



**Course Requirements:** This course is very rigorous and demanding. You are expected to work hard, actively participate, ask questions when you have any doubts, and perform to the very best of your ability. Still, the purpose of this course is to teach you something about the economics of sports, not to destroy your GPA.

The grading breakdown follows: (percentage of final grade)

Midterm #1 ( <b>September 26<sup>th</sup> @ 8:00am</b> )	22.5%
Midterm #2 ( <b>October 31<sup>st</sup> @ 8:00am</b> )	22.5%
Group Project	15%
Data Assignments (2 total)	5%
Cumulative Final Exam ( <b>December 12<sup>th</sup> @ 8:00am</b> )	35%

**Exam Format:** Each exam will cover material presented in class, as well as readings and assignments scheduled outside of class. The exam format will be provided in the class prior to a given exam. You should bring your UNC ID, and a “basic” calculator (for a description see the “Required Materials” section of the syllabus) with you to each exam.

**Missed Exams:** There are no make-up midterm examinations. You are forewarned well in advance to properly schedule your time and make proper arrangements for other potential conflicts. If you must miss a midterm exam, say due to illness, you may be permitted to transfer the missed credit to the final examination. To qualify for a transfer of credit, you must contact me **before** the start of the missed midterm examination and provide me with an acceptable explanation. You are required to support your explanation with documentation within 2 business days of the exam. For example, if you miss an exam on a Thursday, then you will have until Monday to provide your documentation. If the explanation and documentation are approved by me, then the weight of the midterm will be placed on the final exam. If you miss both midterm exams, then your final exam will only carry a weight of 70%, i.e. a 10 percentage point penalty applies.

**Data Assignments:** Two data assignments will be given during the semester. My expectations and requirements will be explicitly stated in each assignment. The assignments can be completed using either Excel or a statistical package (e.g. STATA).

**Group Project:** I will group you into teams and ask you to do bi-weekly assignments on a designated league. Some elements of the project will be individual and other parts will be based on the group’s effort. The overall project will be a combination of research, analysis, and presentation (both oral and written). You will be asked to assess the contributions of each member and, if necessary, free-riding members will receive partial or no credit. The initial assignment will be distributed and discussed in class on Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>. It’s imperative that you attend class that day or risk losing points.

**Grading Scale:** I will use the following scale, which is based on a percentage of total possible points, to assign your final grade.

A	= 93-100	C	= 73-76
A-	= 90-92	C-	= 70-72
B+	= 87-89	D+	= 67-69
B	= 83-86	D	= 60-66
B-	= 80-82	F	< 60
C+	= 77-79		

Letter grades are computed from the total points earned during the semester and assigned based on the scale given above. In previous semesters roughly 20% of the class earned in the A-range and 35% of the class earned in the B-range. Although the grade distribution may change this semester, the past scores should give you a sense of my grading standards.

**Academic Integrity:** All students are expected to adhere to the Honor Code (<http://instrument.unc.edu>). Any violation will result in an **F** for the course, and other sanctions may apply.

### **Other Important Policies:**

**Attendance Policy:** Regular attendance is strongly recommended. You are responsible for any announcements that you may have missed if you choose not to attend class or if you cannot attend class. You should get the missed notes/announcements from one of your peers. Discuss any questions you have on the content with a classmate or stop by during my scheduled office hours. It is expected that you will respect your peers and the instructor with appropriate behavior while in class and that you will arrive to class on time. **Students who are not willing to attend regularly should drop the course.**

In the event that you must miss or anticipate missing at least **3 consecutive classes** because of an *extenuating circumstance*, notify me and the Dean of Students immediately. Upon receipt of notification from the Dean of Students and your return to campus, please contact me and we will discuss any adjustments to your course grade calculation. Reminder: read the email etiquette section for when you should/should not contact your professor.

**Laptop/Cell-Phone Policy:** You should refrain from reading the paper, browsing the web, texting, playing games, etc. during class time. If you are expecting an important phone call (job interview, family illness, etc.), please notify me before class then sit in the back of the class near the exit. The only exception to this rule is if I ask you to bring your laptops to class so we can work on a data assignment or the group project.

**Contacts and Email Policy:** I prefer that you address all questions/concerns to me in person. However, if you must email me, then please use proper email etiquette (see <http://www.usm.edu/chemistry-biochemistry/e-mail-etiquette-adapted-academia> for details).

**Regrade Requests:** Requests for a regrade must adhere to the following rules:

1. *All Regrade Requests must be made within 1 week of the day on which the grade was posted.* There are no exceptions to this rule. For instance, if you find that your midterm grade is incorrect and notify me 2 weeks after it was posted, no Regrade Requests will be accepted.
2. If you feel that any MC questions and/or written work was graded incorrectly, please fill out the Regrade Request Form found in Sakai. If applicable, staple the Request form to your assignment and hand it in at the start of class. Please note that there is an element of subjectivity in grading written work. If your Regrade Request is of a subjective nature ("I think I deserve 10 points and you only gave me 9"), your Request will likely be rejected.
3. If you submit a Regrade Request, I reserve the right to regrade your entire assignment, which could potentially lower your grade.

