships. With that in mind, please contact me any time throughout the semester to let me know how I can help you best succeed, or simply to start a conversation if you are unsure what you need. This extends beyond your needs for course success – if you need assistance in any other way, please reach out. If I cannot personally help, I will ensure you get connected to some of the other great resources and people on campus or in the Gainesville community.

## **COURSE WEBSITE**

All course material, readings/videos/podcasts, assignment instructions, and grades will be posted on the Canvas course website, <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>. Students will be expected to check the course website regularly and submit assignments through Canvas. While Canvas does have an app that students can use, the app may not always show the “home page” of the course website. Therefore, students are encouraged to access Canvas on a browser to ensure they see all content and alert the instructor if they are unable to find any course materials.

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION**

All course communication will either occur in class, through the course website (e.g. announcements), or through students' UFL email. Students should check their UFL email regularly and ensure they enable notifications from Canvas to receive all course communication. Students should not contact their professors on personal email accounts.

The preferred way to contact the instructor or TAs is through Canvas mail. This ensures we can respond to your message as quickly as possible. I aim to respond to all emails in 48 business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.).

---

## **COURSE & ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

### **ATTENDANCE, MAKEUP, & LATE POLICY**

Requirements for class participation and make-up work in this course are mostly consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> .

Assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. on dates indicated on the syllabus and on Canvas. Students have a 48-hour flex period afterward to submit with no late penalty. There will be zero tolerance or extensions beyond those days as all students are automatically granted two extra days to navigate any submission or technical issues.

Students will receive credit for participation in in-class activities and discussions due to the interactive nature of the course. Because of this, students are asked to alert the instructor in advance if they know they are going to be absent or late. If unanticipated and/or urgent scenarios are the cause for the lateness or absence, students are of course only asked to communicate with the instructor once the situation has settled down and it is more convenient for the student to send such a message.

The instructor understands that unexpected situations may arise throughout the semester that may impede a student's ability to participate or submit an assignment on time (even with the extra days.) In the event this occurs, students are encouraged to communicate with the instructor and/or the Dean of Students Office (who will then communicate with the instructor). The instructor is happy to assist but can't help you if unaware of the circumstances.

## COURSE CONDUCT

Students are expected to bring paper and pens/pencils to class daily (or a technological equivalent) for various in-class activities for participation credit. Phones and laptops are permitted, as students may be invited to research information for case studies and in-class activities. Of course, students are asked to primarily only utilize these devices for course purposes during class time. Failure to be actively engaged in lectures, discussions, and activities may impact students' participation grades.

In lieu of a textbook, students will be asked to review course material posted to the Canvas site prior to arriving the class throughout the semester. This may include articles, videos, and podcasts. Students are expected to fully complete the review of these prior to arriving to class and should be prepared to engage in discussion about the material.

Due to the nature of this course, questions will be asked that prompt various opinions. Students are encouraged to debate and disagree with one another, but it is crucial they remain respectful of their classmates at all times and always communicate their ideas courteously.

## GENERATIVE AI POLICY

New AI tools may be helpful for your future professional lives, and so AI may be used in this course to **aid**, not **evade**, learning. Some assignments in this course may require the explicit and intentional use of generative AI. AI may be able to generate ideas/topics for your assignments, formulate structure for your written work, and can even help you find existing research on the topic. These uses are permitted in this course. Any AI generator used to support your work must be included as a source/citation. In other words, students must give credit to AI tools whenever used, even if only to generate ideas rather than usable text or illustrations.

## HONOR CODE POLICY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obliged to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult the instructor. Please note that attempting to submit in-class activities while not in the classroom is considered an Honor Code violation and will be reported accordingly.

## ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting their Get Started page at <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter to present to the instructor outlining accommodation(s). If you need help navigating this process, or are unsure if your accommodations have been implemented, please ask the instructor for assistance.

## COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aq.ufl.edu/students/>. Students

will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

---

## **ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING**

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Detailed instructions for each assignment are available on the Canvas website.

#### **Projects – 250 points**

- **Ethical Dilemma Analysis** – 75 points – Students will identify an ethical dilemma in sport, research the dilemma, provide context of similar past ethical dilemmas, and develop arguments supporting both sides.
- **Ethics Interview** – 100 points – Students will interview a sport management professional working in the sport industry (ideally in the industry segment they are interested in pursuing) about an ethical issue faced. A reflection paper will summarize the dilemma and response and provide the student's reaction.
- **Personal Ethics Philosophy** – 75 points – After learning about different ethical theories and decision-making models, as well as discussing values, morals and principles, students will write a personal philosophy of ethics that incorporates the state of ethics in the industry segment they are interested in pursuing as a career.

#### **Quizzes & Surveys – 100 points**

- **Quizzes** – 90 points (3 X 30 points) – There will be three online quizzes throughout the semester.
- **Surveys** – 10 points (2 X 5 points) – Students will complete a pre-course survey prior to the start of the course and a post-course survey at the end of the course.

