

**The University of Western Ontario
Faculty of Information and Media Studies**

**MIT 4031G– Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Human Health
Course Outline, Winter 2022**

Instructor Information

Name: Prof. Luke Stark (pronouns: he/him/his)

Office: FNB 4035

Student Meetings: By appointment via Zoom (<https://calendly.com/lukestark>)

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Course Information

Course Meetings: Fridays 10:30am to 1:30pm ET

Location: Health Sciences Building Room 9, or via Zoom (session links will be sent weekly via email)

Other student meetings: By appointment via Zoom (<https://calendly.com/lukestark>)

OWL site information: [https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/a210f044-05e2-496f-b627-](https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/a210f044-05e2-496f-b627-1287e98282b6)

[1287e98282b6](https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/a210f044-05e2-496f-b627-1287e98282b6)<https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/a210f044-05e2-496f-b627-1287e98282b6>

Technology requirements: Students will require regular or at least consistent access to a computer and internet connection capable of handling, in particular, streaming video. If this is an issue, please contact me as soon as possible.

Prerequisites or Antirequisites

Registration in fourth year of an Honours Specialization module in FIMS. Note: Enrolment is based on a ballot system which is submitted prior to course registration.

Course Syllabus

Course Description

This course will provide students with the opportunity to examine the ways artificial intelligence systems and digital automation technologies are shaping the practices, discourses, and imagined futures of human health and wellbeing. Through a focus on these technologies' applications in areas such as clinical practice, genetic research, and mental health diagnosis, the course will provide students with a rich understanding of these AI systems' histories, technical affordances, ethical and social impacts, and role in debates about the future of human health and healthcare in Canada and around the world.

Course Objectives

In these challenging times, the first objective of the course is to support each other throughout the semester. Additionally, by the conclusion of the course I hope you'll also feel confident to do the following:

- Think expansively about the historical antecedents and social impacts of artificial intelligence and automation technologies such as machine learning, both broadly and in the context of human health
- Analyze and describe how broader controversies around the ethical and social implications of the technologies apply to sectors such as healthcare, precision medicine, and mental health treatment.
- Become adept in applying your knowledge to the rapidly changing public and scholarly conversation around digital automation.

- Develop a mix of critical research skills, and learn to use these skills synthetically, creatively, and thoughtfully to your own analyses and arguments.
- Apply both your knowledge and research skills to a particular set of research problems.

Weekly Topics and Readings

Introduction

January 14, 2022

Future Advocacy. [Ethical, social, and political challenges of artificial intelligence in health](#). Future Advocacy and Wellcome Trust, April 2018.

Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR). *Building a Learning Health System for Canadians: Report of the Artificial Intelligence for Health Task Force*. July 2020.

Couser, G Thomas. “Illness.” *Keywords for Disability Studies*. Ed. Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin. New York: NYU Press, 2015. 105–107.

Titchkosky, Tanya. “Normal.” *Keywords for Disability Studies*. Ed. Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin. New York: NYU Press, 2015. 130–132.

Thomas, Rachel. “Medicine’s Machine Learning Problem.” *Boston Review*, October 19, 2020, <https://bostonreview.net/articles/rachel-thomas-medicines-machine-learning-problem/>

Epistemology & Evidence

January 21, 2022

Ginzburg, Carlo. “Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method.” *History Workshop Journal* (2009): 5–36.

Marx, Leo. 2010. “Technology: the Emergence of a Hazardous Concept.” *Technology and Culture* 51 (3): 561–77. doi:10.1353/tech.2010.0009.

Seminar presentation:

Rose, Nikolas. “Calculable Minds and Manageable Individuals.” *History of the Human Sciences* 1.2 (1988): 179–200.

Biopolitics

January 28, 2022

Foucault, Michel. “17 March 1976.” *Society Must Be Defended*. New York: Picador, 2003. 239–263.

Deleuze, Gilles. 1990. “Postscript on Control Societies.” In *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, translated by Martin Joughin, 177–82. New York: Columbia University Press.

Seminar presentation:

Mbembé, Achille. 2003. “Necropolitics.” *Public Culture* 15 (1): 11–40.

Fairness & Power
February 4, 2022

Kalluri, Pratyusha. “Don't Ask if AI Is Good or Fair, Ask How It Shifts Power.” *Nature* 583 (2020): 169.

Hoffmann, Anna Lauren. “Where Fairness Fails: Data, Algorithms, and the Limits of Antidiscrimination Discourse.” *Information, Communication & Society* 22.7 (2019): 900–915.

