

**MIT 2000F: The History of Communication
Fall 2019
Faculty of Information and Media Studies**



Instructor

Dr. Atle Mikkola Kjosén
akjosén2@uwo.ca

Lecture times

Mondays 7:00 - 10:00 PM

Office hours/location

Tuesdays noon - 3 PM/ FNB - 4118

Lecture location:

Health Sciences Building (HSB) – 40

Teaching Assistant	Section	Office Hours	Room
Aloa Alota (aalota@uwo.ca)	002		
Sandy Beyrem (sbeyrem@uwo.ca)	003	Tuesdays 1-2pm	FNB 2011
Dominique Kelly (dkelly48@uwo.ca)	004	Tuesdays 11am-noon	FNB 2011
Jessica Erna Michel (jmichel4@uwo.ca)	005		
Man Shi (mshi55@uwo.ca)	006		

Course description

The course examines communication throughout history with a focus on the epistemological, social and cultural effects of media when they were historically new. The historical development of specific communication systems and media are examined, including orality, writing, and the printing press, time-keeping

media, optical media, the telegraph, and other telecommunications media.

Course objectives

Students who complete this course should know the following:

- How communications/media systems developed and their effects on how we know what we know and why we are

concerned with the problems we are concerned about (epistemology).

- How historical communications media have changed our conceptions of space and time
- The history and social and cultural impacts of communication and information technologies
- How scholarship on communication history has shaped understandings of modern-day media and information technologies.

Course assignments

Short paper (15%), due September 30th

A 2-page (500 words) paper on media and epistemology. In this paper, you have to discuss the relationship between media and epistemology using a case study (e.g. microscopes, the cellphone, calendars, recommender algorithms, maps, clocks). A handout with detailed instructions and more suggested case studies will be distributed.

Midterm Exam (25%), Date: Oct. 28th

Covering lecture and tutorial content and course readings from weeks one through seven, the midterm will be an in-class, closed-book test on key terms and concepts, historical developments and events, and the epistemological effects of media. It will be two hours in duration. Questions for the midterm will be circulated a week prior.

Research Essay (35%), due Dec. 2nd

This will be a 10-page (2750 words) research essay on a topic related to communication history and media epistemology. A handout with detailed instructions will be distributed. You have a 10% leeway (over or under) on the essay's word count.

Final Exam (25%), Date: TBC

This exam will take place during the exam period (December 8-19) and will be three hours in duration. The material for the final exam is cumulative. Questions for the midterm will be circulated at the last day of class or a week prior to the examination date (whatever date is earlier).

Grading

All assignments are graded by your teaching assistant who will follow the MIT grading guidelines to assign your grade. Please read the guidelines (see last page of this course outline) to understand the requirements for achieving a given grade.

All 2000-level MIT required courses will have a class average of between 70 and 75%.

Grades will be posted to your tutorial's OWL.

Students will receive graded work worth no less than 15% at least 3 days prior to the deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty. This year (2019), the date by which students are to have received at least 15% of their grade in a first semester course is **November 9**. Students can find details about this academic policy here: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf.

Please note, students who receive accommodations for the assignments on which these grades are based may not receive feedback in time to meet this deadline.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the grades they have received in their courses.

For your own protection, always keep the original of your assignments and hand in a

photocopy. In case of loss, theft, destruction, dispute over authorship, or any other eventuality, it will be your responsibility to provide a copy of the assignment.

OWL

Please note, you will have access to two different OWL groups in this course: one for the lecture part of the course (section 001) and one for your tutorial (sections 002-006). Course readings, assignment descriptions, and announcements from the instructor are posted to the lecture OWL (section 001). Your grades and announcements from your TA are posted to your their respective OWL pages (sections 002-006).

