

Issues in Sport Law

Course Number:
SPM 6726

Day/Time:
Online

Location:
[Canvas E-learning](#)

Semester: Spring, 2025

**Instructor's Name: Dr.
John Spengler**

Email Address:
spengler@ufl.edu

Office: Remote

Office Hours: Tue. 10-11; Wed. 10-11; via email or Canvas

Course Description

This course examines various areas of law and their application to recreational, collegiate and professional sports. We will emphasize the legal problems and issues faced by professionals in sport management today. Students will utilize critical and analytical thinking to develop a basic understanding of areas of law that affect these industries.

Objectives

The objectives for the course include:

- Define with legal terms, procedures, and issues affecting the delivery of sport services.
- Describe the judicial system in the United States as it applies to sports.
- Identify and discuss litigation and legislation affecting sport organizations.
- Discuss and develop strategies aimed at reducing the probability of injuries and lawsuits surrounding sport activities.
- Analyze and evaluate the application of the law in various sport contexts.

Perequisite Knowledge and Skills

There are no prerequisites for this course. Graduate level only.

Course Materials

Yasser, et al. (2023). Sport Law for Sport Management. Carolina Academic Press. **(Required)**
ISBN: 9781531025144
ISBN (e-book): 9781531025151

Optional, suggested reading is Surviving Mahigan, a teaching novel, available in eBook or paperback at <https://www.amazon.com/Surviving-Mahigan-John-Spengler-ebook/dp/B0C94YT5V6>

Additional readings and cases will be provided by the instructor and uploaded to Canvas.

Course Communication

All communication for the course will be disseminated either through Canvas Course messaging or through your University of Florida email address. Please make sure you are professional and that use your school email address and include the following information when emailing me:

Name

Course

Respectful salutation (greeting: ex. Hello, Dear) **and valediction** (closing: Sincerely, Best)

I will only send emails to your university email address so you should be checking that regularly. **Please allow for 24 hours for a response on the weekdays (outside of office hours) and 48 hours for a response on the weekends.**

Course Policies

This course is primarily done in a combination of a lecture format and engagement exercises that examine current and relevant issues in sports. Opinions held by other students should be respected. Students are expected to complete readings and assignments for each module before class. Students are informed of the due dates for quizzes, and assignments well in advance on the syllabus and Canvas. **Therefore, extensions will not be given for engagement activities or quizzes. Late assignments will only be accepted up to 24 hours after the due date and will receive partial credit. Make-up quizzes will not be offered.** Exceptions are excused absences consistent with the [university policies](#) and at the discretion of the instructor with appropriate documentation. It is the student's responsibility to arrange to make up assignments, if allowed. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Because technical problems can arise at any time, I strongly advise that you do not wait until the last minute to turn in assignments, activities, or quizzes. I'm less sympathetic to submission issues due to procrastination.

University Honesty 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 [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor for this course.

Appropriate Use of AI Technology

The UF Honor Code strictly prohibits cheating. The use of any materials or resources prepared by another person or Entity (inclusive of generative AI tools) without the other person or Entity’s express consent or without proper attribution to the other person or Entity is considered cheating. Additionally, **the use of any materials or resources, through any medium, which the Faculty / Instructor has not given express permission to use and that may confer an academic benefit to a student, constitutes cheating.**

Recordings of Course Materials

You are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited.

Specifically, you may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited.

To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Course Grading and Requirements

***Your final grade for this course is based on several categories of assignments each weighted differently and listed below. Grading rubrics for each assignment is provided on Canvas.*

*Case Briefs (36%)

You must complete at least 4 cases briefs throughout the semester. During the first week of class, I will teach you how to brief a case. You will also be provided with written instructions which supersede any and all verbal instructions. The purpose of the case brief is to help students pull out the key components of a judicial decision and understand how courts interpret the law and arrive at their decisions. The assigned case for each case brief is also listed below. You'll notice that there are 5 cases listed for case briefs, but you must only complete four. If you choose to do all 5, your lowest case brief grade will be dropped. *Your individual case briefs must be authentic, meaning that you must write/type each without the use of AI, or other online sources that brief cases for you, or otherwise provide text that is copied and pasted. I reserve the right to question you verbally about case brief content when I suspect that a violation of this rule has occurred. Violations will be considered "cheating" per university policy and will be dealt with accordingly.*

