

## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

### **Instructor**

Dr. Jason Stanford

[jstanfo@uwo.ca](mailto:jstanfo@uwo.ca)

Office:

Talbot College (TC334)

Office Hours:

By Appointment – subject to instructor availability (in-person/online)

### **Computer Support**

FIMS Computing Services

[fims-servicedesk@uwo.ca](mailto:fims-servicedesk@uwo.ca)

**Antirequisite(s):**

**Prerequisite(s):**

**Corequisite(s):**

**Pre-or Corequisite(s):** At least 65% in each of MIT 1020E and MIT 1025F/G

**Extra Information:** 2 lecture hours, 2 laboratory hours, 0.5 course.

**Registration Constraint:** Restricted to students in MIT and MPI. Not open to MTP students.

### **Course Calendar Description**

This course emphasizes the development and manipulation of sound sources, especially music, within a mixed media context. Students will be introduced to music-specific technologies and concepts that can be applied to a multimedia environment. Previous music experience is not required; however students will acquire some musical skills and study certain musical concepts.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course students will not only be able to discuss in detail, relevant historical and contemporary technical and technological notions related to the use of technology in digital music production scenarios, students will also have gained transferable skills in the application of specific technologies through the completion of practice-based creative projects.

### **Course Meetings**

Lecture: Monday 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm FMB 2070 (iMac Lab) and/or online

Laboratory: Thursday 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm FMB 2070 (iMac Lab) and/or online

MIT 2550B-2021 is a blended course thus much of the material and coursework is delivered online and completed independently by students either on their own personal computer or in the FIMS Undergraduate Lab (FNB2070).

Due to any current or future lock-down, and keeping in step with the University's evolving health and safety policies to stop the spread of COVID-19, classes may be delivered in in-person in reduced class size subsets and/or online (synchronously or asynchronously).

**MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction**

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

The two-hour laboratories may be delivered in a number of different ways depending upon the perceived needs of the class. Tutorial sessions may take the form of an additional lecture (partial or full), a group and/or individual drop-session, or any combination of these options either in-person and/or online (synchronously or asynchronously).

- Please see **Appendix A** regarding **Contingency Plans** in case of a resurgence of COVID-19
- Please see **Appendix B** regarding required **Online Etiquette**
- Please see **Appendix C** regarding **Recording of Online Activity**

**Detailed Weekly Description of Course Activities**

Please see separate handout *MIT2550B-2021 Course Schedule* for further details and due-dates

**Methods of Evaluation**

Attendance* and Participation	10%
Quizzes (6 x 3% each)	18%
Tests (2 x 16% each)	32%
Creative Project	10%
Term Creative Project	30%
	—————
	100%

***There is no mid-term or final examination for this course.***

*\*students are required to sign an attendance form that will be circulated at the beginning of each lecture/laboratory, if lectures are virtually delivered, online attendance will be taken by instructor*

Students will receive graded work worth no less than 15% at least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty. This year, the date by which students are to have received at least 15% of their grade in a first semester course is March 15, 2021. Students can find details about this academic policy here:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/exams/evaluation\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exams/evaluation_undergrad.pdf).

Please note, students who receive academic accommodation 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.

## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

### **Course Activities**

Attendance is mandatory and will ensure adequate progress. The key to success in this course is **regular work**, if you invest the necessary time and effort required of this course, then you will comprehend key concepts and be able to effectively apply these concepts in your own creative work.

All coursework is to be completed outside of lectures, either on the student's own computer and/or in the computers in FNB 2070, with the exception of in-class quizzes, tests, and supervised individual work time during Lab meetings. Students are permitted to use computers in FNB 2070 on a regular basis as well as during unsupervised free times.

Follow the link below to view available free times when you can work in the FIMS Undergraduate Mac Lab.

[https://www.fims.uwo.ca/about/facilities/resource\\_calendar.html?Calendar=FIMS-FNB-2070-Lab&View=Day](https://www.fims.uwo.ca/about/facilities/resource_calendar.html?Calendar=FIMS-FNB-2070-Lab&View=Day)

Starting in the week three Lab meeting a quiz will be given each week covering the content of the previous week. Quizzes serve as preparation for the more substantial tests. The content of each test is based upon the content covered in the four previous weeks leading up to each test. The Test 1 will be given in week five and the Test 2 will be given in week ten. Each test is worth 16% of the final grade. Test 1 is based upon the content covered in the weeks leading up to the test (including but not limited to the content of quizzes 1-3). Test 2 is based upon the content covered in the prior four weeks and will only contain content covered after Test 1 (including but not limited to the content of quizzes 4-6). Quizzes and tests may include aural/listening questions. You may be quizzed or tested upon any content delivered or discussed in lectures and laboratories.