Required readings

Schedule

Week 1 - Sept. 9: Introduction

Week 2 - Sept. 16: Media epistemology

- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1*. London: Penguin. 36-49.
 - Poppick, L. (2017). "Let Us Now Praise the Invention of the Microscope". *Smithsonian.com*
 - Truncellito, D. A. (n.d.) "Epistemology". *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Read sections 1, 2a-c, 4a-b, and 5.
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Week 3 - Sept. 23: The bias of communication and why the medium is the message

- Carey, J. W. (1989). "Space, Time, and Communications: A Tribute to Harold Innis". *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*. London: Routledge. Pp. 120-129
- Innis, H. A. (2008). "The Bias of Communication". In Innis, H. A. *The Bias of Communication 2nd Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 33-60.
- Innis, H. A. (2007). "Introduction". *Empire and Communications*. Pp. 21-31.
- May, C. (2014). "A Learning Secret: Don't Take Notes with a Laptop". *Scientific American*.
- McLuhan, M. (1964). "The Medium is the Message". *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. London: Routledge. pp. 7-9.

Midterm material: Kolb, A. (2001). "Transport and Communication in the Roman State: The *cursus publicus*". In Adams, C. and Laurence, R. (Eds.) (2001). *Travel and Geography in the Roman Empire*. London: Routledge. 95-105.

Week 4 - Sept. 30: Orality

- Foley, J. M. (n.d.) "Oral tradition". *Encyclopaedia Britannica*
 - Lord, A. B. (1971). *The Singer of Tales*. New York: Athenum. pp. 13-29.
 - Ong, W. J. (1982). *Orality and Literacy*. New York, NY: Routledge. Pp. 31-36, 46-48, 56-66. 69-72.
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- There is no textbook.
- All readings will be provided to the course's OWL.
- For pedagogical reasons, course texts may change. You will be informed of such changes with at least a week's notice.
- Lecture slides will be added to OWL on a weekly basis
- On the schedule there are texts marked as "midterm material" or "exam material". These texts will not be addressed in the lecture; however, both the midterm and exam will have questions that can only be answered by closely reading these texts.

Short paper due at the beginning of class.

Week 5 – Oct. 4: Writing

- Goody, J (1977). “What’s in a list?” *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 74-76, 78-89, 103-111.
- Ong, W. J. (1982). *Orality and Literacy*. New York, NY: Routledge. Pp. 77-101
- Plato (2003) *Phaedrus*. Transl. Stephen Scully. Newburyport, MA: Focus Philosophical Library. 63-71.
- Robinson, A. (2003). “The Origins of Writing”. Crowley, D. and Heyer, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Communication in History 4th Edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 34-40.

Midterm material: McLuhan, M. and Logan, R. (1977). “Alphabet, Mother of Invention”. *Et Cetera* Vol. 34(4), 373-383.

Week 6 - Oct. 14: Thanksgiving (No class)

Week 7 - Oct. 21: The Printing Press (or mid-term)

- Anderson, B. (1983). “Imagined Communities”. 48-59.
- Carter, T. F. (2003). “Paper and Block Printing—From China to Europe”. Crowley, D. and Heyer, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Communication in History 4th Edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 87-93.
- Eisenstein, E. (1983). “Western Christendom Disrupted” *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 167-173, 190-208
- Graff, H. J. (2003). “Early Modern Literacies”. Crowley, D. and Heyer, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Communication in History 4th Edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 106-110.

Midterm material: Eisenstein, E. (1983). “Resetting the Stage for the Copernican Revolution” *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 232-254

Week 8 - Oct. 28: Midterm

Week 9 - Nov. 4: Reading week (No class)

Week 10 - Nov. 11: Making sense of time: calendars, clocks, and timetables

- Benedict of Nursia (2016 [516]). *The Rule of St. Benedict*. London: Penguin. pp. 31-32, 39-44
- Friesen, G. (2000). *Citizen and Nation: An Essay on History, Communication, and Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 31-44.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York, NY: Vintage. 3-7, 135-139, 149-151.
- Hodson, J. and Vannini, P. (2007). “Island time: The Media Logic and Ritual of Ferry Commuting on Gabriola Island, BC.” *Canadian Journal of Communication*, vol. 32: 261-275.
- Mumford, L. (2010 [1934]). *Technics and Civilization*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. 12-22.

