# Media, Information and Technoculture: 2570b (Winter 2021)
Faculty of Information and Media Studies ~ The University of Western Ontario

Course: MIT 2570b (Online Version)
Antirequisite(s): Digital Communication 2203A/B
Title: Introduction to Digital Imaging and Web Site Design
Times: Asynchronous
Optional Synchronous (live) help session: Wednesdays, 10:30-11:15 am
Location: Online (OWL, YouTube, Zoom)
Lecturer: Mark Rayner
Contact: I strongly prefer you message me on OWL.
Email: marayner@uwo.ca or DM Twitter: @markarayner
Web: OWL and http://instruct.uwo.ca/mit/2570 – or – bit.ly/mit2570
Office Hours: online (Zoom or telephone), by appointment

Why are we here?
This course focuses on the design and production of information for websites, which communicate through the integrated use of text, images and media elements. Secondly, it concentrates on developing digital imaging skills for the web and introduces HTML5 and CSS3. The theoretical implications of this medium will be explored. Brackets, Filezilla & Photoshop are the main tools we will use.
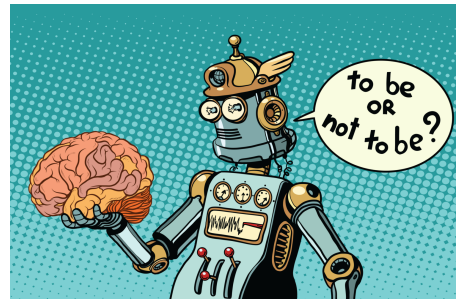
Objectives:
By the end of this course, you will have the technical ability to produce a basic static website, and will be able to critique current practices related to web design. You will also gain an understanding of:

- site architecture and planning
- writing for the web & web typography
- usability issues
- technological issues, especially the importance of file structure
- visual communication & design theory
- creating digital images and web pages
- communications planning & industry requirements

It's not rocket science, but it takes work:
Web design is like learning to play a musical instrument; you can't just show up for the lesson and expect to improve. Keep this in mind when planning your term. And please, remember to save a backup of your work -- I'd keep two; I'd use OneDrive and a thumb drive to be safe!

Course Materials:
There are no required textbooks for this course, but you are expected to get a subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud. You will also need to download Brackets and

FileZilla, which are both open source (free) software. The course is available on OWL, using video on YouTube.

Online Routine:
So that you are not overwhelmed, I plan to release a week of the course at a time, on Monday mornings. I will plan to release two weeks at the start of the course. My hope is this pace will help you get through all the materials, and the exercises will help you practice your coding, so that you have all the skills you need to produce the final assignment. Exercises will be due on **Sunday at 11:55pm**, one week after they are assigned. (A bit longer for the first exercise.)

Evaluation:
Your final mark will be based on an evaluation of:
1. Your work on the exercises (20 points)
2. Three quizzes (15 points)
3. Your understanding of the relevant issues and theory introduced in the class, as demonstrated by your integration of them into your assignments and the quality of your assignments (65).

Exercises: These will be worth 20 percent of your grade in total. Exercises are worth a variety of points and will be marked on a pass/fail basis — in other words, if you tackle the exercise, you will get the points. NOTE: An important part of <u>completing</u> many of the exercises is getting it posted to your website, and linking from your home page to the exercise. NOTE: <u>You will not get the marks if this is not done by 11:55pm on Sundays.</u> Exercises are listed on the assignments page on OWL, and on the week's lesson, along with the exact due date. Please include the exercise URL in OWL.

Coding & File Structure Quizzes: these will be worth 15 percent of your grade. They are online tests that will show you understand the basics of how file structure, relative linking, HTML and CSS code work. You will have a full day to complete them, and they will be available for a week.

Assignments:
1. Web Proposal *(25 percent)*   *Due: Feb. 14, 11:55 pm*
To complete this assignment, use the following process:
- write a communications plan (comms plan)
- figure out what content your site will have, and arrange it in a reasonable architecture (blueprint)
- map your content onto an exact file structure (content map)
- create wireframes of how you think the main sections of the site will be laid out.