There will be one independent Creative Project (worth 10%) due three weeks after it is assigned, four weeks, if you count Spring Reading Week. Reading Week falls between the assigned date and due date for this project. *Students can elect to work on this project during Reading Week if they so desire, but **no work is required** to be completed on this project over the break.*

The final Term Creative Project (worth 30% of the course) is due on the final day of class and will be assigned six weeks prior to the due date.

## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

### **Listening List**

A listening list will accumulate in size over the term and this list will contain musical examples from the canon of both popular and classical music. This list will be available to students for listening, and study, and enjoyment! Titles from this list may be used for instructional purposes in order to demonstrate specific technical features of audio production or any number of musical/compositional features (such as form, texture, instrumentation, arrangement and orchestration, *et cetera*). As mentioned previously, the quizzes and tests may contain aural identification questions. These questions may require a student to describe the sonic features they hear in the given auditory or musical example.

### **Required and Optional Course Materials**

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings will be drawn from a number of different texts made available online via OWL.

If working in the FIMS Undergraduate Mac Lab (FNB 2070) each student is **strongly encouraged** to bring a USB3 stick/hard drive in order to **back-up all work-in-progress** created in the FNB2070 computer lab. The University is not responsible for any lost, missing, or corrupted data on Western-owned (or student-owned computers).

Accurate, quality reference monitoring is required for this course; and although not required, it is **strongly recommended** that students obtain a professional-quality pair of over-the-ear headphones\* to provide clear and accurate aural feedback while working on practice-based projects. Proper monitoring goes hand-in-hand with the critical listening skills that students will develop throughout this course.

*\*Please see separate hand-out for suggestions professional quality headphones.*

### **Software**

Whenever possible, this course will use software titles available to students in the FNB 2070 iMac lab. Additional software titles may be utilized for the purpose of instruction and/or student projects. If software titles not provided by FIMS are to be used in this course it is the responsibility of the student to purchase the requisite software subscription(s) and/or license(s). Many software vendors provide deeply discounted academic subscriptions/ licenses for undergraduate students.

## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

### Online Delivery of Coursework

In order to facilitate the timely delivery and return of coursework please follow these best-practices for the submission of online coursework listed below.

Failure to follow the outlined procedures for the online delivery of coursework may result in unnecessary delays it may also render the coursework un-assessable. Be sure to follow the required file list delivery requirements (if any) detailed on each assignment whether the submitted material takes the form of:

- Word documents
- (fillable) PDF files
- audio files (.wav .aif, .ogg .mp3)
- *et cetera*

or if the submitted material takes the form of software-specific files such as:

- Garage Band **.band** files
- Pro Tools *Session File Folders* (not just the **.ptx** file)
- Max8 **.maxpat** patch files
- Adobe Audition **.sesx** Session Files
- *et cetera.*

Complete files (along with their accompanying session folders, if any) **MUST** be sent to the instructor in a single email attachment. If the size of the attachment is too large, you will be prompted to upload the file(s) to OneDrive first before sending the email to the instructor. The OWL DropBox feature may be utilized in lieu of email submissions of coursework to the instructor.

Delivering incomplete coursework (project files without their accompanying contingencies such as: audio files, video files, *et cetera*) may result in the coursework being assessed as incomplete, and the student risks receiving a much lower grade as a result.

In addition to following the above common-sense provisions for online delivery of coursework to the instructor for assessment the student must clearly and properly **name** their coursework in a consistent manner as demonstrated in the example below.

Below is a hypothetical example:

Student Name: Jane Smith  
Course-Year: MIT2550B-2021  
Assignment: Creative\_Project

## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

Example naming convention for a *.band* file created in Garage Band:

**Surname | Given Name | Course Name | Assignment Name**

*Smith\_Jane\_MIT2550B-2021\_Creative\_Project.band*

Failure to follow the this simple and identifiable naming convention may cause issues with both the delivery and assessment of coursework, and as mentioned previously may result in the given coursework not being assessed fully or at all. If submitted material cannot be attributed to any individual, then that student risks receiving a grade of 0 (zero) on the coursework.