Exam material (making sense of space):

- Schivelbusch, W. (1986). *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press. 33-44.
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- Eisenstein, E. (1983). *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 221-231.
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Week 11 - Nov. 18: *Optical Media and the Reinvention of Seeing*

- Snyder, L. J. (2015). "Ut pictura, ita visio". *Eye of the Beholder: Johannes Vermeer, Antoni van Leeuwenhoek, and the Reinvention of Seeing*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. pp. 123-157.

In-class documentary screening: *Tim's Vermeer* (2013)

Exam material: Steadman, P. (2001) *Vermeer's Camera: The Truth behind the Masterpieces*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1-24.

Week 12 - Nov. 25: *The telegraph and telecommunications*

- Blondheim, M. (1994). *News over the Wires: The Telegraph and the Flow of Public Information in America, 1844-1897*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Pp. 11-19, 27-29, 34-38. Optional: pp. 19-26, 30-34.
- Carey, J. W. (1989). "Technology and Ideology: the case of the Telegraph". *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*. London: Routledge. Pp. 155-177
- Kern, S. (2003). "Wireless World". Crowley, D. and Heyer, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Communication History 4th Edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 210-213.

Exam material: Goheen, P. G. (1990). "The changing bias of inter-urban communications in nineteenth-century Canada". *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol. 16, no. 2:177-196.

Week 13 - Dec. 2: *Secondary Orality: Electronic communication and the impossibility of a public sphere*

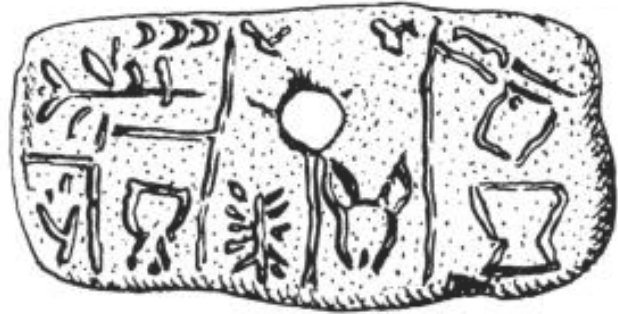
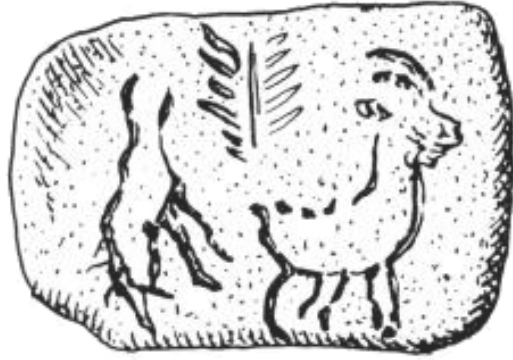
- Baran, P. (1962). *On distributed communication networks*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. 1-11.
- Comor, E. (2001). "Harold Innis and 'the Bias of Communication'" *Information, Communication & Society* 4(2), 286-291
- Habermas, J. (1974). "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopaedia Article (1964)". *New German Critique* No. 3 (Autumn), 49-55.
- McLuhan, M. (1964) "Radio: the Tribal Drum." *Understanding Media*. London: Routledge. pp. 324-335.
- Ong, W. J. (1982). *Orality and Literacy*. New York, NY: Routledge. Pp. 133-135.

Exam material: Abbate, J. (2003). "Popularizing the Internet". Crowley, D. and Heyer, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Communication in History 4th Edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 297-301.

Final paper due at the beginning of class.



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Sumerian writing chits (3000 B.C.)

Policies

Communication

- Students may contact me in class, during office hours or through email.
- If my office hours conflict with your schedule, please do not hesitate to ask for an appointment (at least 48 hours before the desired meeting time).

