

**Special Topics: Human Resources Management in the Sports Industry**  
**Course Number: 37:533:356:01**  
**Rutgers University**  
**School of Management and Labor Relations**  
**Human Resources Management**  
**Spring 2026**

**Instructor:**

Ryan Greenbaum

**Class Day/Location:** Wednesdays, 10:20-1:20 pm, Tillett Hall 204

**Contact Information:**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:00-12:00 pm or by appointment  
(Zoom also available)

**Overview of the Course**

This course will provide a broad overview of the sport industry from the human resource management perspective. We will discuss the basic management skills necessary in the operation of sport organizations. Also, we will examine the social, behavioral and managerial foundations of sport management, talent acquisition, and performance evaluation in the sport industry. We will use several methods to build our knowledge base, including short lectures, in-class discussions, presentations, group activities and game simulations.

**Course Prerequisites** N/A

**Course Objectives**

By the end of the course, the students are expected to be able to:

- discuss the role of sports in historical, economic, political, & cultural perspectives.
- compare and contrast financial and management differences in sport leagues.
- evaluate effective sponsorship and activation approaches.
- analyze sports marketing and ticket sales strategies as well as the use of technology in sports advertising and exposure.

**Course Goals**

This course fulfills the following learning objectives outlined by the School of Management and Labor Relations:

*Knowledge of Theory, Practice and Application*

*IV. Theoretical Perspectives* – Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background of a particular work situation.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the practical perspectives, theories and concepts in the management field of study
- Evaluate and apply theories from social science disciplines to workplace

issues

*V. Understanding Context* – Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of, and perspectives on work
- Analyze a contemporary global issue in the management field from a multi-disciplinary perspective
- Analyze issues related to business strategies, organizational structures, and work systems
- Analyze issues related to selection, motivation, and development of talent in a global context

### **Texts and Supplementary Materials**

Required Materials: Required readings provided by professor.

This course is delivered Face-to-Face in a classroom. However, we will be utilizing the Canvas learning management system to access learning materials, post announcements, submit assignments, and communicating via the Inbox feature.

Note: Whenever anything is posted to this site, you will automatically receive a notification to your rutgers.edu email account. Checking that email account frequently is highly recommended as well.

### **Grading Policy**

The grades in this class break down as follows (maximum available points):

Attendance & Participation	50
Pre-Class Assignments	50
In-Class Assignments	100
Debate Assignments:	100
Opening Presentations	30
Jury Questions	30
Debate Participation	40
Team Analysis	200
Topical Analyses	100
Mock Draft Participation	35
Final Comparison Paper	65
Total Points	500

Letter grades will be assigned according to the standard scale. You earn your grade; do not expect a curve or extra credit assignments.

A	(90-100%)
B+	(87-89.99%)
B	(80-86.99%)
C+	(77-79.99%)
C	(70-76.99%)
D	(60-69%)
F	(Below 60%)

## **Description of Course Requirements**

### **Participation and attendance (50 points)**

Regularly attending class is important for you to do well in this class. Because of this, I will take attendance during each lecture. This will be done through class participation, utilizing the Canvas coursepage, attendance checks, and discussion participation. Every question you answer and every activity you participate in will go toward this portion of the class, so the more you come to class, the better off you will be.

Keep in mind that in order to participate, you will need to bring a cell phone, laptop, iPad or other tablet with you to class. You are not penalized if you do not have access to any of these devices, but please email me at [ryan.greenbaum@rutgers.edu](mailto:ryan.greenbaum@rutgers.edu) so we can figure something else out.

### **Pre-Class & In-Class Assignments (150 points)**

Each week, you will have assignments you will need to complete, both before class begins (typically reading an article or watching a video) and during class. The in-class assignments will be due before the end of class each week and will consist of both completion and correctness points. Pre-class work will be due before the start of class each week.

### **Team Analysis Assignment (200 points)**

The objective of this assignment is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of a sports franchise, focusing on its overall organizational strategic analysis, managerial decisions, including performance evaluation, talent acquisition, and compensation structure. Through this analysis, you will gain insights into the factors contributing to the franchise's success or challenges, and develop recommendations for improvement.