### **Social Distancing and PPE Policy**

We are all in this together. Please demonstrate respect for yourself and for your fellow students by complying with the safety protocols established by the University to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Students must comply with the health and safety protocols in order to participate in face-to-face instruction on campus. If students fail to comply with established protocols they will not be permitted entry to in-person on-campus classes. These protocols include wearing appropriate face covering, maintaining social distancing, and completing the on-campus health survey.

In the unlikely event a student removes face coverings or fails to maintain social distancing during the class that student will be asked to leave immediately. These policies are subject to change and amendment at any point by the University, and any amendments must be strictly adhered to by all students while on campus.

### **Notes from the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Information and Media Studies**

#### **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:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://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 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. Use of the

## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ( <http://www.turnitin.com> ).

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

### **Academic Accommodation and Medical Accommodation**

For Western University policy on accommodation for medical illness, see:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic.../accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic.../accommodation_medical.pdf)

Student Medical Certificate (SMC): [www.studentservices.uwo.ca](http://www.studentservices.uwo.ca) under the heading of Medical Documentation.

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. It will be the Dean's Office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

For work worth less than 10% of the final grade, the instructor will consider requests for academic accommodation on medical grounds made in a timely manner in writing or by appointment in office hours. Such requests need not be accompanied by documentation. The instructor may, however, decide to require documentation be submitted to the appropriate Academic Counselling office.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

### **COVID-19 Related Medical Accommodation (2020-2021 only)**

If a student has been contacted by the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) to self-quarantine due to a Covid-19-related situation, then the Self-Reported Absence system **is not** to be used to report this absence or to request an academic accommodation. The student should contact the Academic Counselling office as soon as they are notified.

Students are advised to not self-determine when to self-isolate. Unless directed by the MLHU students should go about their business as usual. But if a student chooses to self-isolate due to a suspected Covid-19-related situation while waiting to receive direction from the MLHU then the student is directed to contact the Academic Counselling office as soon as possible for further direction on receiving accommodation consideration.

## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

### **Compassionate Accommodation**

Academic accommodation (extensions, makeup tests and exams, additional assignments etc.) may be given to students on compassionate grounds. The situations for which compassionate accommodation can be given must be serious, including significant events such as death in the immediate family, trauma (fire, robbery, harassment, muggings, car accidents, etc.) or emergency situations. Documentation is required.

If a member of your immediate family is seriously ill, obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician and submit the documentation to your Academic Counsellor. If you have been involved in a severe accident, fire or some other exceptional crises, obtain a copy of the police report or be prepared to provide the necessary documentation upon request.

### **Bereavement**

Generally, for deaths within a student's immediate family (parents, guardians, caregivers, siblings, spouses), bereavement leave is granted, upon provision of documentation. For deaths within a student's extended family, academic accommodation is given for one to three days, upon provision of documentation. Students seeking additional bereavement leave for religious or other reasons should contact their Academic Counsellors, and provide valid documentation.

### **Health and Wellness**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western at the following website [https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **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.

<http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

Further specific information is given in the Western Academic Calendar.

### **Support Services at Western**

Office of the Registrar: [www.registrar.uwo.ca](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca)

Student Development Centre: [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)

Mental Health @ Western: [www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](http://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

Psychological Services: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych)

Services for Students with Disabilities: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd)

Accessibility Information: [www.accessibility.uwo.ca/](http://www.accessibility.uwo.ca/)

Writing Support Centre: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing)

Learning Skills Services: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning)

Indigenous Services: <https://indigenous.uwo.ca/>

International and Exchange Student Centre: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/int](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/int)

Career Centre at Western: [www.success.uwo.ca/careers/](http://www.success.uwo.ca/careers/)



## MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

### **FIMS Grading Policy**

FIMS recently changed its class average policies, which specify the range between which the average marks for courses at particular levels (1000, 2000, 3000) must fall. Previously, these policies applied to all courses. Now they apply only to required MIT courses.