Email

- Students are required to periodically check their Western email account for messages from the instructor and TA.
- Students are responsible for ensuring that their email account is working properly, including making sure it is not full.
- I will respond within 48hrs to most email inquiries.
- To questions that can be answered by checking the syllabus or OWL, I will reply with “Please check the syllabus and/or OWL”
- Please send inquiries that can be answered with a simple “yes/no” or max with a sentence or two. For inquiries that require more thorough responses, please come to my office hours.

Electronic devices

- Students are permitted to use laptops in class for academic reasons only, although for better retention of lecture material I strongly advise you to use pen and paper. With a laptop you are just a medium of communication between the lecturer and your laptop’s storage.
- I reserve the right to ask students to leave the classroom if their use of electronic devices is disruptive.

NB! Teaching Assistants will inform you about their own communication policies.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a self-reported absence form online provided that the absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy are met

This policy is available online at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds).

The Student Medical Certificate is available online at:

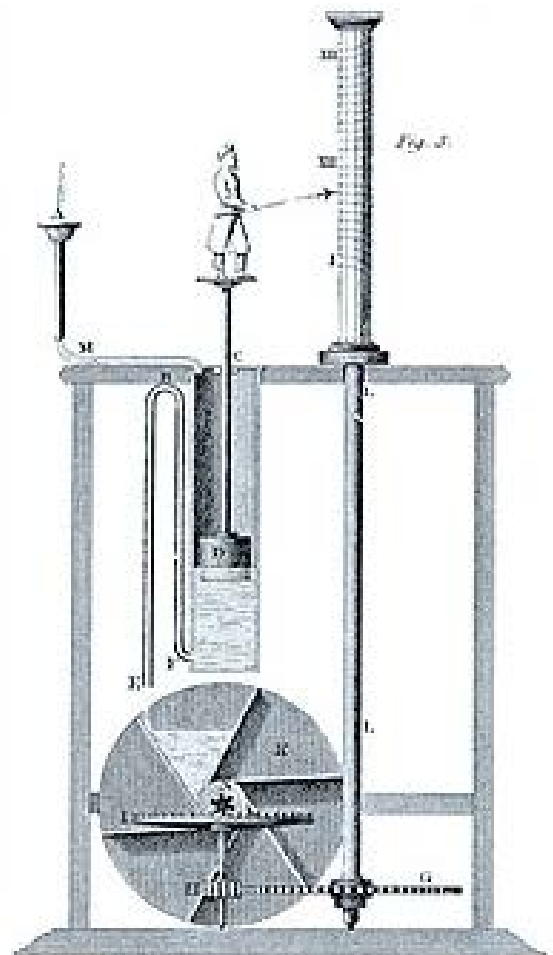
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances. Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health

conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation.

Students who have not submitted a self-reported absence form or received academic or compassionate accommodation will, in the case of late papers, receive 3% penalty per day (including weekends), and, in the case of a missed midterm, will not be allowed to write a make-up exam.

FIMS make-up midterms are held on Fridays October 11, 18, and 25, and November 1, 15, and 22.



NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Fall 2019

Rights and Responsibilities

The conditions governing a student's ability to pursue their undergraduate education at Western are ratified by Senate and can be found on the Academic Policies section of the University Secretariat:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software Turnitin under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the

semester, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- during exam periods,
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are NOT met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate, if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact the FIMS Undergraduate Student Services Office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration For Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#) and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

Grading at FIMS

- Normally, first year courses required for entry into an MIT or MPI module (MIT 1020E and MIT 1025F/G) are expected to have a course average between 68-72%.
- Normally, second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500) are expected to have a course average between 70 and 75%.
- Normally, third year required courses (MIT 3000, 3100) are expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%.