If your Regrade Request is rejected and you disagree with the explanation, come see me during my office hours to appeal your Request. Please note the odds are fairly low that I will overturn the original grade, but it is possible if there is a relatively severe misunderstanding.

### **Tips for Being Successful in ECON 485**

- Prepare for each lecture by completing all assigned readings and preparing any related discussion questions.
- Review the material immediately after it is presented and bring any questions you may have to my attention. I will dedicate the first few minutes of every class to answering questions.
- Do the suggested problems at the end of each chapter. The answers to the questions from Blair are available on Sakai and the answers from Kesenne can be found in the back of the book.
- If you find that you are having particular difficulty with any of the material in this course, then get help immediately. *Do not let it build up.* It is expected that you will have completed the readings and reviewed your notes BEFORE a scheduled meeting. Many students will wait until the last minute to get help and put extraordinary demands on my time. I have weekly office hours so please take advantage of them. It is impossible for me to drop everything and dedicate all of my time before an exam to procrastinating students.

**Calendar and Reading List:** You are expected to have all assigned readings completed before the material is presented. The entire chapter is to be read unless otherwise noted. Please expect to have additional readings throughout the semester.

I. Introduction to Sports Leagues and Organizations

- Blair, Chapters 2 and 3
- Kesenne, Chapter 1
- Stephen Morrow and Catherine Idle, 2008. "The Challenge of Modernizing a Professional Sport: A Case Study of Professional Road Cycling," in International Cases in the Business of Sport, edited by Chadwick and Arthur, pp. 45-59.
- Stefan Szymanski, 2012. "Economics of League Design," in The Oxford Handbook of Sports Economics: The Economics of Sports Volume 1, edited by Kahane and Shmanski.
- Andrew Zimbalist, 2003. "Sport as Business," *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 503-511.
- Andrew Zimbalist. "A Miami Fish Story," *New York Times*, October 18, 1998.

II. Defining and Measuring Competitive Balance

- Blair, Chapter 4 (Sections 1-4)
- Kesenne, Chapter 2 (pp. 8-16)
- Brad R. Humphreys, 2002. "Alternative Measures of Competitive Balance in Sports Leagues," *Journal of Sports Economics*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 133-148.

III. Ticket Pricing Decisions

- Blair, Chapter 5
- Kesenne, Chapter 2 (pp. 16-19)

IV. Market for Sports Broadcasting Rights

- Blair, Chapter 7
- Kesenne, Chapter 2 (pp. 19 - 28)

V. Player Labor Market

- Blair, Chapter 17 (pp. 338-343)
- Kesenne, Chapter 3 (pp. 30 – 42; pp. 49-57; and skim remarks on pp. 42-47)

**Midterm Exam 1 is on September 26<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am**

VI. Restrictions on Player Mobility

- Blair, Chapter 17 (pp. 343-349)
- Kesenne, Chapter 5 (pp. 84 – 93)

VII. Estimating MRP, Measuring Monopsony Power, and the Efficiency of the Labor Market

- Blair, Chapter 17 (pp. 350-354)
- Jahn K. Hakes and Raymond D. Sauer, 2006. "An Economic Evaluation of the *Moneyball* Hypothesis," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 173-185.

VIII. Impact of League Policy on Competitive Balance

- Kesenne, Chapter 6 (pp. 101-114; skim remarks), Chapter 7 (ignore "two-decision variable model")

IX. Sports Leagues and Antitrust Policy

- Blair, Chapter 9
- Liptak, A., & Belson, K. (2010, May 24). N.F.L. Fails in Its Request for Antitrust Immunity. *The New York Times*.

**Midterm Exam 2 is on October 31<sup>st</sup> at 8:00am**

- X. NCAA: What is It's Objective?; and the BCS: Origins and Motivation
  - Blair, Chapter 18
  - Lawrence M. Kahn, 2007. "Cartel Behavior and Amateurism in College Sports," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 209-219.
  - BCS Reading (to be assigned later)
- XI. Discrimination and Gender Equity
  - Blair, Chapter 25
- XII. Rank Order Tournaments: Structure, Purpose and Efficiency
  - Bernd Frick and Rob Simmons, 2007. "The Allocation of Rewards in Athletic Contests," Lancaster University Management School Working Paper.
  - Jeremy T. Schwartz, Justin P. Isaacs, and Anthony M. Carilli, 2007. "To Race or Place?: An Empirical Investigation of the Efficiency of the NASCAR Points Competition," *Journal of Sports Economics*, Vol. 8, No. 6, pp. 633-641.
- XIII. Cheating, PEDs, and Misconduct in Sports
  - Blair, Chapters 11, 12, and 13
  - Kjetil K. Haugen, 2004. "The Performance-Enhancing Drug Game," *Journal of Sports Economics*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 67-75.
- XIV. Facilities, Franchises, and Public Policy
  - Blair, Chapters 14, 15 and 16

**Final Exam is on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am**

**Disclaimer:** Although the instructor intends to follow this syllabus as closely as possible, there may be times when deviations from the material presented herein are necessary.