Myers West, Sarah. “Redistribution and Recognition: A Feminist Critique of Algorithmic Fairness.” *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience*, 6(2) (2020): 1–24

Seminar presentation:

Bruno L, Oliver N, Letouze E, Pentland A, Vinck P. [Fair, transparent, and accountable algorithmic decision-making processes: the premise, the proposed solutions, and the open challenges](#). *Philosophy & Technology* 2018; 31(4): 611-627.

Selbst, Andrew D., danah boyd, Sorelle A. Friedler, Suresh Venkatasubramanian, and Janet Vertesi “Fairness and Abstraction in Sociotechnical Systems.” *Proceedings of ACM FAT* 2019*, New York, NY, USA: Association for Computing Machinery, 2019. 59–68.

Ethics
February 11, 2022

Char D, Abramoff MD, Feudtner C. Identifying ethical considerations for machine learning healthcare applications. *American Journal of Bioethics*, 2020:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15265161.2020.1819469>

Chin-Yee Benjamin, and Ross Upshur. “Three Problems with Big Data and Artificial Intelligence in Medicine.” *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 62 (2019) : 237-256

Seminar presentations:

Metcalf J., Moss E., Boyd D. [Owning ethics: Corporate logics, Silicon Valley, and the institutionalization of ethics](#). *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 82(2): 449-476.

Irene Y. Chen, Emma Pierson, Sherri Rose, Shalmali Joshi, Kadija Ferryman, Marzyeh Ghassemi. “Ethical Machine Learning in Health Care” *Annual Reviews for Biomedical Data Science* 2021.

Bias and Inequality
February 18, 2022

Alberga, Hannah, “How can we keep algorithmic racism out of Canadian health care’s AI toolkit??” *The Globe and Mail*, February 5, 2021, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health-and-fitness/article-how-can-we-keep-algorithmic-racism-out-of-canadian-health-cares-ai/>

Browne, Simone. “Digital Epidermalization: Race, Identity and Biometrics.” *Critical Sociology* 36.1 (2010): 131–150.

Kahn, Jonathan et al. “How Not to Talk About Race and Genetics.” *Buzzfeed News*, 30 March 2018, <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/bfopinion/race-genetics-david-reich>

Parikh, Ravi B, Stephanie Teeple, and Amol S Navathe. “Addressing Bias in Artificial Intelligence in Health Care.” *JAMA* 322.24 (2019): 2377.

How We’ve Taught Algorithms to See Identity: Constructing Race and Gender in Image Databases for Facial Analysis. Morgan Klaus Scheuerman, Kandrea Wade, Caitlin Lustig, Jed R. Brubaker. Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 4, CSCW1, Article 58. May 2020.
Seminar presentations:

Seminar presentations:

J Wiens, S Saria, M Sendak, M Ghassemi, VX Liu, F Doshi-Velez, K Jung, et al. “Do no harm: a roadmap for responsible machine learning for health care.” *Nature Medicine* 2 (9), 1337-1340

Obermeyer, Ziad et al. “Dissecting Racial Bias in an Algorithm Used to Manage the Health of Populations.” *Science* 366.6464 (2019): 447–453 AND

Benjamin R. Assessing risk, automating racism. *Science*, 2019 (a response to Obermeyer et al): <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/366/6464/421/tab-article-info>

Reading Week – No Class

February 25, 2022

Data

March 4, 2022

Aitken, Mhairi et al. “Consensus Statement on Public Involvement and Engagement with Data-Intensive Health Research.” *International Journal of Population Data Science* 4.1 (2019): 1–6.

Allen J, Adams C, Flack F. [The role of data custodians in establishing and maintaining social licence for health research.](#) *Bioethics* 2019 (18 Jan).

Powles, Julia, and Hal Hodson. “Google DeepMind and Healthcare in an Age of Algorithms.” *Health and Technology* 29.7 (2017): 1–17.

Seminar presentations:

Dixon-Woods M, Carter P, Laurie GT. [The social licence for research: why care.data ran into trouble.](#) *Journal of Medical Ethics* 2015; 41(5): 404-409.

Stinson, Catherine. *Healthy Data: Policy Solutions for Big Data and AI Innovation in Health.* Mowat Centre, University of Toronto, 2018.

Diagnosis

March 11, 2022

Agassi, Joseph, and Nathaniel Laor. “The Computer as a Diagnostic Tool in Medicine.” *Technology in Society* 6 (1984): 235–239.

Beede, Emma, Elizabeth Baylor, Fred Hersch, Anna Iurchenko, Lauren Wilcox, Paisan Ruamviboonsuk, and Laura M Vardoulakis. 2020. "A Human-Centered Evaluation of a Deep Learning System Deployed in Clinics for the Detection of Diabetic Retinopathy." In *Proceedings of CHI 2020*:1–12. New York, NY, USA: ACM. doi:10.1145/3313831.3376718.

