



Communication Studies Department

COM 4090-1 Sport Communication

3 Units

Fall 2025

Meeting days/times: MWF 11:00 am – 11:55 am

Meeting location: Cabrillo Hall #102

Final Exam: Wednesday, 12/17, 10:30 – 1:00 pm

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor title and name:	Dr. Johnny Capra
Phone:	619-849-2724
Email:	jcapra@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	Cabrillo Hall #207, Office Hours: M/W 1:00-2:45 pm and T/TH 9:15am-10:45am

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Catalog/Course Description: By recognizing sport as a microcosm of society, sport communication research acknowledges that communication in and through sport has the potential to reflect and shape cultural values. With this influence in mind, this course is designed to provide students with an overview of the theory, influence, and practice of communication across a variety of sport contexts. In doing so, students will learn to describe the role of communication in sport, identify the impact this communication has, and apply communicative best practices across interpersonal, organizational, and mediated sport contexts.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, students should have a knowledge of the following course learning outcomes. Specifically, each student should be able to:

- A. Apply communication theories and principles to sport environments and organizations
- A. Describe the communication dynamics within sport (e.g., fans, organizations, media)
- A. Explain the communication dynamics of identity, diversity, and politics in sport
- A. Analyze communication practices in interpersonal, organizational, and mediated contexts
- A. Analyze and understand the importance of public relations within a sports franchise
- A. Understand and evaluate current PR press releases

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3-unit class delivered over 16 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

COURSE FORMAT AND POLICIES

Required Text:

Billings, A. C., Butterworth, M. L., Lewis, N. (2025). *Communication and Sport: Surveying the Field* (5th ed.). CA: Sage.

*This course is part of our course material delivery program, **LomaBooks**. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.*

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.

*For more information about **LomaBooks**, please go: [HERE](#)*

Communication

All communication for this course will take place via Canvas where you will receive reminders and updates related to the course regularly. Your instructor will utilize the Canvas page to communicate with the class as well as post the syllabus, reading materials, assignment descriptions, rubrics, grades, and any other information related to the course. Throughout the term it is essential that you actively check your canvas email and the course canvas page in order to succeed in this course.

Email: jcapra@pointloma.edu

I check my email frequently and try my best to respond to emails within 24 hours during the workweek (Monday- Friday). If you have not received a response from me within 48 hours, then please send me a follow up email.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

COM 4090 Attendance

Students are allowed three (3) absences during the course of the semester without penalty excluding university approved absences or Covid-related absences. Each absence over these three will result in a 15-point deduction from your final grade. Please notify me at least one week prior to excused absences. You are responsible for communicating with your instructor in order to make up missed work within one calendar week of the excused absence.

Late Policy

In order to benefit from each class session and avoid interrupting the learning experience of their fellow classmates, it is important that students attend the entire class period. Tardiness exceeding 5 minutes at any point during the class period is taken note of. If a student demonstrates habitual tardiness points will be taken from their final grade.

Reading Policy: This course requires that all assigned readings are completed prior to arriving in class on the day they are due. In-class time will be used to build on the concepts covered in the readings, not to review it. Come to class prepared to any ask questions you have about the readings, and to thoughtfully analyze and apply the topics covered in the text.

Professionalism: Please be respectful of your peers and instructor at all times by adhering to the guidelines provided below.

- Use your best communication skills. Actively engage in class discussions and be professional, positive, and supportive of others.
- Be respectful to your classmates and instructor.
- Use technology strictly for notetaking and course-related reasons.
- Put laptops away during in-person student presentations.
- Ensure appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation for all completed work.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the

same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

Late assignments are not accepted in this course and should instead be submitted via Canvas on or before their assigned due date. If you are unable to attend class on the day an assignment is due for university excused reasons, communicate with your instructor and an alternative will be made available to you. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the

privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/Title-IX.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

Loma Writing Center

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual

communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

Assignments and Grading

Exams (100 points – 200 total): Exams will be comprised of multiple choice and true/false questions. There will be two exams – a midterm and a final – which will each be worth 100 points.

