

EC310F – Sports Economics – Winter 2020

Course Description

The sports industry offers significant scope for the application of economic analysis. We will discuss a wide variety of economic concepts in the context of sports, including game theory, pricing strategies, labour market outcomes and public finance.

This course is designed as a hybrid course, with a significant amount of online material and a required lab component. It is intended that students will complete the online material before attending the lab in order to ensure that the in-class discussion is useful.

This is the first time that this course has been offered at Laurier. As such, there may be some modification to the course design as we go through the term. If you have questions or concerns, please let me know – the intent of any modifications will be to improve the learning environment without negatively affecting any students in the course.

For context below, the standard 12-week term is divided as follows:

- A) Introduction – January 6th
- B) Weeks 1-4 – lab/lecture on January 13th to February 3rd
- C) Midterm – February 10th
- D) Weeks 5-9 – lab/lecture on February 24th to March 23rd
- E) Conclusion – March 30th

Course and Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Ken Jackson

Office: LH3008 – Office hours will be posted on MyLearningSpace

Phone: 519-884-0710 x.2316 (definitely not your best option)

E-mail: kjackson@wlu.ca (a much better option)

Course Website

- Announcements, lecture slides, and grading will all be posted to My Learning Space, <http://mylearningspace.wlu.ca>. You are expected to regularly log-in to My Learning Space to access course material, complete quizzes, and check for announcements.
- As noted below, a number of required items of assessment are offered through the textbook publisher's online system (LaunchPad).
- If you need assistance with My Learning Space, please send an e-mail to myls@wlu.ca.

Course Textbook and Assessment

Required Textbook

The required textbook for the course is *Economics of Sports*, by David Berri. The textbook may be purchased through the WLU bookstore bundled with access to the McMillan LaunchPad system that will allow you to complete the required LaunchPad homework assignments.

Assessment	Schedule (tentative)	Grading
MyLearningSpace Quizzes	Due Fridays by 5pm, 1pt each	Total points out of 40, 20%
LaunchPad Assignments	Due Mondays by 5pm, 3 pts each	
In-Class Activities	Completed in lectures, 2pts each	
Media Analysis	Up to 4 pts each	Total points out of 10, 10%
Midterm Test	Monday, February 10 th (in-class)	20%
Literature Review	5pm, Friday, April 3 rd	15%
Final Exam	April	35%

Minor Assessment Items

In this course, students are expected to complete a variety of activities prior to the lab each week. For most weeks, there will be a MyLearningSpace quiz based on background material from an introductory economics course such as EC120, a LaunchPad homework assignment based on the slightly higher level economic analysis required in the course, and in-class questions directly related to sports content. For each of the 9 primary content weeks in the course, there are 6 points available, for a total of 54 points. Each student will end up with a grade out of 40, which is worth 20% of your course grade.

MyLearningSpace Quizzes

Starting with the content for week 1, there will be a MyLearningSpace quiz for each week in the course. These are due to be completed each Friday by 5pm – the MyLearningSpace quiz on Game Theory is due by Friday, January 10th at 5pm, giving you the weekend to complete the remaining content.

LaunchPad – Homework

For each week, there is a homework assignment assigned through LaunchPad. Each assignment may be repeated as often as you like, with your best grade counting for up to 3 points in the minor assessment grades in the course.

The first assignment, for week 1, is due at 6pm on January 13th, with all subsequent deadlines posted to LaunchPad.

In-Class Activities

Each week will include a short quiz or activity that must be completed in class and submitted for marks. These will generally consist of a short-answer question connected to the weekly homework assignment or similar content. Submissions are graded out of 2 points.

Media Analysis

The sports industry is a popular topic in the news media. One task for students will be to analyze media reporting within the context of the economics of sports. Alone or in small groups, students are responsible for submitting short reviews on media content. Each review should be 400-500 words in length, providing a short summary of the article and a critical discussion of the related economic concepts.

