DC 3304G: Locative Media
Winter 2021
Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Instructor: Darryl A. Pieber (dpieber@uwo.ca)
Classroom: SH 3315 (Classes to be held via Zoom until further notice)
Time: Tuesdays, 3:30-6:30pm
Office location: TBA
Office hours: Thursdays 1:00-2:00pm

Course description: This course explores the social, political, and economic contexts of locative media: smartphone apps like Tinder, Uber and Google Maps that make use of people's location coordinates to provide information about the people, places and events around them in the moment. The course covers issues such as mobility, space and time, privacy, security, identity and relationships.

Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 landscape may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online. The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Though this is scheduled to be a face-to-face course, we will hold classes via Zoom during the scheduled class time for at least the month of January, possibly longer. I will post the Zoom link on the main page of the course OWL site.

When deemed necessary, tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at: https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca.

Students must wear triple layer non-medical masks at all times in the classroom as per university policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons should seek accommodation through Accessible Education.

Reminder: Students must not to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks, provided MLHU guidelines permit this.

Assignments and grading

Midterm exam (In class, 15 February): 20%
Reading responses (4x5%): 20%
Group project (29 March): 30%
Final exam (During final exam period): 20%

Participation: 10%

Reading responses: You will need to write a 500-word response paper for four different readings from the course – two before Reading Week and two after. You must choose readings from different days. For each response, you will need to identify one key point that you agree with and one key point that you disagree with, and explain why for both. You will also need to identify one point that you would like to explore further, or that has changed the way you think about the topic covered in the article. Reading responses are due on the day that the reading is scheduled. Detailed instructions are posted on OWL under the Assignments tab. Each response is worth 5% for a total of 20% of your final grade.

Group project: Working in groups of three or four, you will develop and present a proposal for either

- how an existing social media platform can incorporate locative capacities to what they currently offer, or
- an altogether new locative media platform

In either case, you will need to apply theories from the course to inform your proposal. You will have 20 minutes to present your proposal to the class followed by 10 minutes for questions. As a group, you will also need to produce a written report of your proposal of not more than 1,500 words. The report is due on 29 March in class. Additionally, each member of the group will need to submit a self-assessment of their work on the project as well as a peer assessment for each member of their group. The assessments should not exceed a total of 250 words. Detailed instructions will be posted on OWL under the Assignments tab. The grade for the group project breaks down as follows:

- Presentation: 10%
- Written report: 15%
- Self and peer assessments 5%
- Total: 30%

Exams: Exams will cover course materials from both the readings and class. The midterm exam will cover information from Weeks 2-5 inclusive. The final exam will cover information from Weeks 8-11 inclusive.

Late assignments

Late assignments without accommodation will be **docked 2% per day**. Work deferred through an SRA is due 48 hours following the end of the SRA. After 48 hours, late work will be **docked 2% per day**.

Accessing materials from class

I will post my powerpoint presentations on the course OWL site each week after class. I will record classes delivered via Zoom. Those students who are unable to attend class due to illness can request the video from me. I will remind students of this at the beginning of each class. Those who do not wish to be recorded can turn off their cameras.

Readings

There are no required texts for this course. All readings are either journal articles or book chapters (ebooks) that are available through the Weldon Library catalogue.

Course schedule

Week 1: 11 January – Introduction to the course / What are locative media?

Suggested reading:

Wilken, Rowan. (2019). *Cultural economies of locative media*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 1: 25-44. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190234911.001.0001.

Week 2: 18 January – Mobility

Required readings:

Sheller, Mimi & Urry, John. 2006. The new mobilities paradigm. *Environment and Planning A, 38*(2), 207-226. https://doi.org/10.1068/a37268.

Licoppe, C. (2016). Mobilities and urban encounters in public places in the age of locative media. Seams, folds, and encounters with 'pseudonymous strangers'. *Mobilities, 11*(1), 99-116. https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2015.1097035.

Week 3: 25 January – Space, place and placelessness in the city

Required readings:

Özkul, D. (2013). 'You're virtually there': Mobile communication practices, locational information sharing and place attachment. *First Monday, 18*(11). https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v18i11.4950.

Wilken, R. & Humphreys, L. (2021). Placemaking through mobile social media platform Snapchat. *Convergence*, 27(3), 579-93. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856521989518.

Week 4: 1 February – Time

Required readings:

Highmore, B. (2004). Homework: Routine, social aesthetics and the ambiguity of everyday life. Cultural Studies, 18(2-3), 306-27. https://doi.org/10.1080/0950238042000201536.

Gekker, A., Hind, S., Lammes, S., Perkins, C., & Wilmott, C. (2018). Introduction: Mapping times. In Lammes, S., Perkins, C., Gekker, A., Hind, S., Wilmott, C., & Evans, D. *Time for mapping: Cartographic temporalities*. Manchester University Press. 1-23. https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/30006/650132.pdf.

Week 5: 8 February – The space and time of locative media

Required readings:

Speed, C. (2011). Kissing and making up: Time, space and locative media. *Digital Creativity*, *22*(4), 235-246. https://doi.org/10.1080/14626268.2011.622283.

Løvlie, A.S. (2011). Annotative locative media and G-P-S: Granularity, participation, and serendipity. *Computers and composition, 28*, 246-54. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2011.07.006.

Week 6: 15 February – Midterm exam

Week 7: 22 February – Reading Week

Week 8: 1 March – Maps and mapping

Required reading:

Kitchin, R. & Dodge, M. (2007). Rethinking maps. *Progress in Human Geography*, *31*(3), 331-344. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132507077082.

Week 9: 8 March – (In)visibility

Required readings:

Frith, J. (2017). Invisibility through the interface: The social consequences of spatial search. *Media, Culture & Society, 39*(4), 536-51. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443717698871.

Conner, C.T. (2019). The gay gayze: Expressions of inequality on Grindr. *The Sociological Quarterly, 60*(3), 397-419. https://doi.org/10.1080/00380253.2018.1533394.

Week 10: 15 March – Privacy

Required readings:

Leszczynski, A. (2017). Geoprivacy. In Kitchin, R., Lauriault, T.P., & Wilson, M.W. eds. *Understanding spatial media*. Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526425850.n22.

Mann, S. & Ferenbok, J. (2013). New media and the power politics of souveillance in a surveillance-dominated world. *Surveillance & Society*, 11(1/2), 18-34. https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v11i1/2.4456.

Hjorth, L., Pink, S., & Horst, H.A. (2018). Being at home with privacy: Privacy and mundane intimacy through same-sex locative media practices. *International Journal of Communication, 12*, 1209-1227. https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A561120199/AONE?u=lond95336&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=f2b2d221.

Week 11: 22 March – Storytelling

Required readings:

Didur, J. & Fan, Lai-Tze. (2018). Between landscape and the screen: Locative media, transitive reading, and environmental storytelling. *Media Theory, 2*(1), 79-107. http://journalcontent.mediatheoryjournal.org/index.php/mt/article/view/37.

Week 12: 29 March – Group project presentations

Week 13: 5 April – Group project presentations

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.