

RUTGERS - THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department
School of Management and Labor Relations • 50 Joyce Kilmer Avenue
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LABOR RELATIONS IN PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

37:575:310:01 Spring 2026

Professor Leonard C. Schiro, Esq.

Tuesdays, 5:40- 8:40 pm

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Professional and college sports have been influenced and altered in all aspects of the game by relationships between the league and the various unions representing the players. Labor unions in the MLB, NFL, NBA, NHL, as well as the WNBA have created the economic and societal landscape that currently dictate modern professional sports. This class will provide a historical basis for understanding the ebbs and flows of salaries, player safety, equity, and competitiveness in professional sports and how that has influenced amateur sports including the NCAA. The class will also provide in-depth instruction and in class applications of negotiating techniques and strategies in both a collective (union) negotiation and individual (player) negotiations setting.

GRADING:

1) mid-term exam – 33%

2) final exam- 33%

3) projects A and B-16.5 % Each

* Exceptional class participation may result in a half grade boost for your final grade. Unexcused absences may subject students to grades being lowered.

TEXT BOOKS DO NOT HAVE TO BE PURCHASED.

Playing For Dollars: Labor Relations and the Sports Business, Staudohar, Paul D, Cornell University Press, 1996. (Not required to be purchased)

Legal Bases, Baseball and the Law, Abrams, Roger I, Temple University Press (Not required to be purchased)

Gain the Edge! Negotiating To Get What You Want. Latz, Martin E. Griffin; First Edition, December 27, 2005. (Not required to be purchased)

Effective Legal Negotiation & Settlement, 6th Ed., Charles B. Craver (Not required to be purchased)

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Jan 27 Introductions & Course Overview, Labor Relations in the U.S.,
Basics in Negotiation Techniques
- Feb 3 Creation of Professional Baseball, Advent of Reserve Clause and
Effect
Class exercises of negotiations with and without reserve clause
Reading: *Legal Bases, Baseball and the Law*, Ch. 1 and 2
(You are expected to read prior to the class and engage in the
class based on the reading)
- Feb 10 In Depth Discussion Of Multiple Legal Actions To Reserve Clause
In Professional Baseball And Football;
Review Partial Documentary On Curt Flood And The Reserve
Clause
Reading: *Legal Bases, Baseball and the Law*, Ch 3 Antitrust
Creation Of Free Agency In Baseball Through Collective
Bargaining; Discussion Of Catfish Hunter And Oakland A's; Andy
Messersmith And The Dodgers And Dave McNally and the expos;
Creation Of Salary Arbitration In Baseball
- Feb 17 **Graded Project #1: Salary Arbitration; Assignment Of Player
And Teams**
**Each Student Will Be Assigned A Salary Arbitration As Either
A Team Or Individual Player Seeking A Contract. The
Exercise Requires Both Sides To Present A Salary Arbitration
Case Before The Class The Following Week And Requires
Strict Compliance With The Mandates Set Forth In The MLB
Players Association Contract And MLB. This Will Count For**

16.5% Of Your Grade. Each Presentation Will Be Done In Front of The Class And The Class Will Vote On Who Won The Arbitration. Winners Will Receive A Half Grade Boost And There Will Be No Grade Effect For Losing.

Feb 24 Presentations Of Salary Arbitrations

Mar 3 History Of The NFL And Restrictions On Free Agency Including The Rozelle Rule, Plan B Free Agency, Strikes And Lockouts;
Prep For Midterm

Mar 10 Mid-Term Examination

Mar 17 Spring Break NO CLASS

Mar 24 History Of NBA And NHL; Review And Analyze Current Collective Bargaining Agreements And Review Transition Between Rookie Contract And Free Agency with Emphasis On Restricted Free Agency In NBA And Franchise Tags In NFL (MLB Is Salary Arbitration)

Relevant Portions of the NBA Collective Bargaining Agreement and NFL Collective Bargaining Agreement. These readings will be done in class.

Mar 31 Addressing Gender Based Pay Inequity in WNBA and National Womens Soccer League

Salary Caps In Professional Sports; Review And Analyze CBA For Salary Caps In NFL, NBA, NHL, And Luxury Tax In MLB

Class Exercise On Calculating Salary Caps

Apr 7 Assignment B - Students Will Be Assigned Either A Player Or A Team In Which They Will Have To Analyze In The Roll Of Either A Player Agent Of A General Manager The Needs Of Their Client, The Potential Financial Impact, The Value Of The Player/Players, And Attempt To Negotiate And Secure A

Contract. Grades Shall Be Based On The Preparation And Assessment As Well As The Negotiating Techniques Employed, And Effort As Measured By Quality Of Those Factors And The Amount Of Teams And Or Players With Which You Attempted To Secure A Final Contract. This Will Be Done With Either In NBA Or NFL Setting As Determined By The Professor.

- Apr 14 Additional discussions regarding salary caps and in class negotiations for Project B

- Apr 21 Presentations of Project B; Final Exam Prep

- April 28 Final Exam