Sport Media and Culture, BA

The sport media and culture major examines the complex and dynamic relationship between sporting organizations and media companies, and how this relationship shapes the cultures of sports in the U.S. and beyond. Students take courses in the area of sport and media and the area of sport and culture in order to gain an understanding of how cultural meanings are shaped and contested through sport. At the end of the program, students will complete a capstone to direct this knowledge toward their own personal interests and career goals.

Coursework provides students with the critical skills necessary to understand sport media’s relationships to economics, politics, and education. A focus on race, class, gender, and sexuality in sports is central to the major.

Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the BA in sport media and culture learn how to study sports critically and understand their complex relationships with cultural meanings. This entails an understanding of:

- contemporary U.S. sports' relationship with media and how this relationship intersects with other institutions and contexts including politics and the economy;
- the diversity of sporting experiences in the U.S., including how opportunities for and the nature of participation are influenced by social class, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, and ability/disability; as well as how that diversity is represented in sport media;
- the historical and cultural forces that shape the relationship between U.S. sport and media from the 19th century to the present;
- U.S. sport media's relationship to global sport media and the historical, political, and social factors that impact it; and
- the theories and research methods that allow students to forge their own well-informed and clearly communicated critical studies of sport media.

Requirements

The Bachelor of Arts with a major in sport media and culture requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including 33 s.h. in sport media and culture courses, plus a second major, certificate, or minor (see the section titled “Second Area of Study”). Students must maintain a grade-point average of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major. At least 24 s.h. of credit for the major must be earned at the University of Iowa. Students also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core.

Students may count a maximum of 56 s.h. of sport media and culture courses (prefix SMC) toward the 120 s.h. required for the degree. Sport media and culture majors who also complete another major, minor, or certificate offered by the School of Journalism and Mass Communication must earn a minimum of 56 s.h. from courses offered outside of the school.

The BA with a major in sport media and culture requires the following coursework.

Foundation Courses

Course # Title Hours
Both of these:
SMC:1050 Sport and the Media 3
SPST:1074 Inequality in American Sport 3

Sport and Media Courses

In addition to the following courses, students with a second major in journalism and mass communication may take JMC:3413 Sports Writing or JMC:3421 Sport Content Marketing as one of the two courses numbered 3000 or above.

Course # Title Hours
Two of these:
SMC:2084 Sport and Film 3
SMC:2101 Digital Media and the Future of Sport 3
SMC:2400 Sport Media and Culture Experience 3
SMC:2500 Sport and Technology 3

Sport and Culture Courses

Course # Title Hours
Two of these:
SPST:2077 Sport and Religion in America 3
SPST:2078 Women, Sport, and Culture 3
SPST:2079 Race and Ethnicity in Sport 3
SPST:2170 Sport and Globalization 3
SPST:2847 Hawkeye Nation: On Iowa and Sport 3

Two of these:
SPST:3171 Baseball in America 3
SPST:3172 Football in America 3
SPST:3173 Cultures of Basketball 3
SPST:3176 Sport and Nationalism 3
SPST:3178 History of Sport in the United States 3
SPST:3500 The Olympics 3

Second Area of Study

Requirements

Course # Title Hours
SMC:1050 Sport and the Media 3
SPST:1074 Inequality in American Sport 3

Course # Title Hours
Two of these:
SMC:2084 Sport and Film 3
SMC:2101 Digital Media and the Future of Sport 3
SMC:2400 Sport Media and Culture Experience 3
SMC:2500 Sport and Technology 3

Course # Title Hours
Two of these:
SMC:3182 Sport, Scandal, and Strategic Communication in Media Culture 3
SMC:3184 Narrative Sports Journalism 3
SMC:3186 Athletes, Activism, and Social Media 3
SMC:3187 American College Athletics: A Big Money Tradition Unlike Any Other 3
SMC:3540 The Business of Sport Communication 3

Course # Title Hours
Two of these:
SPST:2077 Sport and Religion in America 3
SPST:2078 Women, Sport, and Culture 3
SPST:2079 Race and Ethnicity in Sport 3
SPST:2170 Sport and Globalization 3
SPST:2847 Hawkeye Nation: On Iowa and Sport 3

Two of these:
SPST:3171 Baseball in America 3
SPST:3172 Football in America 3
SPST:3173 Cultures of Basketball 3
SPST:3176 Sport and Nationalism 3
SPST:3178 History of Sport in the United States 3
SPST:3500 The Olympics 3
Capstone Course

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<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMC:4500</td>
<td>Sport Media and Culture Capstone</td>
<td>3</td>
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Optional Sport Media and Culture Electives

Students may earn elective credit by completing additional sport media and culture coursework selected from this list.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMC:1000</td>
<td>First-Year Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPST:3193</td>
<td>Independent Study</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPST:4999</td>
<td>Honors Project</td>
<td>1-3</td>
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Second Area of Study

Every student majoring in sport media and culture must complete a second area of study. The second area of study enables students to acquire a substantial body of knowledge or expertise in a relevant area, learn how another discipline views the world, and/or develop a companion set of skills to those in sport media and culture.

Students must complete the requirements for the sport media and culture major (at least 33 s.h.) and must satisfy the second area of study requirement in one of three ways.

Option 1
Students complete a second major.

Option 2
Students complete an undergraduate certificate. Students may not double count courses for the major and a certificate being used as their second area of study.

Option 3
Students complete an undergraduate minor. Students may not double count courses for the major and a minor being used as their second area of study.

Honors

Honors in the Major

Students majoring in sport media and culture have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. They must maintain a University of Iowa grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.33 and a GPA of at least 3.50 in the major.

The honors project is usually undertaken in a student’s final semester. Students should identify a potential project topic and advisor from the sport media and culture faculty the semester before. Work for the honors project is done under the supervision of a faculty member with expertise in the topic the student is exploring. Projects typically take the form of traditional scholarly research. However, they also can be organized around public engagement, the digital humanities, or other formats decided on in consultation with the faculty advisor.

Students should enroll in SPST:4999 Honors Project.

Students who pursue honors projects in two departments may not submit the same project for both unless special permission is obtained from each department. Such an option would require more substance and depth than projects undertaken in one department. Students should check with honors advisors from both departments before they pursue such projects.

University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. University honors students must maintain a 3.33 UI cumulative GPA, complete 12 s.h. of coursework designated as honors courses, and complete 12 s.h. of an experiential learning project. Visit Honors at Iowa for more details.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the sport media and culture major.

Career Advancement

Students who major in sport media and culture can pursue a wide variety of exciting career paths within and beyond the growing and diverse field of sport media. These include more established careers in storytelling (writing, public relations, and marketing) as well as emerging professions in social media, podcasting, digital market research, and analytics. The major also provides students with a firm background in the critical and contextual analysis of sport media institutions that can prepare them for careers in law or for socially committed organizations that seek to transform sport by making it more equitable, diverse, and inclusive.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.

Academic Plans

Four-Year Graduation Plan

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the university’s Four-Year Graduation Plan. Courses in the major are those required to complete the major; they may be offered by departments other than the major department.

Before the fifth semester begins: declaration of the major.

Before the sixth semester begins: second area of study determined.

Before the seventh semester begins: at least six sport media and culture courses and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree.

Before the eighth semester begins: at least eight sport media and culture courses.

During the eighth semester: enrollment in all remaining coursework in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate.

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.
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This sample plan is being reviewed and will be added at a later date.