Media content can come in a variety of forms (written, video, audio) - any of these are acceptable for review. Only one person or group may submit a review of a specific media item – this will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis using the Discussion Board to “claim” an article. When it is complete, the review must be submitted via the DropBox on MyLearningSpace, and must come with some way for me to access the content – for example, if an article is behind a paywall, the content could be provided through screenshots (I will argue that this falls within fair-use in copyright legislation).

Reviews may be submitted individually or in groups. Reviews are graded out of 4 points, with two adjustments made to the grades:

- 1) An increase of 1 point if the review is submitted no later than 5pm on the day that the topic is discussed in class. In this case, the review must highlight the link between the article and the class content.
- 2) A decrease of 1 point for each additional group member. A joint submission by two people that would earn the maximum possible 5 points would result in each receiving 4 points. The same submission by a group of 3 would result in each receiving 3 points.

Students may submit as many reviews as they would like, and you may change group members as often as you would like. No reviews will be accepted after the final lecture on March 30th. Each student will end the term with a grade out of 10 points, worth 10% of your total grade in the course.

Literature Review

Each student is required to complete a short literature review on a Sports Economics topic of their choice.

Topic proposals must be submitted to the MyLearningSpace Dropbox by 11:59pm on Friday, February 7th. They must include a research question, and a short explanation of why the question is of interest to the student. Students that do not submit a meaningful proposal by the deadline will have their eventual paper grade reduced by 2 points.

The review itself should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words, and must highlight critical **academic and non-academic** sources on your chosen topic, along with a discussion of the key economic concepts involved. A literature review is not simply a list of relevant articles – it is your responsibility to identify key similarities and differences across sources, along with explanations for those where possible.

Final submission of the literature review is required by 5pm on Friday, April 3rd, and will be graded out of 15, and is worth 15% of your overall grade.

Mid-term Test and the Final Exam

There will be a midterm test to be written in-class on Monday, February 10th. Students will have 2 hours to complete the test, which may include multiple choice, short answer and short essay questions. It is worth 20% of your overall grade. Students that miss the midterm test will be required to write a makeup test, date, time and format to be determined.

The final exam is scheduled by the registrar during the April final exam period. Students are reminded to not make any vacation plans during the exam period. The final exam will be 2 and a ½ hours, and may include multiple choice, short answer and short essay questions. It is worth 35% of your overall grade.

While I will provide more information leading up to both tests, the LaunchPad assignments and in-class questions will be similar in format and content to the multiple choice and short answer questions on the midterm and final. When I say “short essay”, I mean questions where I am looking for answers of 3-4 paragraphs.

Detailed Course Schedule

This is clearly incomplete at the moment. Once it is completed, it is still subject to change as necessary.

Introduction – January 6th

- a) Class Schedule – all students, 7 to 9:50pm
- b) Szymanski, The Assessment: The Economics of Sport, Oxford Review of Economic Papers, 2003.

Week 1 – Game Theory and In-Game Situations

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, January 10th, 5pm
- b) Gibbons, An Introduction to Applicable Game Theory, Journal of Economic Perspectives, 1997. (pages 127-137 are most relevant for the course)
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, January 13th, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, January 13th:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Week 2 – Sports Organizations

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, January 17th, 5pm
- b) Berri chapter 3
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, January 20th, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, January 20th:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Week 3 – Ticket Pricing

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, January 24th, 5pm
- b) Berri chapter 1
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, January 27th, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, January 27th:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Week 4 – A League is a Cartel

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, January 31st, 5pm
- b) Berri chapter 4
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, February 3rd, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, February 3rd:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Midterm – Monday, February 10th – 7:00pm to 9:00pm**Week 5 – Public Finance and Sports, part 1**

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Monday, February 24th, 5pm
- b) Berri chapter 10
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, February 24th, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, February 24th:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Week 6 – Public Finance and Sports, part 2

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, February 28th, 5pm
- b) Berri chapter 10.5
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, March 2nd, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, March 2nd:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Week 7 – Labour Markets in Sports

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, March 6th, 5pm
- b) Berri chapters 5 and 6
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, March 9th, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, March 9th:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Week 8 – Labour Market Issues – Unions, Discrimination, etc.

