

# Advanced Sport Career Preparation

**Course Number:**

SPM 4940

**Day/Time:**

Tuesdays  
3:00-4:55 PM

**Location:**

Florida Gym 210

**Semester:**

Spring 2026

**Instructor's Name:**

Dr. Jessica Francis

**Email Address:**

[jessica.francis@ufl.edu](mailto:jessica.francis@ufl.edu)

**Phone Number:**

352-294-1660

**Office:** FLG 306**Office Hours:**

Tuesday &  
Wednesday  
afternoons, by  
appointment only.  
Use this link to  
schedule:  
<https://calendly.com/drjfrancis/15min>

## Course Description

Advanced Career Preparation is designed to equip students with the skills, knowledge, and professional insights necessary to be successful sport industry professionals. The course focuses on helping students intentionally transition from student to professional by developing core competencies related to professionalism, career readiness, and strategic career decision-making in sport.

Through guided reflection, applied activities, and targeted resources, students will refine essential professional skills such as resume and cover letter development, interviewing, networking, site assessment, and professional communication. Students will also gain a deeper understanding of industry expectations, workplace culture, and best practices that contribute to long-term success in sport organizations.

While the course includes a required applied field experience component, its primary purpose is to support students in positioning themselves competitively for internships and early career opportunities. By the end of the course, students will have completed their field experience requirement, strengthened their professional materials, practiced key success-prediction skills such as interviewing, and developed the tools needed to confidently pursue internships and future employment in the sport industry.

**UF Syllabus Policy:** <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy>

## Minimum Technical Skills

To complete your tasks in this course, you will need a basic understanding of how to operate a computer, and how to use word processing software.

## Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Develop a personalized plan to prepare for an internship, practicum, graduate school, or full-time employment.
2. Formulate clear and actionable career objectives aligned with individual strengths and interests.
3. Evaluate personal strengths and areas for growth through guided self-assessment and professional experiences.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the necessary steps and requirements for securing an internship and/or full-time employment.
5. Analyze current issues and trends in the world of work and their implications for professional practice.
6. Apply principles of professional development to enhance career readiness and workplace effectiveness.
7. Complete at least 40 hours of documented field experience in a professional organization/agency.

## Course Materials

Francis, J. (2025). *Leveling Up: Workforce Strategies for Future Sport Leaders*. Kendall Hunt (eBook). ISBN: 9798385194148

Link to eBook: <https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/leveling-workforce-strategies-future-sport-leaders>

## Course Communication

All communication for the course will be disseminated either through Canvas Course messaging, Canvas Announcements, or through your University of Florida email address.

**Email is the preferred form of communication for this course, and students should use it for all course-related questions or concerns.** 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 48 hours for a response on weekdays not including 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 attend class and complete in class and homework assignments for each module. Students are informed of the due dates for assignments well in advance through this syllabus and Canvas. **Therefore, extensions will not be given for case studies, quizzes, or the group project and no late work will be accepted.** 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.

***Additionally, because technical problems can arise at any time, I strongly advised that you do not wait until the last minute to turn in assignments, complete discussions, engagement activities, or quizzes. I am not sympathetic to issues that arise 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.

## Disability Resource Center

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. The Disability Resource Center contact information is as follows: 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

## Course Structure

Attendance will be taken during most class sessions. Students who miss **three class meetings without a University-approved excuse** will automatically fail the course. Approved absences must align with University policy and be communicated in a timely manner.

## Course Grading and Requirements

*The final grade for this course is based on several categories, each weighted differently and listed below. All deadlines can be found on the Course Schedule and within each assignment on Canvas.*

### **Attendance**

Attendance will be taken at the start of each class session. Participation is important. Students will need to engage with the topics and as such, participation and attendance points are awarded for contributing to class through discussion, group project, and case studies. Students are responsible for keeping up with the readings. All students are expected to engage actively in-class discussions and group activities, pay attention to lectures, and contribute positively to the overall class environment. Students who persist in displaying lethargic, disrespectful, or disruptive behavior may be asked to leave class, given an unexcused absence for the day, and risk losing points on the in-class activity for that day.