Initial Response Paper (50 points): To begin our discussion about sport, communication, and sports communication we will read and reflect on an important piece of sport communication scholarship. For this assignment you will read the 1992 article by Trujillo and reflect on how you approach and engage with sport. This assignment is 2-4 pages double spaced.

Critiquing Sports (50 points – 100 total): As individuals who are interested in sport, it is important for us to be able to critically analyze sporting events. For this assignment you will choose two sporting events from any sport of your choosing (e.g., NFL, MLB, NBA, WNBA, NHL, Premier League...) and use two-to-three theories or concepts from our text to analyze the event.

Press Release (100 points): This assignment will require you to locate and breakdown an actual press release formed in response to a crisis related to sport. You will choose a delicate or controversial situation that has taken place within a sports franchise and from a researcher's standpoint, analyze this press release for the public. You will be tasked with applying the information from the text to this press release in an effort to gain a deeper understanding of the organization/athletes' techniques used to deal with crisis.

Presentation (50 points): You will give a presentation at the end of the year detailing one of your papers from throughout term. A detailed rubric will be provided in class.

Quizzes, Homework, Synchronous and Asynchronous Activities (100 points): During the course of our class, we will have a variety of quizzes, homework assignments, and synchronous and asynchronous activities for which you will receive points.

Midterm Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Initial Response Paper	50 points
Critiquing Sports (x2 @ 50pts.)	100 points
Press Release	100 points
Presentation	50 points
Quizzes, Homework, In-class Activities, Participation	100 points
Total Points Possible: 650	

Grading Scale: Grades are calculated by dividing the number of points you earn by the total points available (650). The grading scale is as follows:

A	93-100%	C	73-76%	D-	60-62%
A-	90-92%	C+	77-79%	F	59% and below
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%		
B	83-86%	D+	67-69%		
B-	80-82%	D	63-66%		

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE:

Below you will find a detailed course outline. Please keep in mind that this is a living document that may change at any time. It is your responsibility to actively and regularly check the course canvas page, as well as your canvas email to stay up to date on any changes made to this outline.

Week	Dates	Topic/Activity	Reading / Assignment Due
1	9/3	Intro / Syllabus	
	9/5	Introduction to Communication and Sport	<i>Chp.1</i>
2	9/8	How do We approach and engage with Sport?	<i>Trujillo, 1992 (on canvas)</i>
	9/10	Sport Communication Research	
	9/12		
3	9/15	Theoretical Approaches to Communication and Sport	<i>Chp.2</i>
	9/17	Mediated Nature of Sport	
	9/19	Public Relations and Sport	Initial Response Paper
4	9/22	Legacy Media Interactions	<i>Chp.5</i>
	9/24		
	9/26		
5	9/29	Social and User-Generated Media Interactions	<i>Chp.6</i>
	10/1		
	10/3		

6	10/6	Sports Storytelling	<i>Chp.7</i>
	10/8	Sport and Mythology	<i>Chp.8</i>
	10/10		Critiquing Sport #1
7	10/13	Review	
	10/15	Midterm Exam	
	10/17	Media Representations of Sports Identity	<i>Chp.9</i>
8	10/20	Performance of Sports Identity	<i>Chp.10</i>
	10/22		
	10/24	No Class- Fall Break!	
9	10/27	Interpersonal Interactions	<i>Chp.3</i>
	10/29		
	10/31		
10	11/3	Small Group and Team Interactions	<i>Chp.4</i>
	11/5		
	11/7		Critiquing Sport #2
11	11/10	Sport and Politics	<i>Chp.11</i>
	11/12	Sport and National Identity	<i>Chp.12</i>
	11/14		
12	11/17	Reputation and Crisis Management in Sport	<i>Chp.14</i>
	11/19		
	11/21		
13	11/24	Commercialism and Sport	<i>Chp.13</i>
	11/26	No Class-Thanksgiving!	
	11/28	No Class-Thanksgiving!	Press Release
14	12/1	Sports Gaming	<i>Chp.15</i>
	12/3		
	12/5		Presentation Slides
15	12/8	Group Presentations	
	12/10	Group Presentations	
	12/12	Review Day	
16	12/17	Final Exam	Wednesday, 12/17, 10:30 – 1:00 pm