Seminar presentations:

Braun, Lundy. "Race Correction and Spirometry: Why History Matters." *Chest* 159, no. 4 (2020): 1670–75. doi:10.1016/j.chest.2020.10.046.

Lea, Andrew. "Computerizing Diagnosis: Keeve Brodman and the Medical Data Screen." *Isis* 110.2 (2019): 228–250.

Treatment

March 18, 2022

Elish, M.C. and Elizabeth Anne Watkins. *Repairing Innovation: A Study of Integrating AI in Clinical Care*. Data & Society Research Institute, 2020.

Sendak, Mark et al. "'The Human Body Is a Black Box': Supporting Clinical Decision-Making with Deep Learning." *Proceedings of ACM FAT**, Vol. 44. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2020. 99–109.

Seminar presentations:

Merid, B., Robles, M.C., and Nallamotheu, B.K. (2021). "[Digital Redlining and Cardiovascular Innovation.](#)" *Circulation* 144(12), 913-915. ([PubMed](#))

Wadmann S, Hoeyer K. [Dangers of the digital fit: Rethinking seamlessness and social sustainability in data-intensive healthcare.](#) *Big Data & Society* 2018 (Jan-Jun): 1-13.

Prevention, Wellness, and Aging

March 25, 2022

Eveleth, Rose. *Welcome to Vanguard Estates: A story in which you choose your own path*. Data & Society Research Institute, 2018

Pugh, Allison J. "Automated Health Care Offers Freedom from Shame, But Is It What Patients Need?" *The New Yorker* (22 May 2018), <https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/automated-health-care-offers-freedom-from-shame-but-is-it-what-patients-need>

Samuel, Sigal. "You can buy a robot to keep your lonely grandparents company. Should you?" *Vox* (8 December 2020), <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2020/9/9/21418390/robots-pandemic-loneliness-isolation-elderly-seniors>

Schüll, Natasha Dow. 2016. "Data for Life: Wearable Technology and the Design of Self-Care." *BioSocieties* 11 (3). Nature Publishing Group: 1–17. doi:10.1057/biosoc.2015.47.

Seminar presentations:

McFall, Liz. “Personalizing Solidarity? The Role of Self-Tracking in Health Insurance Pricing.” *Economy and Society* 0.0 (2019): 1–25.

Holzmeyer C. (2021). [Beyond ‘AI for Social Good’ \(AI4SG\): social transformations—not tech-fixes—for health equity](#). *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*: 46.

Epidemiology & Public Health
April 1, 2022

Molldrem, Stephen, and Smith Anthony K J. 2021. “Reassessing the Ethics of Molecular HIV Surveillance in the Era of Cluster Detection and Response: Toward HIV Data Justice.” *The American Journal of Bioethics* 20 (10). Taylor & Francis: 10–23. doi:10.1080/15265161.2020.1806373.

Mooney SJ, Pejaver V. [Big data in public health: terminology, machine learning, and privacy](#). *Annual Review of Public Health* 2018; 39:95-112.

Greta R Bauer , Daniel Lizotte, “Artificial Intelligence, Intersectionality, and the Future of Public Health” <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33326280/>

Futures
April 8, 2022

Benjamin, R. 2016. Informed refusal: Toward a justice-based bioethics. *Science, Technology, and Human Values* 41(6):967–990.

Brandt, Marisa. 2013. “From “the Ultimate Display” to “the Ultimate Skinner Box”: Virtual Reality and the Future of Psychotherapy.” In *Media Studies Futures*, edited by Kelly Gates, 1–22. London.

Klein, Eran. 2020. Ethics and the Emergence of Brain-Computer Interface Medicine. *Brain-Computer Interfaces*. 1st ed. Vol. 168. Elsevier B.V. doi:10.1016/B978-0-444-63934-9.00024-X.

Etiquette & Course Conduct

In this course, I’d like you to strive to embody Western’s equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles. Western’s institutional commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) supports the University’s mandate as a research-intensive institution of higher learning, an employer of choice and a community leader. The University is enriched by the diversity of our campus community and strengthened by our shared commitment to equity and inclusion. Black Lives Matter, as do the lives and experiences of Indigenous peoples, other visible minorities, and all underrepresented and equity-seeking groups*. Your conduct in this course should be guided by the principles below:

Equity – We value equity of access and opportunity for members of underrepresented and equity-seeking groups*. We take action to identify and address barriers to the full participation of members of these groups at the University.

Diversity – We value and respect the diversity of our campus community. We recognize the important contributions that diverse perspectives and lived experiences bring to Western’s learning, teaching, working and research environments.