Case Brief 1: *Benejam v. Detroit Tigers, Inc.*, 635 N.W.2d 219 (Mich. App. 2001)

Case Brief 2: *Class v. Towson*, 806 F.3d 236 (4th Cir. 2015)

Case Brief 3: *Christian Heritage Academy v. OSSAA*, 483 F.3d 1025 (10th Cir. 2007)

Case Brief 4: *Jordan v. Jewel Food Stores, Inc.*, 743 F.3d 509 (7th Cir. 2014)

Case Brief 5: *Clarett v. NFL*, 369 F.3d 124 (2nd Cir. 2004)

Quizzes (17%)

Students will take an open book/open notebook quiz (meaning access only to the required textbook or written/typed notes that you have created) on the material assigned for that module. There will be six quizzes throughout the course, but your lowest quiz grade will be dropped. *Your individual written responses must be authentic, meaning that you must write/type each response without the use of AI, or other online sources that answer questions for you, or otherwise provide text that is copied and pasted. I reserve the right to question you verbally about your responses when I suspect that a violation of this rule has occurred. Violations will be considered "cheating" per university policy and will be dealt with accordingly.*

*Midterm (Legal Reasoning Paper) (15%)

In lieu of a midterm and final exam, students will be required to write a paper based on research about a given topic covered in the course. Instructions and grading rubric can be found on Canvas.

*Graduate Final Exam Requirement: During this course, the successful completion of the Legal Reasoning Paper will fulfill a requirement of the Graduate Final Exam, which is a requirement to be

completed prior to the completion of the M.S in Sport Management degree at the University of Florida. To successfully complete this requirement, the student must earn a minimum of 80% on the assignment. A failure to meet the minimum of 80% will require the student to re-submit a paper to the instructor by the stated deadline, which will be before the end of the semester. However, the rewrite grade will not count towards the course but will count towards the successful completion of that Graduate Final Exam portion. A failure to successfully rewrite and resubmit the short paper will result in earning an “Incomplete” (I) grade for the course until the requirement has been met. (Please note: An “Incomplete” (I) grade becomes punitive to your overall GPA approximately one semester following the assigned “Incomplete” grade.)

Career Context Papers and Presentation (27%)

Students will make “presentations” (Case Briefs and Article Summaries are written products and the Final Presentation is presented verbally and visually) explaining how the different areas of law impact their desired positions in the sport industry. The presentation will be divided into the three parts listed below. Instructions and the grading rubric can be found on Canvas.

Part I: Case Briefs (written product)

Part II: Article Summaries (written product)

Part III: Legal Aspects of Sport Careers (Final Presentation – audio/visual)

Discussions (13%)

Because this is an online course, we can’t engage in traditional classroom discussions, so discussion questions are a way to provide a classroom experience online. Each student is required to make **at least 3 posts** for each discussion. An initial discussion post in response to the discussion question must be made by the first Thursday in each module (the exact date is included in each discussion prompt). It should be between 200-250 words. The remaining two discussion posts should be in response to other students’ initial discussion post. Those responses should be substantive and provide additional analysis and/or raise additional questions. Each response post should be between 150-200 words.

| Assignment | | Total Points |
|--|---|---------------------|
| <i>Quizzes (5) x 50</i> | | <i>250</i> |
| <i>Discussions (8) x 25 pts each</i> | | <i>200</i> |
| <i>Case Briefs (4) x 75 pts each</i> | | <i>300</i> |
| <i>Legal Reasoning Paper (1) x 200</i> | | <i>200</i> |
| <i>Career Context Assignments</i> | <i>Part I 75pts Part II 75pts Part III 200pts</i> | <i>350</i> |
| Total | | 1300 |

*** All written assignments are submitted through Turnitin via Canvas, unless otherwise instructed. Students are to work alone on all assignments. There is no group work in this course. Plagiarism and cheating are violations of the Student Honor Code. If a student has cheated or plagiarized, they can be given a zero for the assignment and an Honor Code Incident Report will be filed with the Dean of Students Office.**

