

Syllabus for ECON 3450: Sports Economics

- **Professor:** Dr. Michael Sinkey
- **e-mail:** My e-mail is msinkey@westga.edu. I post materials on D2L.
- **Class Time and Location:** ONLINE
- **Office and Office Hours:** Miller Hall 1313. Tuesday/Thursday 2-3 PM, Wednesdays Make an appointment and we'll get it done. Phone is 678.839.5166.
- **Text:** Most sports economics texts are in the \$125-\$200 range. In lieu of one of these books, I am assigning *Circling the Bases: Essays on the Challenges and Prospects of the Sports Industry* by Andrew Zimbalist. It's around \$25 on Amazon and it should be in the bookstore. Everyone is required to buy and read this book. If you should wish to read a textbook about Sports Economics, I will be lecturing using content from Rodney Fort's Sports Economics book and Michael Leeds/Peter Von Allmen's Sports Economics textbook.
- **Prerequisite:** ECON 2106. You need to know what marginal revenue, marginal cost, and supply and demand are to be successful in this class.

Class Description:

Sports are a particularly desirable venue to illustrate economic concepts. People watch sports, are familiar with the rules and how teams/individuals win, and are generally interested in the nuances associated with sports. Still, from time to time we observe occurrences in sports that may not have an obvious explanation, but can be explained using economics. Conversely, sometimes sports can provide a vessel for us to learn more about the world around us.

We will examine the traditional sports economics curriculum. We will cover some topics in stadium financing, competitive balance, marginal revenue product of players, monopoly and monopsony, labor markets and labor conflicts, franchises as profit-maximizing, etc. Other topics of this class will be related to the Zimbalist text. We will look at PEDs, Title IX, NCAA licensing in perpetuity, the Olympics, the BCS and a potential playoff system, and current methods of evaluating player performance and valuation. We will also cover betting markets and, if time permits, how sports can be used to explain economic phenomena.

Grades and Grade Distribution

This class is front-loaded. What I mean by this is that seventy percent of your grade will be determined by spring break. The reason for this is as follows—I believe that I will get higher quality work from you at the start of the semester, when you have relatively little to do, than at the end of the semester, when you have many projects to complete. Your grade will be determined by your performance on one on-campus “long quiz,” one “short quiz,” four “writing,” participation in online discussion, two question sets, and an **optional** small “project.”

The long quiz is worth twenty percent of your grade (40 points), the short quiz is worth ten percent of your grade (20 points). Each writing assignment will be worth 12.5 percent of your grade (25 points each), participation in discussion is worth five percent of your grade (10 points), and the two question sets will be worth 15 percent of your grade (15 points each). The class is out of 200 points. As of today, the grading scale will be 90+ A, 80-89.99 B, 70-79.99 C, 60-69.99 D, less than 60 F.

Guests

From time to time I may attempt to find a guest from the sports industry to offer insight to the class. If possible, the speaker will answer questions in an online forum. Respect them, show up to the forum, and treat them well.

Academic Misconduct and Class Policies

Do not cheat. I will catch you and will pursue whatever action is necessary. Cheating includes plagiarism, which includes lifting sentences from others' works, having another person write your paper for you, or failing to attribute relevant ideas to someone else. If you do not know if you are plagiarizing, come see me.

Late Work, Makeup Exams, and Class Format

I do not want to hear your reasons for why you cannot successfully turn in your work. However, it may be the case that you have a lot of stuff due in a particular week. I would rather you not hurry to get something together for my class. In lieu of this, I will accept one writing assignment up to one week late, no questions asked. There will be no penalty and no other chances for you to turn in late work.

This is an *online* class. I will post narrated slides. Material for exams will come from the narrated slides, articles, and other content that is posted online. If you should want to learn more about any topic we cover in class please let me know, and I will direct you to a wealth of literature about the topic. If you have a special interest in a topic please e-mail or call me or visit me during my office hours. If you cannot make the in-class exam time I have scheduled **contact me for distance arrangements**.

This class is *writing-intensive*. I would ideally like students' writing and analytical skills to improve during the semester. I believe this is the right class for this because presumably everyone likes sports. We will concentrate on shorter essays with defined goals to understand how to formulate coherent arguments.

Other Stuff

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the students conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions.

Tentative Class Schedule

Topic	Week
Ticket Pricing	Week 1
Sports Franchises as Profit-Maximizing	Week 1 and 2
Competitive Balance	Week 2
Writing Assignment 1 due	1/16/2015, midnight
Competitive Balance, Drafts, and Free Agency	Week 3
Sports Labor Markets	Week 3 and 4
Sports Labor Markets, Unions, and Lockouts	Week 4
Writing Assignment 2 due	1/30/2015, midnight
Competition for Franchises	Week 5
Costs/Benefits for Franchises in Cities	Week 5 and 6
Monopoly and Antitrust in Sports	Week 6
Writing Assignment 3 due	2/13/15, midnight
College Athletics	Week 7
College Athletics	Week 7 and 8
Question Set 1 due	2/20/15, midnight
College Athletics and Rankings	Week 8
In-Class Long Quiz	week of 2/25
optional project proposal due	2/27/15, midnight
Racial and Gender Discrimination	Week 9
Behavioral Economics and Sports 1	Weeks 9 and 10
Behavioral Economics and Sports 2	Weeks 9 and 10
Writing Assignment 4 due	3/10/15, midnight
no class	3/15-3/21
Sports Betting	Week 11
Game Theory and Strategy in Sports	Week 12
PEDs and Perverse Incentives	Week 12
Stats and Sports	Week 13
Stats and Sports	Week 13
Question Set 2 due	4/10/15, midnight
Optional Project due	4/15/15, midnight
topics to be announced	remaining weeks
short quiz due (online, take home)	4/21/15, midnight

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office of Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 123 Row Hall at the Student Development Center, telephone 678-839-6428, http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/index_8884.php