#### **Participation – 150 points**

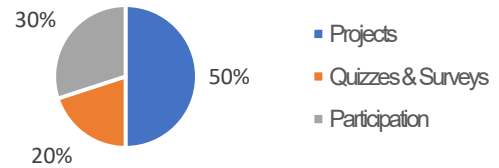
- **Case Studies** – 100 points (10x10 points) – Students will apply decision-making models and ethical theories to in-class case studies every Friday during the application-based portion of the course. These make up the largest chunk of the participation grade, so students who miss one of these are encouraged to talk to the instructor about making it up and submitting it via email.
- **In-Class Activities** – 50 points – Students will be asked to answer polls, fill out worksheets, annotate documents, participate in discussions, and/or respond to questions regularly.
- Participation is a part of this course because the class is designed to be interactive and simulate workplace scenarios around ethical dilemmas. This workload should contribute to your grade. Participation is not meant to be punitive, so communicate conflicts with the instructor. Requests to makeup missing in-class activities or case studies will not be honored after the class has begun unless they have university-approved documentation or are a result of an emergency or extreme circumstance. At maximum, students have four days after an unexcused absence to submit university-approved documentation and initiate a makeup request.

## GRADING SUMMARY

Final grades are based on the accumulation of points the student earns throughout the semester. Total points are converted to letter grades using the grading scale provided. Grades can be found on the Canvas site.

Category	Total Points	Percent of Grade
Projects	250	50%
Quizzes & Surveys	100	20%
Participation	150	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Grade Breakdown



## GRADING SCALE

Scores and feedback will be in Canvas. If you are unsure why you received a deduction/score or feel there is an error in grading, please contact me via email within one week of the grade being posted. Requests to review grades will not be accepted more than one week after a grade has been posted. I do my best to provide prompt feedback to hundreds of students in my classes by using rubrics and selected comments. However, I am always happy to discuss student work in more detail, so students who would like additional feedback are welcome to contact the instructor.

More details about UF grading policies are here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>. Requests for additional extra credit or special exceptions to these grading policies (i.e. awarding a higher letter grade than earned) can be interpreted as an honor code violation (i.e., asking for preferential treatment) and will be handled accordingly.

Letter Grade	Points Needed to Earn Each Letter Grade	Percent of Total Points Associated with Each Letter Grade	GPA Impact of Each Letter Grade
A	465-500	93-100%	4.0
A-	450-464	90-92.99%	3.67
B+	435-449	87-89.99%	3.33
B	415-434	83-86.99%	3.0
B-	400-414	80-82.99%	2.67
C+	385-399	77-79.99%	2.33
C	365-384	73-76.99%	2.0
C-	350-364	70-72.99%	1.67
D+	335-349	67-69.99%	1.33
D	315-334	63-66.99%	1.0
D-	300-314	60-62.99%	0.67
E	0-299	0-59.99%	0

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
<b>THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS</b>			
1	Jan. 13	Introduction to Sport Ethics	
	Jan. 15		
	Jan. 17		<b>Pre-Course Survey due 1/19</b>
2	Jan. 20	<i>No Class – University Holiday</i>	
	Jan. 22	Theories of Ethics & Moral Development	
	Jan. 24		
3	Jan. 27	Ethical Decision-Making & Moral Reasoning	
	Jan. 29		
	Jan. 31		
<b>APPLICATIONS TO PRACTICE</b>			
4	Feb. 3	Ethical Issues in Sport Marketing, Branding, & Sponsorship	
	Feb. 5		
	Feb. 7		<b>Case Study #1</b>
5	Feb. 10	Ethical Issues in Sport Media & Communications	
	Feb. 12		
	Feb. 14		<b>Case Study #2</b>
6	Feb. 17	Ethical Issues in Sport Finance & Sales	
	Feb. 19		
	Feb. 21		<b>Case Study #3</b>
7	Feb. 24	Ethical Issues in Athletic Academic Support Services	
	Feb. 26		
	Feb. 28		<b>Case Study #4</b>
8	March 3	Ethical Issues in Management, Leadership, & Coaching	
	March 5		
	March 7		<b>Case Study #5</b>
9	March 10	Ethical Issues in Sport Facilities, Events, & Operations	
	March 12		
	March 14		<b>Case Study #6</b>
10	March 17	<i>No Class – Spring Break</i>	
	March 19		
	March 21		
11	March 24	Ethical Issues in Sport Governance, Policy & Law	
	March 26		
	March 28		<b>Case Study #7</b>
12	March 31	Ethical Issues in College Sport	
	April 2		
	April 4		<b>Case Study #8</b>
13	April 7	Ethical Issues in Youth Sport	
	April 9		
	April 11		<b>Case Study #9</b>



14	April 14	Ethical Issues in Professional, Olympic, & International Sport <b>Case Study #10</b>	
	April 16		
	April 18		
15	April 21	Integrating Theory & Practice	
	April 23	Course Reflection	<b>Post-Course Survey due 4/23</b>
	April 25	<i>No Class – Reading Day</i>	<b>Personal Ethics Philosophy due 4/27</b>
16	April 28	<i>No Class – Exam Week</i>	
	April 30		
	May 2		

## ADDITIONAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> or 352-392-1575
- Field and Fork Food Pantry: Reitz Union North Lawn. <https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) - Student Health Care Center: 352-392-1161
- University Police Department: 352-392-1111 (911 for emergencies) or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

### ACADEMIC & CAREER RESOURCES

- UF Computing Help Desk: 352-392-4357 or <https://it.ufl.edu/helpdesk/>
- Career Connections Center: Provides career assistance and counseling in the Reitz Union. 352-392-1601 or <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- Gator Career Closet: Provides free professional attire for career fairs, interviews, and workplaces at C3 Front Desk in the Reitz Union, 1st Floor. <https://careerhub.ufl.edu/resources/career-closet/>
- Library Support: Provides various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>
- Teaching Center: Provides general study skills and tutoring in Broward Hall. 352-392-2010 or 352-392-6420, <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio: Helps brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers in 302 Tigert Hall. 352-846-1138 or <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>
- On-Line Students Complaints: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>