

Georgia Institute of Technology
Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts
School of Economics
Introduction to Sports Economics – ECON 2020
Fall 2026

Course description: This course introduces sports economics by applying economic principles to analyze professional and amateur sports teams, leagues, and institutions. Topics include ticket pricing, competitive balance, monopolistic behavior, athlete compensation, and public funding of sports venues.

Prerequisites: None.

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

I look forward to interacting with you throughout the semester about economics and your other interests. Lectures will be used to motivate, clarify, extend, and synthesize the material. Active learning methods will be used to involve you in a discussion of principles and ideas. It is crucial that you come to class prepared to actively contribute to class discussion. Regularly, you will work together in class with your classmates. Working together in class will increase learning potential and retention.

Students will choose sports related franchises and leagues to complete their short research assignments. Specifically, each student will choose 2 U.S.-based franchises, 1 international-based sport franchise, 1 college with athletics, and 1 sports league to complete their research. Each choice will be unique to the student and there will be no duplicates. Franchise and leagues will include sports such as soccer, football (American and variations), baseball, basketball, hockey, cricket, rugby, lacrosse, and e-sports.

Course objectives:

- Students will be able to apply economics principles to various areas of sports, including revenues, valuation, and market structures.
- Students will understand what drives demand for sports from fans around the world.
- Students will analyze the various ways that competitive balance has been altered by domestic and international sports leagues.
- Students will learn how sport franchises maximize profits and/or wins, making optimal pricing decisions regarding television and gate revenue.
- Students will compare the benefits, costs, and other public finance considerations in the funding of sport venues and mega events.
- Students will understand athlete compensation, including the considerations of players and union negotiations with owners and federations.

Canvas: Communication about the course and other course materials is available on Georgia Tech's Canvas system. I will upload course materials and post course announcements on the course page. You may access Canvas at <https://canvas.gatech.edu/>.

Required texts: We will use **The Economics of Sports** by Leeds, von Allmen, and Matheson (ISBN: 9781000787610, 7th edition). Any additional readings will be provided through Canvas by the instructor.

Grading procedures: There are 3 main components to a final grade. All writing assignments will be turned in online and checked for plagiarism with Turnitin.

The coursework consists of short research assignments where the student is given a research topic and specific details that need to be found. Students write a few paragraphs (between 100-200 words) and orally share the results with the class. These are worth 10 points each with a possible total of 200 points. There will be 20 of these assignments.

All writing will be judged for accuracy, clarity of writing, and must meet the length standard. I want you to be creative and go where the research takes you, so please demonstrate originality in your assignments.

The course will have 3 midterm exams that will contribute to the final grade. Each exam is worth 50 points.

The final exam will take place during the assigned time in our usual classroom. It is worth 150 points.

Your final grade for the course is based on the distribution in Table 1.

Table 1

| Task | Points | Percentage of Grade |
|----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Short Research | 200 | 40% |
| Midterm Exams | 150 | 30% |
| Final Exam | 150 | 30% |
| Total | 500 | 100% |

Grades will be entered continuously into Canvas. If you have any questions regarding your grade on a particular assignment, please inform the instructor no later than one week after the grade is posted.

Grading system: Your final grade transfers to the Georgia Tech grading system according to the following.

| | | | |
|---|-----|--------------|------------------|
| A | 4.0 | Excellent | 90.00% - 100.00% |
| B | 3.0 | Good | 80.00% - 89.99% |
| C | 2.0 | Satisfactory | 70.00% - 79.99% |
| D | 1.0 | Passing | 60.00% - 69.99% |
| F | 0.0 | Failure | < 60.00% |

Late or missing assignments policy: Work in this class is only allowed to be made-up or turned in late when the student has an excused absence. I will use a standard definition of excused absences that includes: serious illness, illness or death of family member; College-related trips; and major religious holidays. In each case, appropriate verification is required. Students missing assignments bear the responsibility of informing the instructor about their excused absence within one week to request the extension and determine a new date of completion.

For illness and personal emergencies please refer to this Georgia Tech policy managed by the Office of Student Life and the Dean of Students: [Student Absence from Class Due to Illness or Personal Emergencies | Georgia Tech Catalog](#).

For college-related trips and major religious holidays please refer to this Georgia Tech policy managed by the Registrar's Office and the Student Academic and Financial Affairs Committee: [Institute Approved Absences \(IAA\) Form for Students | Registrar's Office | Georgia Tech](#).

Institute Attendance Policy: Students are subject to the institute attendance policy which may be found at <https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/>. Attendance is not taken; however, some assignments have an in-class component that can only be done in class.

Freedom of expression: As a faculty member at Georgia Tech, I respect your rights to the freedom of speech and expression. I am also committed to maintaining an orderly learning environment for all students and ensuring that all facilities are used in a way that facilitates teaching, learning, and research. Therefore, you should treat your peers and instructor respectfully in discussion. Disagreements are likely to happen. When they do, you are expected to disagree respectfully and to keep your discussion focused on evidence.

Discussions in this class are expected to take place solely within the course. Thus, statements made during class should not be quoted on social media unless the individual being quoted has provided their express permission. This applies to the instructor, students, and classroom guests. This policy is meant to protect student privacy and create a safe environment to learn.

Academic integrity: “I commit to uphold the ideals of honor and integrity by refusing to betray the trust bestowed upon me as a member of the Georgia Tech community.” Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Academic integrity is extremely important to me.

Any student suspected of plagiarizing, fabricating data, or any other academic misconduct will receive a zero in the course and be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Student-faculty expectations agreement: It is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

This syllabus is subject to change.