

Course Name and Number

Writing 2225G-650: The Inside Track - Sports Writing

Section: 650 (online)

Instructor: Mark Kearney

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Course Description and Objectives

For decades, the sports pages have been an integral part of the daily newspaper and more recently the online versions. Sports makes up its own section in practically every daily paper on the continent, and in the past 70 years or so has spread widely into the magazine and online world. Sports TV channels are an integral part of every cable or network operation, there are countless websites devoted to sports, and the sports themselves have become multi-billion-dollar enterprises. The best sports writing combines elements of history, event coverage, biography, narrative, and opinion. This course will give you the chance to delve into some of these different genres while offering you the chance to discuss sports online regularly. You should also develop skills in the ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences. You will also develop skills in researching and writing stories, revising and editing, and meeting the deadlines that sports writing often requires. Strong emphasis will be on the practicalities of writing for different audiences and in different sub-genres of the field.

Required Text

In lieu of a text, you will be reading a variety of sources online throughout the course as indicated in the syllabus and the Brightspace site. You are also strongly encouraged to read about sports daily and to watch events on television or via streaming.

Recommended Text:

Stofer, Kathryn T. et al., 2010 *Sports Journalism: an Introduction to Reporting and Writing*, Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (I will try to put this on a two-hour reserve at Weldon Library for anyone who's interested)

Course Requirements

Covering a sports event	25%	Due Feb. 4
Sports Feature Article	40%	Due March 5
Sports column	30%	Due March 26
Online discussion/exercises/workshopping	5%	ongoing

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Attendance Policies

Obviously, we do not meet formally as a “class” in a Distance Studies course. Therefore “attendance” and participation on the Discussions on Brightspace are intertwined. Distance Studies classes are generally self-paced, so you must attend class (defined as logging into our Brightspace section) and participate by introducing yourself and posting questions and/or thoughts each week based on the given week’s set discussion topic) **at least two times weekly**. This means at least two separate posts per week (a week is defined as running from Monday to Sunday), at least one of which must be a “new” post rather than just a reply to someone else’s. Extended absences, defined as a failure to post into the Brightspace classroom for more than three weeks, must be coordinated with the instructor. **The use of racist or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated.**

Postings on the Discussions must have the following characteristics:

Must contribute something meaningful to the Discussion;
Must support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence;
Must display good grammar and organization.

Postings should also not:

Contain disrespectful or insulting language;
Be excessively long or excessively short;
Be unrelated to the week’s topic;
Say things that do not contribute anything, e.g. “I agree with you” or “nice comment.”

- I will track your postings to the discussion Board, and it will be part of your 5% Online Discussion/ Exercises/Workshopping mark indicated above. **Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements may result in your final grade in the course being reduced by up to 10% (e.g., an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72).**

Although this is an online course, you are expected to check into the BRIGHTSPACE site on a regular basis, to read the material and your fellow students’ comments, participate in online discussions and to interact online with your fellow classmates by workshopping your drafts as much as online allows you. This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for your absence discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of ‘make-up class’ in another course **will** count as non-attendance and **will** attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario **shall not require** a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student’s other scheduled class times. If you

are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is **your** choice; your absence will not be excused.