Course Summary

This fiat lux course provides an opportunity to analyze some of the economic implications of sports, with a focus on professional and college sports, both of which generate billions of dollars in revenue every year.

Economic analysis will not only provide you with a new way of thinking about the world of sports, but sports also provides us with some of the best examples of basic economic concepts at work in the world of business.

Our goal is to make the course a conversation among all of us. To do this, each week, we will pick a topic to discuss based on your interests. Pick at least 2 electronic documents from the internet on a topic that is about the economics or business of sports. They can be from any sport, they should be of interest to you, and they should be about an issue that we can engage in a class discussion.

Examples include (some of which are in the list of topics below): collective bargaining agreements from the NBA and NFL, salary caps in team sports, revenue sharing within professional leagues, how much competition a league allows, should college athletes be paid, should performance enhancing drugs be allowed, should the Olympics go back to using only amateur athletes, why professional athlete salaries are so much higher today than 30 years ago, what sports leagues do to spur attendance, how to value a pro sports franchise, recent scandals, such as “Deflategate”, the scandals in soccer and college basketball, etc.

Requirements

Send me at least 2 electronic links on topics that are of interest to you by 5 pm, Thursday, April 5 to:

economicsofsports2018@gmail.com

I will distribute links to you each week prior to class via email. It will be then your responsibility to read the material and be prepared to discuss that material during the next lecture. Those who submitted the links will lead the conversation.
This is a P/NP course. Passing requires the following:

(1) The university requires you to attend all classes. If you have a medical or personal emergency and cannot attend class, please send me an email along with a Dr.'s note 
(2) Participate in the class discussion 
(3) Send in articles for discussion 
(4) Submit a short paper (around 1500 words) on a topic of your choice that relates to the economics and/or business of sports. You can stop by my office to chat about topics, or send me an email.

This paper is due electronically on the last day of class by 5 pm PST. Send the paper to economicsofsports2018@gmail.com

**Recommended Books**

There is one recommended book, *Moneyball*, by Michael Lewis, which illustrates some of the key principles in the economics of sports.

**Other Sports Economics Resources**

There are a number of online resources on the economics of sports, including:

http://jse.sagepub.com/

http://thesportseconomist.com/


http://dberri.wordpress.com/

http://thesportsbizblog.blogspot.com/

http://firestone.princeton.edu/econlib/sportsite/Economics.htm (links for player salaries)

The following provide general sports information and articles:

http://espn.com

http://bleacherreport.com

http://sportingnews.com

http://sportsillustrated.com
Topics

Introduction – how are sports different from other goods or services that you buy?

Economic concepts important in understanding and analyzing sports

Sports as a business – you are the owner – what are your goals/? How do you maximize your profit?

Sports as a business – you are a collection of owners – what decisions should you make as a league?

Sports as a business – you are a player – how do you maximize how much you get?

Player’s unions and collective bargaining


Sports as a business - society's perspective. Why has sports grown so much over time? What principles should guide "how much" sports should be provided in society? Is the amount being provided more or less than "socially optimal"? How should sports be priced?

Race relations, racial discrimination, and sports

College athletics and the NCAA. What should the rules be? What should be the goal of the NCAA? Should athletes be paid? What types of sanctions are reasonable when violations occur? The impact of Title IX

Sports management and agency. What do sports management firms and agents do?

Why are some sports highly profitable and some are not?
Using statistics (analytics) in the world of sports

Stadiums and attracting and keeping professional teams.