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, March 13th, 5pm
- b) Berri chapters 7 and 8
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, March 16th, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, March 16th:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Week 9 – Economics of University Athletics

- a) MyLearningSpace quiz, due Friday, March 20th, 5pm
- b) Berri chapter 9
- c) LaunchPad assignment, due Monday, March 23rd, 5pm
- d) Lab Schedule for Monday, March 23rd:
 - a. Sport 1 – 7 to 7:50pm
 - b. Sport 2 – 8 to 8:50pm
 - c. Sport 3 – 9 to 9:50pm

Conclusion – Monday, March 30th

- a) Class Schedule – all students, 7 to 9:50pm

Final Exam – Scheduled during the Exam Period

Course Policies and Procedures

Missing/Late Assessments

Due to the timely nature of the minor items of assessment, late submissions will not be accepted for any reason. As issues may arise over the term, the grading structure allows for students to miss some assessments without having their overall grade affected.

Media reviews will not be accepted after 5pm on March 30th.

Late submissions of the literature review will be penalized with a 3-point deduction (out of 15) per day or partial day late.

Missed Midterm

Students that will miss the midterm due to a religious commitment may submit a petition to the Lazaridis School Petitions Office, LH2058, to write the midterm at an alternate time. To be eligible to write the midterm at an alternate time, this petition must be submitted within a week of the start of the term.

Students that will miss a midterm test due to their participation in varsity athletics must contact their coach, who may arrange proctoring of the test at an alternate time. Varsity athletes at the University of Waterloo should have their coach contact Helen Kaluzny in the Economics Office at WLU. To be eligible to write a deferred exam, this request must be submitted within a week of the start of the term, or as soon as practical given schedule changes.

Students that miss a midterm test for any other reason, **must** complete the Missed Midterm form on MyLearningSpace. Students that miss the midterm for an acceptable reason are required to complete the makeup midterm (or earn a zero on this element of the course).

Deferred Final Examinations

Students who miss **the final exam** for an acceptable reason may apply to write a deferred exam (normally in late January). Petitions, accompanied by supporting documentation, should be submitted to Ms. Eileen Morouny, in the Lazaridis School Petitions Office (LH2058). If you miss the exam due to illness, you will need medical documentation on the date of the exam, or as close to that date as possible. Students are strongly urged not to make any commitments (ie. vacation/trips home) during the examination period. Students are required to be available for examinations during the examination periods of all terms in which they register.

Accessible Learning

Students with disabilities or other special needs are advised to contact Laurier's Accessible Learning Centre for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.

Academic Misconduct

You are reminded that the University will levy sanctions on students who are found to have committed, or have attempted to commit, acts of academic or research misconduct. You are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing such offenses, and to take responsibility for your academic actions. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalty, please consult the relevant section of the Undergraduate Academic Calendar. If you need clarification of aspects of University policy on Academic and Research Misconduct, please consult your instructor.

Policy on Technology Use

Students may use computers and other devices during class as long as they are using them for course-related reasons. Everyone is expected to be considerate of those around them, and students with larger devices are asked to sit at the sides or back of the room where you will not block other students. Students that are disruptive to others may be asked to either put their device away, or leave the classroom.

Intellectual Property

The educational materials developed for this course, including, but not limited to, lecture notes and slides, handout materials, examinations and assignments, and any materials posted to MyLearningSpace, are the intellectual property of the course instructor. These materials have been developed for student use only and they are not intended for wider dissemination and/or communication outside of a given course. Posting or providing unauthorized audio, video, or textual material of lecture content to third-party websites violates an instructor's intellectual property rights, and the Canadian Copyright Act. Recording lectures in any way is prohibited in this course unless specific permission has been granted by the instructor. Failure to follow these instructions may be in contravention of the university's Code of Student Conduct and/or Code of Academic Conduct, and will result in appropriate penalties. Participation in this course constitutes an agreement by all parties to abide by the relevant University Policies, and to respect the intellectual property of others during and after their association with Wilfrid Laurier University.