The MIT program now has the following class average policy:

- All 1000-level MIT required courses (i.e., 1200, 1500, 1700) will have a class average of between 67 and 72%.
- All 2000-level MIT required courses (i.e. 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500) will have a class average of between 70 and 75%.
- All 3000-level MIT required courses (i.e. 3000, 3100) will have a class average of between 72 and 77%.
- 4000-level MIT courses and courses with fewer than 20 enrolled students will be exempt from this grading policy.
- Elective courses have no class average requirement.

Removing the mandatory grade range from elective courses gives truly outstanding students an opportunity to excel in, and faculty greater freedom in the instruction of, such courses. At the same time, FIMS remains committed to rigorous academic standards, and to grading practices that give high marks only for high quality work. To this end, FIMS undergraduate instructors mark according to the Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range, using the full range of marks available. Please consult these

Guidelines to see the standards work is expected to meet.

[http://www.fims.uwo.ca/acad\\_programs/undergrad/mit\\_mpi/courses/grading/averages.htm](http://www.fims.uwo.ca/acad_programs/undergrad/mit_mpi/courses/grading/averages.htm)

### **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.

**MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction**

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

**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

**MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction**

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

**Key Dates 2021**

<https://www.uwo.ca/stats/undergraduate/key-dates.html>

Monday, January 11, 2021	Classes resume
Tuesday, January 19, 2021	<b><i>Last day to add a second-term half course or a second-term full course</i></b>
Friday, January 22, 2021	Deadline for applications for graduation: In Absentia February Convocation
Saturday, February 13, 2021 to February 21, 2021	Spring Reading Week
Monday, February 15, 2021	Family Day
Friday, February 26, 2021	In Absentia February Convocation
Monday, March 15, 2021	<b><i>Last day to drop a second-term half course, or a second-term full course without academic penalty</i></b>
Friday, April 2, 2021	Good Friday (University Closed)
Sunday, April 4, 2021	Easter Sunday
Monday, April 12, 2021	Fall/Winter Term classes end (final due date for all course assignments)
Tuesday April 13, 2021	Study Day(s)
Thursday, April 14, 2021 to April 30, 2021	Final examination period

**Appendix A: COVID-19 Contingency Plans (2020-2021 only)**

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the term that necessitates the delivery of this course move away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor.

## **Appendix B: Online Etiquette**

### **Taken From the University Senate Protocol for Zoom Meetings**

Some components of this course will involve online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- please “arrive” to class on time
- please use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- to minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- In order to give us optimum bandwidth and web quality, please turn off your video camera for the entire class unless you are invited to speak
- please be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor’s request if the internet connection becomes unstable
- unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- if you wish to speak, use the “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question
- remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking
- self-identify when speaking.
- remember to mute your microphone and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise)
- 

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment. “Flaming” is never appropriate.
- Be professional and scholarly in all online postings. Cite the ideas of others appropriately.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

**MIT 2550B – Digital Music: An Introduction**

Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Western University

Winter 2021

**Appendix C: Recording of Online Activities**

All of the blended in-person/online learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Student participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

Individual or group meetings (in-person online) for the purposes of reading, rehearsing, or performing any creative assignments or projects (in part, or in full) may be recorded. Please obtain consent of all participants (if performers/musicians are not enrolled in this course) before proceeding with the recording of any portion of any meeting.

Any and all recordings are made for use in this course alone, and under no circumstances may these recordings be distributed through any public or private network, platform, or channel.

# NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 2021

## 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](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](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

## Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments, including take-home exams, 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 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 Accessible Education (formerly 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 two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, 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, unless noted on the syllabus. 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 or equivalent documentation, 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](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

**In the event of a Covid-19 resurgence, it is possible that different procedures may need to be put in place on short notice.**

## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca)

### Mental Health

#### Support:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

### Accessible Education:

[http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)

### Accessibility

#### Information:

[www.accessibility.uwo.ca/](http://www.accessibility.uwo.ca/)

### Writing Support

#### Centre:

<http://writing.uwo.ca/>

### Learning Skills

#### Services:

<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>

### Academic Learning and Support for Online Learning:

<https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/types/academic-and-learning-support.html>

### Indigenous Services:

<https://indigenous.uwo.ca/>

### Western International:

<https://international.uwo.ca/>

### Career Centre:

<http://careerexperience.uwo.ca/>

## 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.