Grading Scale and Standards

****Rounding up is completely under the discretion of the instructor. Asking them to round up your grade is not necessary or helpful. Extra credit is not offered in this course. If you have a question about a grade or a submission, you must notify me within three days after the grade has been posted. Do not take screenshots of quizzes. The instructor already has access to them.**

| Percent | Grade | Grade Points |
|-----------|-------|--------------|
| 93.0-100 | A | 4.0 |
| 92.9-90.0 | A- | 3.67 |
| 87.0-89.9 | B+ | 3.33 |
| 83.0-86.9 | B | 3.0 |
| 80.0-82.9 | B- | 2.67 |
| 77.0-79.9 | C+ | 2.33 |
| 73.0-76.9 | C | 2.0 |
| 70.0-72.9 | C- | 1.67 |
| 67.0-69.9 | D+ | 1.33 |
| 63.0-66.9 | D | 1.0 |
| 60.0-62.9 | D- | .67 |
| 0-59.9 | E | 0 |

See current UF Grading Policies for further details: [Grades and Grading Policies](#)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester to ensure full access to all accommodations.

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](#). 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/>.

U Matter, We Care

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [U Matter, We Care](#) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available

including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

- [U Matter, We Care](#): If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit the link to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- [Counseling and Wellness Center](#): Visit or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- [Student Health Care Center](#): Visit or call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need
- [University Police Department](#): Visit call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- [UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center](#): For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608

Academic Resources

- [E-learning technical support](#): Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services
- [Library Support](#): Ask for various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- [Teaching Center](#): For general study skills and tutoring
- [Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help with brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers
- [Student Complaints \(On-Campus\) or Students Complaints \(Online\)](#)

Course Schedule

Most modules will span over two weeks, and you will have at least one assignment due each week.

| Date | Readings | Assignment | Point Value & Due Date |
|-------------------------|---|--|------------------------|
| Module 1 Weeks 1 -2 | Introduction Meeting Intro Lecture and Handouts | Discussion 1: Introductions | 25 pts; Due 1/19 |
| | | Module 1 Quiz | 50 pts; Due 1/21 |
| Module 2 Weeks 2-3 | Tort Law Chapter 10 <i>Edwards v. City of Albuquerque</i> <i>Cobb v. Time, inc.</i> | Discussion 2 | 25 pts; Due 1/26 |
| | | Case Brief #1 | 75 pts; Due 1/27 |
| | | Module 2 Quiz | 50 pts; Due 2/3 |
| Module 3 Weeks 4-5 | Contract Law & Agency Law Chapter 3 (pp. 89-99 and 114-132) Chapter 8 (pp. 359-376) Force Majeur: <i>UCLA v. Under Armour</i> Chapter 9 <i>Oliver v. NCAA</i> (pp. 79) | Discussion 3 | 25 pts; Due 2/9 |
| | | Module 3 Quiz | 50 pts; Due 2/16 |
| | | Career Context Part I: Case Briefs | 75 pts; Due 2/17 |
| Module 4 Weeks 6-7 | Discrimination Chapter 5 (pp. 186-224) Chapter 12 | Discussion 4 | 25 pts; Due 2/23 |
| | | Case Brief #2 | 75 pts; Due 2/23 |
| | | Module 4 Quiz | 50 pts; Due 3/2 |
| Module 5 Weeks 8-9 | Constitutional Law Chapters 1, 2 and 5 (pp. 177-185) | Discussion 5 | 25 pts; Due 3/9 |
| | | Case Brief #3 | 75 pts; Due 3/9 |
| | | Legal Reasoning Paper | 150 pts; Due 3/16 |
| Module 6 Weeks 10-11 | Intellectual Property and International Sport Law Chapter 11 Chapter 13 | Discussion 6 | 25 pts; Due 3/23 |
| | | Module 6 Quiz | 50 pts; Due 3/30 |
| | | Case Brief #4 | 75 pts; Due 3/30 |
| Module 7 Weeks 12-13 | Antitrust Law Chapters 4 and Chapter 6 (pp. 233-250 and 280-294) <i>USFL v. NFL</i> | Discussion 7 | 25 pts; Due 4/6 |
| | | Module 7 Quiz | 50 pts; Due 4/13 |
| | | Career Context Part II: Article Summaries | 75 pts; Due 4/13 |
| Module 8 Weeks 14-16 | Labor Law Chapter 7 | Discussion 8 | 25 pts; Due 4/20 |
| | | Case Brief #5 75 pts; Due 4/20 | |
| | | Career Context Part III: Presentation | 250 pts; Due 4/22 |

