

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 landscape will necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online.

Instructor Information

Instructor: Bernard Graham

Office: FNB 4122

Office Hours: Available by appointment via Zoom.

E-Mail: bgraha52@uwo.ca

Course Information

Weekly lectures (in class or via Zoom) will be held Fridays 1:30pm – 4pm (with break) from Jan 14 to April 8

Classroom: Zoom or FNB 2070

Technology requirements: Computer/laptop, microphone, headphones, audio editing software (more info below).

Additional audio equipment will be available for you to sign out through the FIMS equipment office.

Prerequisites

Restricted to years 3 & 4 FIMS Modules. Not open to MIT Minor Module. Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course will examine audio as a media platform – with a focus on podcasting. Students will be introduced to the foundations of audio production and audio journalism. Students will be given the opportunity to produce audio content (record voice, edit, mix sound and music) using digital audio tools. Students will become familiar with audio storytelling, story structure and program creation.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Be able to create an audio production containing voice, sound and music using multi-track mixing
2. Understand the principles of audio storytelling, story structure and program production
3. Have learned how to use their voice for narration
4. Pitch and produce an original podcast
5. Understand podcasting as an emerging media platform

Course Schedule/Outlook

You will find information about the weekly lectures in OWL under the lecture date. You can also find an overall lesson schedule. Information about specific weekly lectures will be released every Wednesday.

Lecture slides and video of Zoom guests will be posted each week after Friday's class.

Course Materials

There is no textbook for this course! However, students will need access to a computer, editing software, headphones and a microphone.

Approved audio editing software for this course includes **Adobe Audition** or Premiere, Audacity, Garage Band, and Reaper. **Adobe Audition is the preferred software because technical support is available through FIMS. There is no support for any other software. You are on your own.**

You can get a monthly paid subscription to **Adobe Audition** [here](#). You will need the software for three months: February, March and April. **TIP: One account can have multiple users so consider sharing the cost.**

Students will also need a microphone. Mobile phone mics and headsets offer acceptable quality if you speak close to the microphone. USB microphones offer the best quality and are relatively inexpensive. This [USB mic](#) has been recommended. Other mics such as Yeti and Blue offer very good sound quality. **TIP: There are used USB mics are readily available on Kijiji and FB Marketplace.**

Other course materials

I will be providing links to articles and podcasts throughout this course.

The book I recommend for extra learning is called *Make Noise: A Creator's Guide to Podcasting and Great Audio Storytelling* by Eric Nuzum.

I also strongly encourage students interested in the podcasting industry to sign up for [the weekly blog](#) from **Pacific Content**, a Canadian podcasting company. The blog provides interesting, up-to-date information about the industry.

There is also a very good sub-Reddit thread featuring posts from content creators and listeners. Find it at **r/podcast**

Course evaluations and assignments

A student's final mark will be made up of grades for following assignments as well as a participation grade:

First-person mix (40%) DUE Fri Mar. 4 at 1pm

Students will produce a a multi-track mix of someone sharing a "first-person" story. The story will be enhanced with sound effects and music.

Podcast pitch (5%) DUE Thurs Mar 24 at 5pm

Students will submit a proposal for a podcast series and a pilot episode.

Podcast episode (40%) DUE Fri April 8 at 1pm

Students will create an audio production of varying time limits - depending on whether it's produced by an individual or by a group of students.

Asynchronous assignments (5%) ONGOING

To complement synchronous lectures, there will be five assignments. Students will complete them either during class time or on their own time. Each assignment is worth 1 per cent of their final grade. These assignments are pass/fail.

Class participation (10%)

Each student will be given a participation mark based on attendance, engagement, contributions to class learning, forum posts, and professionalism.

Course Attendance

Most of the learning of this course will be delivered during the weekly lectures. As mentioned, there will be times when you will be assigned an activity that you will need to complete during either the remaining class time or on your own time.

Deadlines

Deadlines for assignments are hard deadlines - unless you provide me a compelling reason to extend.

You must seek my approval for an extension at least 24 hours in advance of the deadline.

Scholastic offences/withdrawal from course

Members of the University Community accept a commitment to maintain and uphold the purposes of the University and, in particular, its standards of scholarship. It follows, therefore, that acts of a nature that prejudice the academic standards of the University are offences subject to discipline. Any form of academic dishonesty that undermines the evaluation process, also undermines the integrity of the University's degrees. The University will take all appropriate measures to promote academic integrity and deal appropriately with scholastic offences.

The deadline to drop a course without academic penalty is March 14, 2022. Students can find details about this academic policy [here](#).

Please note, students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the grades they have received in their courses.

Statement on the Use of Zoom Recording

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.

Any Zoom 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 under special circumstances. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Weekly Breakdown

Week 1/ Jan 14: Class introduction, review of the syllabus and course expectations

Week 2/ Jan 21: A short history of podcasting (with guest speaker)

Week 3/ Jan 28: The art of conversation (with guest speaker)

Week 4/ Feb 4: Editing and mixing w/ FIMS technical support staff

Week 5/ Feb 11: Audio storytelling and first-person mixes

Week 6/ Feb 18: Audio gear w/ FIMS technical support staff

Week 7/ Feb 25: NO CLASS/Reading Week

Week 8/ Mar 4: Listening session for your first-person mixes

Week 9/ Mar 11: Bringing your best voice forward (with guest speaker)

Week 10/ Mar 18: What goes into a good podcast pitch

Week 11/ Mar 25: Feedback for your podcast pitches

Week 12/ April 1: Elements of program production

Week 13/ April 8: Listening session for your podcast submissions

Land Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay- wuk) and Attawandaron (Add-a-won-da-run) peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 2022

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/uwo.com/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.