Regular attendance is required. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and students entering the classroom afterward will be counted as tardy. A student who comes in late is responsible for notifying the instructor after class on the same day that they did, in fact, attend class. Failure to do so will result in the student being counted as absent. **Being tardy three times without an excused absence will result in one unexcused absence.** In accordance with university policy, excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation to excuse an absence. If such documentation is not provided **within one week after returning to class**, then the absence will not be excused. It is also the student's responsibility to initiate communication with the instructor about make-up work **within one week after returning to class**. The professor may designate a make-up assignment that is different from the original. Students may not make up in-class assignments for unexcused absences. **Unexcused absences will also have a direct impact on each student's final grade:** Three or more unexcused absences will result in a failing grade (F) for the entire course.

***All written assignments are submitted through Turnitin via Canvas, unless otherwise instructed. Plagiarism and forms of cheating are violations of the Student Honor Code. If a student has 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. Please be sure to properly cite all sources directly quoted and paraphrased in each assignment using the APA style. Proper citation includes having parenthetical citations as well as a reference list. A link to APA Guidelines is included in all assignment instructions. Also, citation style guides can be found on the library's website. If you are unsure about how or whether to cite something, please ask the instructor for guidance.***

Points	Grade
940-1000	A
900-939	A-
870-899	B+
840-869	B
800-839	B-
770-799	C+
740-769	C
700-739	C-
670-699	D+
640-669	D
610-639	D-
0-609	E

Evaluation Components	Points Per Component	% of Total Grade
Resume & Cover Letter (1)	50 pts	5%
Qualtrics Dept. Surveys (Pre & Post) (2)	15 pts each = 30 pts	3%
Journal Entry (5)	30 pts each = 150 pts	15%
Discussion Boards (5)	30 pts each = 150 pts	15%
Field Work Assignment (3 parts)	1 x 20, 2 x 40 pts each = 100 pts	10%
Field Experience Application (1)	Doesn't count towards grade	Doesn't count towards grade
Individual Career Plan (1)	270 pts	27%
Attendance (10)	15 pts = 150 pts	15%
Additional Assignments (In-Class Assignments, assessments, etc.)	100 pts	10%
<b>Total =</b>	<b>1000 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Assignments

### Journals

Students will reflect on the week's course content, readings from the book, guest lectures, and class lectures. The goal of the journal entries is for students to think critically about the course material while reflecting on themselves. This is a free write response where students can comment on whatever is related to the topic of that week.

### Discussion Board Posts

Throughout the semester, you will participate in 6 discussion board posts. These discussions are designed to encourage you to reflect on and engage with the course material, as well as to interact with your peers.

- **Initial Post:** Your initial post should be a minimum of 150 words and must directly address

the prompt or reflection questions provided in the textbook. You are encouraged to draw upon the textbook reflection questions to guide your response, but your post should be an open response that reflects on what you have learned. **Initial posts are due by 11:59 PM on Fridays.**

- **Reply Post:** You are also required to reply to at least two peers' posts each week. Your reply should be a minimum of 100 words and should offer thoughtful feedback, additional insights, or ask questions that further the discussion. **Replies are due by 11:59 PM on Sundays.**

**Grading:** Grade will be based on the depth of your reflections, the relevance to the course material, and the quality of your interaction with your peers.

### **Qualtrics Pre & Post Tests – Department Surveys**

In order to provide relevant programming, curriculum, and preparation to SPM students, you will complete two surveys at the start and end of the semester. This assignment requires that you upload the screenshot of your completed survey. This is a pass/fail assignment.

### **Resume and Cover Letter**

Students will submit a resume and cover letter based on a real job description. Additionally, students will submit a screenshot of their results from the Quinncia submission. All three parts are expected to be uploaded to this assignment for grading.

### **Professional Brand and Networking Strategy Assignment**

This assignment requires students to assess their current professional reputation and evaluate strengths and gaps within their professional network. Through intentional reflection and strategic planning, students will identify actionable steps to strengthen their professional presence and build meaningful professional relationships.

### **Field Work Assignment**

One of the most valuable experiences students engage in this course are field hours. You must complete 40 total field hours in a valuable work setting related to the sport industry. This can be volunteering for an event, shadowing a sport industry professional, working a job related to sports, and more. Essentially, students will need to secure an opportunity where they can gain experience and knowledge to help them grow as future professionals. The field experience must be approved and must have a supervisor who can provide feedback on the student. Students must submit all of the following: 20 hour report (midway evaluation completed by supervisor), Student Summary Report, and the 40 hour report (final evaluation completed by supervisor).