As a part of this assignment, you will research a professional sports franchise from any major sport (e.g., NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, etc.) that interests you. You will analyze the following areas:

- Managerial decisions
- Performance evaluations
- Talent Acquisition
- Compensation structure
- Overall current strategic direction and goals and recommendations for improvements

You will also complete a mock draft for your organization during an in-class event and complete an assignment based on the results of the draft.

We will break these down by topic and complete the analysis in chunks during our class time. Be sure to check Canvas for full assignment details and rubrics.

### **Debate Assignments (100 points)**

The objective of these assignments is to construct and argue a side of a debate in the sports world that mirrors the topics we will cover in class. These group debates do not have a “correct” answer and will challenge you to prove that your side of the debate is “correct” through an opening statement, question & answer session from the class, and a closing argument.

Each group will go through this process twice during the course of the semester. Professor Greenbaum will separate the groups and assign each group to a side of each debate. Be sure to check Canvas for full assignment details and rubric.

### **Expectations of Students**

1. That you feel free to express your ideas in class. To succeed in your future careers, you need to develop the ability to discuss your ideas with and in front of others. Think of this class as a safe laboratory in which you can experiment.
2. That you come prepared for class.
3. That you try to show some interest in the course.
4. That you come and speak to me if you have any problems with me, the course, or any other students.

### **Professional Communication**

I will communicate regularly via email because it is the most prominent means of communication in the workplace today. If you need to reach me, please utilize e-mail so that we have documentation and so that I can receive messages from you while I am away from the office. I will check e-mail routinely and I will hold you to the same standard. That is, I expect that you will check email and Canvas regularly for course information (this is vital as it is the only way that I can communicate with all of you in a timely manner). It is your responsibility to make sure that any messages sent from the Canvas system are reaching you. Additionally, your communications will need to be professional.

Unprofessional communications include:

- Asking questions in which the answer is readily obtained from an accessible resource, such as:
  - What is my grade? Where are the instructions? How much is this assignment worth?
- *These types of questions and those similar to them waste valuable time and will result in my not responding.* Further, you would not ask these questions in a work setting since you could readily attain the answer yourself. The working world is tough - begin creating value now by showing that you work independently to obtain answers and solve problems

Although I am generally informal and will not be offended if you use bad e-mail etiquette, you should develop the habit of addressing emails properly – managers, coworkers, businesspeople and customers that you interact with will judge you on this necessity.

Professional communication will:

1. Include the point in the subject line
2. Start with a salutation and if appropriate, greeting
3. Provide relevant information
4. Provide actionable items.

5. Be brief, but appropriate
6. Include your name/section/etc.

### **Class Policy for Late Work**

All late assignments lose 20% per 24-hour period following the due date, unless the instructor has granted prior approval for late submission of an assignment. Approval for late submissions must be obtained from the instructor in advance, or be based on a documented medical emergency.

### **University Guidelines and Resources**

#### **Academic Honesty**

The University's policy on cheating and use of copyrighted materials is enforced in this class. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy for more detail regarding these policies: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers>

All students registered for this course are asked to sign an Academic Integrity Contract (refer to the last two pages of this syllabus). You must return a signed copy to me or the course TAs and keep a copy for yourself. This contract includes detailed explanations of behavior that constitutes plagiarism and cheating. Examples of a breach of this contract with regard to this specific course include, but are not limited to: sharing your answers or copying another student's answers on examinations; sending a fellow student who did not attend class the answers to a poll to falsely indicate their presence; copying material that is not your own without providing proper documentation. In the event that this contract is breached, the punishment can range from receiving a failing grade on the assignment, to being placed on disciplinary probation or permanent expulsion from Rutgers.

#### **Students with Disabilities**

Students requesting accommodations for disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services to determine his/her Coordinator. The Coordinator will then provide documentation to the student. Upon review and approval, the student must then provide this documentation to the instructor. Please refer to the Office of Disability Services for Students for more detail regarding this policy: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. Students may make requests for accommodations: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>

#### **Counseling**

CAPS is a comprehensive mental health resource center for the campus community. They offer a variety of high-quality counseling services to Rutgers students in order to enhance both academic and personal achievement and progress. Please click on the following link to learn more about their services: <http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/services/counseling>

#### **Additional Services**

This link provides students with access to information on how to receive extra support for (a) victim and mental health services, (b) academics, and (c) financial assistance (mainly emergencies): <https://smlr.rutgers.edu/academic-programs/current-students>