At this point you can also decide on the design/navigational elements and consider the overall tone, color, and layout. This is your best chance to get the site right — it should be fully planned before you begin creating it.
Required elements: Hand in a **single PDF** of your communications plan (one or two pages, point form), the blueprint, the content map and page layout ideas — also referred to in class as wireframes.

To get a higher grade: Include the website content and other elements that will flesh out your plan: color palettes, images you have created for the site, storyboards, a full mock-up and anything else that explains what the site will look and feel like, such as scenarios or audience research.

2. Web Production *(40 percent)*   *Due: Apr. 12, 11:55 pm*

Produce a website that you created from scratch. Check to ensure the links are not broken and ask your peers to Beta test the site. <u>Remember that the content of your site must be original.</u> This means that *you must write it* — you cannot use content from other websites, books, magazines, and so on. Material copied from other sources is plagiarism. You can quote other material if you cite it. There should be a minimum of 13 *static html* pages, with an average of 100 word/page.

Required elements and tips: Check out the OWL site for a complete list of the required elements and marking criteria for this final project. I'd recommend reading it before you even begin designing your site!

A note on when assignments are due:
- Except for the final project, due dates are **Sundays at 11:55pm**
- A lateness penalty of 5% is applied every day afterwards, including the weekends. If you're having troubles, let me know. I'm flexible if you talk to me and let me know <u>before the deadline</u>.
- Web Production projects will not be accepted after Apr. 12.

Note from the Senate

Students will receive graded work worth no less than 15% at least 3 days prior to the deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty. Students can find details about this academic policy here: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf. Please note, students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the grades they have received in their courses.

Land Acknowledgement

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the *Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak* and *Attawandaron* peoples who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

Tentative Schedule (see OWL)

Week 1: Jan. 11-17
- Elements of the web.
- How to critiquing a website
- How HTML works
- Writing Basic HTML (Brackets)
- File structure
- Using FTP (FileZilla)

Exercise 1: Create your homepage

Week 2: Jan. 18-24
- Usability & UX
- Critique a site for usability
- Semantic HTML
- Semantic Tagging (Brackets)
- Images, Relative Linking & Jump Links (Brackets)

Quiz 1: HTML Basics
Exercise 2: Semantic Tags

Week 3: Jan. 25-31
- Conceptual Design Process
- How CSS works
- Writing CSS (Brackets)
- The Box Model
- Lines, Colors, Fonts, Background Images (Brackets)

Exercise 3: Emulate a layout

Week 4: Feb. 1-7
- Using CSS to create basic layouts (Brackets)
- Writing for the web
- Web typography (Brackets)

Quiz 2: CSS
Exercise 4: Create a two-column layout
Exercise 5: Scannable text with original typography

Week 5: Feb. 8-14
- Floats & clearing floats (Brackets)
- Logos & image floating (Brackets)
- Linking Styles (Brackets)
- Compound CSS (Brackets)
- Rounded edges, drop shadows, CSS3 (Brackets)

Exercise 6: Create an original 3-col. layout
Exercise 7: Robot Uprising

Reading Week: Feb. 15-21

Week 6: Feb. 22-28
- File Structure (review)
- Externalizing CSS (Brackets)
- CSS style organization (Brackets)
- Horizontal menu (Brackets)

Quiz 3: Relative Linking
Exercise 8: Big Red Dot
Assignment 1: Web Proposal

Week 7: Mar. 1-7
- Drop Down Menu (Brackets)
- Using Dreamweaver's Templates (Dreamweaver)
- Suggestions for easiest building in Brackets (Brackets and Finder/Explorer)

Exercise 9: Excelsior Designs Mini-Site

Week 8: Mar. 8-14
- Graphic Types
- Color Theory
- Photoshop Intro (Photoshop)
- Optimizing Graphics (Photoshop, Online Tools)

Week 9: Mar. 15-21
- Adjusting Images (Photoshop)
- Refining Edges, Layer Styles, Filters (Photoshop)

Exercise 10: Hybrid Image

Week 10 – Bonus tutorials: Mar. 22-28
- Responsive Design (Brackets)
- Responsive Images (Brackets)
- Accessible Dropdowns

Weeks 11-14: Mar. 28-Apr. 12
- Work time on final project

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, 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

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 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
Mental Health Support: https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html
Accessible Education: http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html
Accessibility Information: 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.