Inclusion – We value inclusion and active engagement with and across diverse communities in all aspects of university life. We foster a welcoming campus community where everyone feels respected, valued and included.

*Members of underrepresented or equity-seeking groups includes, but may not be limited to, women, Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis), persons with disabilities, members of racialized groups and members of LGBTQ2+ communities. In recognition that all individuals have multiple aspects of identity, an intersectional lens will also be used when assessing barriers and/or developing policies/programs at the University.

Your goal is full attendance, attention, participation, listening and reading all of required texts. That said, while I expect the very best you can give, this semester is unlike many others, and goals are always aspirational. Do your best, but don't beat yourself up when (as we all do) it feels to you as if you come up short.

Disagreements are expected, but while arguments are not contests, they often have high stakes (sometimes invisible to you, but highly compelling to others – see the EDI principles above). Personal attacks, bullying, or intimidation are not acceptable under any circumstance. Please keep nitpicking to a minimum; all questions, whether basic or advance, are valuable. Remember, you are free to change your mind at any time -- as are others.

Do not engage in “seek and destroy” criticism of others’ ideas, or of ideas in the readings. Critique is a powerful tool and can do damage. If you have something critical to say about a reading, please be ready to explain how the piece could be improved; if you disagree with the premise of a piece, read to understand what motivates the argument -- without knowing your adversary, how can you defeat it?

The testimony of personal experience is a necessary and often valuable part of our intellectual grounding and trajectory. However, like critique, testimony is also a powerful tool that can cut both ways. Please be thoughtful about mobilizing personal experience in class. Ask yourself if the testimony is relevant, and safe for you to share; ask yourself too if you are prepared to seriously consider others’ interpretations of your experience if they differ from your own? Anecdotes are a different kind of evidence that systematically collected scholarly data, and useful (or harmful) in different ways.

For more information on Western’s policies around academic integrity, including plagiarism, please visit <https://teaching.uwo.ca/teaching/assessing/academic-integrity.html>

Course Materials

All course materials will be available via the course site on OWL. There are no late penalties for this course; however, I am constrained by final mark submission deadlines set by the university.

The final date to drop this course without academic penalty is **March 14, 2022**.

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, 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 assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

~~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>.~~

Methods of Evaluation

Collegiality & Engagement: 25%

You will be evaluated on your qualitative contributions to course discussions. Please remember that some people may feel less comfortable speaking up in class, while some feel more comfortable. We will discuss best practices for class dynamics and group discussion, particularly via Zoom, on the first day of the course. As part of this portion of your grade, you will complete a weekly “exit ticket” through which you can ask further questions about the material and provide other feedback to me.

Seminar Presentation & Facilitation: 25%

Once a term, you will be responsible for a fifteen-minute, in-depth presentation of one of the week's readings marked as “seminar presentations.” In that presentation, you should present the piece's main arguments, explain its broader scholarly context, and connect its contribution to contemporary debates both academic and public. **Visual aides are welcome but not required.** You will also facilitate class discussion. A sign-up list will be available on the OWL course site at the beginning of the semester; please make an appointment with me the week prior to your assigned presentation to discuss your plans for your presentation.

Review Article: 15%

Synthetic review articles can be a valuable way for junior scholars to engage with the broader intellectual community around current ideas. For this assignment, pick two or three recent (within the past four years) articles related broadly to the topics of the course. Write a review of around 1500 well-polished words describing the distinct arguments of the pieces, how they agree or disagree, and relating them to the themes of the course. The articles should not be ones on the course syllabus; as a group, they should broadly cohere, yet be distinctive enough for you to draw comparisons between them.

We'll will discuss best practices for reviewing and further assignment details in class. **Your review article is due on Friday, February 11th**

Research Essay 35%

The final research essay for this course should be approximately 6000 words in length. It should draw on external sources to make an original scholarly argument. It can also make targeted recommendations for a specific audience (e.g. policymakers or clinicians). We will discuss further assignment details in class. **Please email me with your preferred option, specific topic, and a brief abstract by Friday, March 11th; we will also have an in-person meeting to discuss the project during the month of March.**

A final version of your essay is due on Friday, April 8th.

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.

Remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded for accessibility purposes. 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.

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that Western University's buildings are located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and future, and acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples (e.g. First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society, and we honor and respect the Indigenous communities still living on and connected to this land by striving for restorative justice for First Nations peoples, and for all.

Syllabus Credits

This syllabus is grounded in part on materials developed by Drs. Gabriella Coleman of McGill University, Jonathan Sterne of McGill University, Anna Lauren Hoffmann of the University of Washington, and Jay Shaw and Ross Upshur of the University of Toronto.

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.