### **Additional Assignments**

In addition to the other assignments in this course, students will have various assignments to submit throughout. Some of these are in-class assignments that must be turned in during the class period for a grade. Additionally, there are other assignments, including submitting resumes, cover letters, personality assessments, elevator pitches, and more. These additional assignments are all categorized under "Additional Assignments" and are worth 10% of the

overall grade.

### **Individual Career Plan**

Instead of a final exam, students will submit a 3-4 page paper about their individual career plan. This assignment encourages students to think critically and intentionally about their career path, their personal values, preferences, strengths and weaknesses as well as develop a practical plan for personal and professional development.

### **Attendance**

Attendance and participation are important. Students will need to engage with the topics and as such, participation points are awarded for contributing to discussions and completing in-class activities. Students are responsible for watching and keeping up with online material. All students are expected to engage actively in class discussions and group activities, pay attention to lectures, and contribute positively to the overall class environment. Students who persist in displaying lethargic, disrespectful, or disruptive behavior may be asked to leave class, given an unexcused absence for the day, and risk losing points on the in-class activity for that day.

Regular attendance is required. Attendance will be taken during class and students entering the classroom afterward will be counted as tardy. A student who comes in late is responsible for notifying the instructor after class on the same day that they did, in fact, attend class. Failure to do so will result in the student being counted as absent. **Being tardy three times will result in one unexcused absence.** In accordance with university policy, excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation to excuse an absence. If such documentation is not provided **within one week after returning to class**, then the absence will not be excused. It is also the student's responsibility to initiate communication with the instructor about make-up work **within one week after returning to class**. The professor may designate a make-up assignment that is different from the original. Students may not make up in-class assignments for unexcused absences. **Unexcused absences will also have a direct impact on each student's final grade, as follows:**

- One unexcused absence = -3%
- Two unexcused absences = -6%
- Three or more unexcused absences = a failing grade (F) for the entire course

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

**\* Grades will be posted in the CANVAS gradebook. Grades are dependent on the student's performance measured by assignments, discussion boards, and quizzes. 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 below. Rounding up is completely under the discretion of the instructor. DO NOT ASK. The grading scale is strictly enforced and unchangeable. The professor will NOT change grades at the end of the semester because the student is unhappy with their academic performance. Asking the instructor for extra credit or special exceptions to these grading policies will be interpreted as an Honor Code violation (i.e., asking for preferential treatment) and will be handled accordingly.***

***\*\*If you want to challenge a grade of an assignment, please come to the professor with evidence from the textbook or case materials to justify your grade change request. You must do so within three days after the grade has been posted. Do not take screenshots of quizzes. The instructor already has access to them.***

### Tips for Success

- Schedule "class times" for yourself. It is important to do the coursework on time each week.
- Read ALL of the material contained on the CANVAS site and the syllabus. There is a lot of helpful information that can save you time and help you meet the objectives of the course.
- Ask for help or clarification of the material if you need it.
- Do not wait to ask questions! Waiting to ask a question might cause you to miss a due date.
- Do your work well before the due dates. Sometimes things happen. If your computer goes down when you are trying to submit an assignment, you will need time to troubleshoot the problem.
- To be extra safe, back up your work to an external hard drive, thumb drive, or through a cloud service.

### 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. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals,
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals,
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluer.com>



- a. Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. 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](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [umatter.ufl.edu/](http://umatter.ufl.edu/) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit [counseling.ufl.edu/](http://counseling.ufl.edu/) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit [shcc.ufl.edu/](http://shcc.ufl.edu/).
- University Police Department: Visit [police.ufl.edu/](http://police.ufl.edu/) or 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; [ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center](http://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center).

### Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services [career.ufl.edu/](http://career.ufl.edu/)
- Library Support: [cms.uflib.ufl.edu/](http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/) ask various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420.
- General study skills and tutoring: [teachingcenter.ufl.edu/](http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/)
- Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming,

formatting, and writing papers: [writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/](https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/)

- Student Complaints (On-Campus): [sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code/student-conduct-code/](https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code/student-conduct-code/)

**OR**

Students Complaints (Online): [distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/](https://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/)

#### Disclaimer

This syllabus represents the instructor's current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor(s). The instructor(s) is only responsible for these instructional materials.