Elective courses and 4th year seminars have no recommended course averages.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

SUPPORT SERVICES – LINKS

Office of the Registrar:

www.registrar.uwo.ca

Student Development Centre:

www.sdc.uwo.ca

Psychological Services:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych

Services for Students with

Disabilities:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd

Accessibility

Information:

www.accessibility.uwo.ca

└ Writing Support

Centre:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing

Learning Skills Services:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning

g Indigenous Services:

[http://indigenous.uwo.c](http://indigenous.uwo.ca/)

a/

International and Exchange

Student

Centre:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/int Career

Centre at Western:

www.success.uwo.ca/careers/

Appendix A: Suggested Grade Ranges in MIT, MPI and MTP

Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range

These guidelines are benchmarks, and are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. As well, competency in English language usage (including spelling and grammar) may be taken into account in the assignment of grades by individual instructors. Note that the 70-79 grade range is broken into two divisions, as this is the grade range into which a large number of students fall.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The report shows sparkling originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the writing and background research is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The report shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic; it gets to the heart of the matter with comments and/or questions. It is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing makes the report immediately understandable. Mastery of complex material and ideas is demonstrated. The report is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that the result is meaningful, not simplistic.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The report shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The topic is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed. The report demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material.

70-74 (Good, B)

The report shows an attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The topic is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. The analysis is organized around focal points. The report is generally well written and well argued.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The report demonstrates adequate comprehension of the topic. The report is on topic and is a reasonable summary of material covered in the course, but goes no further. Facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the report.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The report shows less than adequate comprehension of the topic and of the material covered by the course. The report is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the report.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The report demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. The material is disorganized and unintelligible. The report clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.

Appendix B: Guidelines of Academic Appeals for FIMS Students

Grounds for Appeal:

The Faculty of Information and Media Studies does not view the appeals process as an opportunity for students to solicit a second opinion on a grade assigned to a particular piece of work. Appeals must pertain to the final grade in a course, and will only be entertained if sufficient grounds for appeal can be met, including: medical or compassionate circumstances, a defect in the evaluation process, bias, inaccuracy or unfairness.

Stages in the Appeals Process:

The first stage of the process is a discussion of the disputed grade with the appropriate Teaching Assistant (if applicable), and subsequently, the course Instructor. For grades assigned to individual assignments, essays, lab reports, projects and tests completed throughout the term, the student first must appeal to the Teaching Assistant or Instructor of the course, within three weeks of the date on which the Instructor or Teaching Assistant returned the assignments to the class. The Appeals Committee will not hear any further appeals about the final grade in any course unless this first step has been taken.

If completion of the first stage has not resolved the matter, the student may appeal the final grade in the course to the FIMS Appeals Committee. Appeals of final grades must be **within the time frame indicated in the Undergraduate Calendar.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is submitted within the deadline. The student shall submit a formal letter to the FIMS Appeals Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal, the remedy sought and relevant materials including the information about when and with whom (Teaching Assistant and/or Instructor) the student met, as described in Stage 1. If the appeal involves a request for work to be regraded, the original marked work and a clean copy (if possible) must be included. If the appeal is commenced once the deadline has passed, it will not be considered either by the Appeals Committee or by the Associate Dean.

The FIMS Appeals Committee has the discretion to determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met.

If the Committee deems that the reasons for the appeal are not legitimate, the Associate Dean will be informed. The appeal will be terminated and the student will be informed.

If the Committee decides that the grounds for appeal have been met, the following steps will be taken:

1. the course Instructor will be shown the appeal letter and offered an opportunity to make a written response;
2. if work is to be regraded, a reader will be appointed who is competent in the area in question and was not involved in the assignment of the original mark. The reader will consider the work in question and will arrive at an independent evaluation. If there is a large discrepancy between the original mark and the regraded mark, a second reader may be appointed by the Committee. **If the appointed reader(s) arrive at a grade within five marks of the original, the original grade will stand.**

The FIMS Appeals Committee will review the evidence and will make a recommendation on the case to the Associate Dean Undergraduate.

The Associate Dean Undergraduate will consider the recommendation from the Appeals Committee, and will make a decision. The student and the instructor will be notified promptly and in writing by the Associate Dean of the decision and of the change in grade, if any. Within the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, the Associate Dean's decision on the matter is final.

Further appeals are possible under certain circumstances to the Senate Review Board Academic (for Undergraduate students) or to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (for Graduate students) but the student should carefully consult the guidelines regarding such Appeals.