

ECON 216: ECONOMICS OF SPORTS

Instructor:	Yael Midnight (she/her)	Time:	TR 1:30–3:20
Email:	yeam@uw.edu	Place:	Savery Hall 131

Course Pages:

- <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1798989>

Office Hours: Office Hours times: Tuesdays 11:30–12:30, Thursdays 12:00–1:00. Location: Savery 334. I am also available by email, and if you want to schedule office hours at a different time or schedule a Zoom meeting, please just let me know.

Main References: The primary references for this course will be selected papers and book chapters made available on Canvas. Other optional readings may also be provided on Canvas. Students are also encouraged to read sports and sports economics related news throughout the term, such as in *The Seattle Times*, *The Athletic*, or from *ESPN*, and to discuss these in class.

Objectives: Students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Discuss ways that competition structure impacts athletes, fans, and the flow of money.
- Discuss the impact of public policy on athletics.
- Describe the historical evolution of the economics of sports.
- Differentiate between different models of sporting across the globe.
- Argue for or against different policies and competition structures.

Grading Policy: Grades will be determined from the following:

- Participation (10%)
- Quizzes (30%)
- Paper (30%)
- Final Exam (30%)

Quizzes: There will be four short take-home quizzes throughout the quarter, one for each of the broad topics discussed in class. These quizzes will be based on students' understanding of the reading and the economic ideas discussed in class. Each quiz will be due a week after it is assigned.

Writing Assignment: Students must complete one writing assignment during the quarter, arguing for or against a particular policy that might be introduced at a governmental or organizational level that would impact the economics of the sports. By the end of the seventh week of class, students must submit a proposal outlining the policy they wish to evaluate. The final paper, due at the end of the quarter, must be supported by evidence found by the student, and will be evaluated primarily based on the soundness of the economic arguments, with additional evaluation criteria consisting of the quality of writing and a summary of the evidence cited.

Final Exam: Students will take a final exam during finals week, covering the material discussed in class and the readings the students have completed.

Participation Policy: Students who must miss a class should let me know as early as possible. Participation in classroom discussion is a requirement of the class and is graded, so attendance at all meetings is encouraged.

Exceptions will be made for health, religious, and academic reasons, and accommodations may be possible for those with other challenges with advance notice.

No late assignments will be accepted.

Accommodations: Should you require disability accommodations, please contact Disability Resources for Students at <http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/> or 206-543-8924.

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy](#). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](#).

Academic Misconduct: All students are expected to know and to abide by the University's Academic Misconduct policies as defined at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/SGP/SPCH209.html#7> summarized at <https://depts.washington.edu/grading/pdf/AcademicResponsibility.pdf>. In particular, while you are encouraged to study with each other, all assignments for this course must be completed on one's own. Generative AI may not be used for the course's writing assignment. Failure to abide by these policies is likely to result in failing this course, and may result in further sanctions as described by the policy. If I believe you have cheated on an assignment, you will receive a "zero" grade for that assignment.

Course Outline: The class is divided into four sections, corresponding to four broad areas of economics. Each section is further divided into a number of topics that will be discussed in class, along with readings for each topic.

- Weeks 1–3. Industrial Organization
 - Week 1. Organization of sports leagues and competitions
 - Week 2. The fan experience
 - Week 3. Sports leagues and collusion
- Weeks 4–5. Public Economics
 - Week 4. Subsidizing sports, quiz 1 due
 - Week 5. Gambling and corruption
- Weeks 6–8. Labor Economics
 - Week 6. Gender inequality in sports, quiz 2 due
 - Week 7. Player performance and the value of talent, proposal due
 - Week 8. Players' unions and collective bargaining
- Weeks 9–10. Game Theory
 - Week 9. Athlete and coach optimization, quiz 3 due
 - Week 10. Gaming the system, paper due
- Final Exam Week. Final exam, quiz 4 due