

# Labor Relations and Professional Sports

## ONLINE Syllabus

Alex Sperling  
37:575:310:90

WEEK BEGINS ON MONDAYS

Office Hours: Online, by Appointment  
Email Address: [sperling.alex@gmail.com](mailto:sperling.alex@gmail.com)  
**Spring 2015**

### Course Description

This class focuses on labor relations systems in professional sports in the United States. The course will provide a basic understanding of labor relations and labor law, as well as the business of sports. We will learn the history of professional leagues, the unions and the bargaining history for the four major sports (Baseball, Hockey, Football and Basketball) and others. Students are expected to participate in group and individual activities to learn about the collective bargaining process, and the operation of the various labor agreements in regards to salaries, discipline and free agency. As an online course, material will be covered in videos, online lectures, group projects and posted discussion questions. There will be two simultaneous activities that require students to be logged in at the same time to participate, along with one "test" date. The specific dates will be set based on the student questionnaires, due during the first week.

### Equipment needed:

**USB Headset with a microphone (other types don't work well); please do not attempt to use an "open" microphone built into a personal computer because it leads to feedback that will bother other students. You also need a personal computer with broadband connection. An I-pad, other tablet, or a smart-phone will not be sufficient.**

### Covered Texts

- All texts will be assigned on eCollege. There is no textbook for this course. Texts will be drawn from a variety of sources, including the following:
  - Staudohar, Paul. *Playing for Dollars. Labor Relations and the Sports Business.* IRL Press, 1996.
  - Yost, Mark. *Tailgating, Sacks, and Salary Caps: How the NFL Became the Most Successful Sports League in History.* Kaplan Publishing, 2006.
  - Clark, Paul; Delaney, John and Frost, Ann. *Collective Bargaining in the Private Sector (LERA Research Volumes).* IRL Press, 2002.
  - Rosner, Scott and Kenneth L. Shropshire. *The Business of Sports.* Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2004.
  - Marvin Miller. *A Whole Different Ball Game: The Inside Story of the Baseball Revolution.* I.R. Dee, 2004.
  - Glenn M. Wong. *Essentials of Sports Law.* ABC-CLIO, 2009.
  - Sloane, Arthur A and Fred Witney. *Labor Relations.* Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007.
- Other texts will also be assigned.

### Course Requirements

- Participate in three synchronous online activities with members in your group  
\*\*This requires that ALL students have a USB powered-headset.
- Participate in online class activities including two online forums
- Participate in a small group presentation covering a specific labor action in sports
- Midterm and Final written exam, administered online
- Journal questions, and knowledge checks as assigned
- Regularly check your eCollege Course Site at [eCollege.Rutgers.edu](http://eCollege.Rutgers.edu). You will receive announcements from eCollege at your Rutgers e-mail address, so remember to check that account frequently. I will often assign additional readings as the course progresses.

## Policies

- Papers that exhibit significant errors of punctuation, grammar, spelling, or syntax (generally, three or more errors per page) risk failing.
- Papers and exams will be evaluated using Turnitin. Significant plagiarism risks receiving a failing grade for that assignment, the class, and other sanctions
- You are required to review and abide by the University's Policy on Academic Integrity. This can be found online at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

## Grading

Grading will focus primarily on two written exams and projects. Online discussion participation will make up the remaining portion of the grade. Grades distributions are as follows:

Student Questionnaire – 25 Points

Forum 1 - 100 Points

Forum 2 – 100 Points

Knowledge Check

Journal Question 1 – 50 Points

Journal Question 2 – 50 Points

Online Selection of Labor Presentation – 25 Points

Labor Presentation – 100 Points

Midterm Exam – 200 Points

Second Midterm Exam – 200 Points

Salary Arbitration Exercise – 150 Points

Final Student Bargaining – 250 Points

Total – 1250 points

## Schedule Weeks Begin on Monday

Week	Dates	Topics of Discussion
1	1/20 – 1/25	➤ Course Introduction ➤ Syllabus ➤ Student Questionnaire
2	1/26 – 2/1	➤ Labor Law/Collective Bargaining ➤ History of Labor ➤ Selection of Labor Presentation
3	2/2 – 2/8	➤ Baseball
4	2/9 – 2/15	➤ 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Baseball
5	2/16 – 2/22	➤ Baseball Antitrust and Collective Bargaining
6	2/23 – 3/1	➤ Football
7	3/2 – 3/8	➤ Football
8	3/9 -3/14	➤ Football
9	3/23 – 3/29	➤ Basketball
10	3/30 – 4/5	➤ Basketball
11	4/6 – 4/12	➤ MMA
12	4/13 – 4/19	➤ Hockey
13	4/20 – 4/26	➤ NASCAR and Tennis
14	4/27 – 5/3	➤ Student Bargaining