

**MIT 2151B (002)**  
**Consumer Society: Advertising & Promotional Culture**  
**Course Outline – Winter 2023**



**Time and Place:** Thursdays 1:30pm – 4:30pm in-person FNB 1200



*Students will be expected to 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](#).*

*In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online. If this happens, our weekly lecture will be posted each Thursday at 1:30pm – and you will have the week to review this posted material. The grading scheme will not change, though our exams would pivot to online assessments. If the course runs online, 'attendance' will be tracked through very short weekly forum posts which you will have access to each Thursday at 1:30pm with one week to complete. More information will follow if we find ourselves in this situation.*

**Contact Information:**

Professor: Dr. Selma A. Purac

Email: [spurac2@uwo.ca](mailto:spurac2@uwo.ca)

Office Hours: held weekly via Zoom during scheduled hours (TBA)



As noted on the previous page, I will hold weekly virtual office hours via Zoom. Meetings will run during scheduled office hours (TBA). If you would like to meet with me via Zoom, send me an email and I will let you know what my availability for that week is (I will book appointments in 15 minute time slots). I'll email you a link to the meeting about 10-minutes beforehand; click on the link to enter the 'waiting room,' and I'll let you in once I finish up with the student who is scheduled before you.

If you would prefer to meet with me in person, send me an email and we can make arrangements. My office is on the fourth floor of FNB (4126) – near the elevators.

### **Course Description and Overview:**

This course examines the complex role of advertising, promotion, and marketing in our culture. In our in-depth exploration of 'consumer society,' we will consider the connections between advertising and propaganda, the ways marketing may or may not be used for purposes other than profit, and how markets and marketing influence media.

This course will:

- survey the theoretical, historical, social, and cultural contexts of consumer society
- analyze and evaluate advertisements and marketing campaigns from a critical perspective
- consider the how the theory and practice of public relations intersects with consumerism
- explore how and to what purpose different media employ and disseminate ideologies of consumption
- encourage students to assess and analyze their own engagement with consumer culture

### **Important Dates:**

- January 9: Classes Start
- February 18 - 26: Reading Week
- March 7: Last Day to Drop the Course without Penalty
- April 10: Classes End
- April 11, 12: Study Day(s)
- April 13 - 30: Exam Period

### **Resources:**

#### **READINGS:**

-All course readings have been posted on OWL for you.

-In OWL, on the left-hand side of our course page, click on "Resources". Then, click on "Course Readings." Here, you will find links to our course readings; the schedule for these readings is listed below in the section entitled "Course Schedule."

#### **OTHER:**

Fincher, David Dir. *Fight Club*. Fox, 1999.

- You will need to stream/rent the film *Fight Club* in advance of our Week 11 class
- Students may also be required to listen to podcasts or watch videos that are available online (as noted in the syllabus schedule)

### Evaluation:

Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Information on these assessments will be posted on OWL. Our Reflection assignments will take place online; your deadline will be randomly assigned to you (one in the first-half of the course and one in the latter-half). Please refer to the “Online Reflections – Assigned Deadlines” sheet posted under the “Assignments” tab of our OWL site. I will update this sheet regularly to reflect changes in our course roster. Our exams will be mixed format and take place in person.

Assessment	Format	Weighting	Due Date
Midterm Exam	Mixed, in-person	35%	Feb 16, 1:30 – 3:30pm
Final Exam	Mixed, in-person	35%	TBA
Online Reflection #1	OWL submission	15%	Date Assigned, 1:30pm
Online Reflection #2	OWL submission	15%	Date Assigned, 1:30pm

- All reflections will be submitted to Turnitin.
- Detailed information on the Reflections has been posted on OWL (under the “Assignments” tab of our OWL site, click on “MIT 2151B Online Reflection.” Here, you will find two documents: “Assigned Deadlines” and “Guidelines”. Review both carefully.
- Detailed information on the Exams will be covered in class as those dates approach.
- After an assessment is returned, students need to wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting the instructor. To ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days.

Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning exams and grading. The table below outlines the University-wide grade descriptors. Detailed FIMS specific descriptors are included in the Notes from the Dean’s Office appended to this syllabus.

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

### Late Assignment Policy:

- **IMPORTANT NOTICE:** as per university policy, SRAs no longer exist. This means that you will need to monitor your deadlines much more carefully; it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they meet the posted deadlines.
- Late reflections without academic consideration **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**. You will have access to a reflection submission link based upon your assigned deadline. If you do not upload your assignment to OWL by that assigned deadline, you will receive a ZERO on the assignment, which is worth 15%. (see “Online Reflections – Assigned Deadlines” sheet posted under the “Assignments” tab).
- Late reflections with academic consideration require the student to work with the Academic Advising unit in their Faculty of registration; once that has been

# NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 2023

## Rights and Responsibilities

The conditions governing a student's ability to pursue their undergraduate education at Western are ratified by Senate and can be found on the Academic Policies section of the University Secretariat:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic\\_policies/rights\\_responsibilities.html](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html)

## Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

## Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software 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

### Academic Accommodation

Students with disabilities work with [Accessible Education \(AE\)](#) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.

### Medical Consideration

Students who have medical grounds for academic consideration for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth **10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty (for FIMS students this is [Undergraduate Student Services](#)).

Students are required to provided

documentation in the form of a [Student Medical Certificate](#). It will be the Dean's Office that will determine if consideration is warranted.

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

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

## Compassionate Accommodation

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

If a member of your immediate family is seriously ill, obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician and submit the documentation to your Academic Counsellor.

If you have been involved in a severe accident, fire, or some other exceptional crisis, obtain a copy of the police report or be prepared to provide the necessary documentation upon request.

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

## 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 Advisor. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

## Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). The gender-based violence and survivor support case managers are located in Thames Hall (3114-3127 office suite.) To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

## Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Health and Wellness](#) for a complete list of supports.

## SUPPORT SERVICES - LINKS

[FIMS UGSS](#): *academic advising; career services*

[Psychological Services](#): *Information about accessing mental health supports*

[Medical Services](#): *Student health related services*

[Office of the Registrar](#): *Financial Information, Timetable, Exam Schedules, Academic Calendar Information*

[Academic Support and Engagement](#): *Central Academic Supports, including Writing Centre, Learning Development, Transition and Leadership Supports, and Careers and Experience*

[Accessible Education](#): *Assessment and recommendations for students with disabilities*

[Accessibility Information](#): *Information to help support barrier free access, including floor plans, accessible washroom locations, service disruptions etc.*

[Indigenous Student Services](#): *Includes information about financial support, indigenous self-identification, orientation, and tutor support*

[Western International](#): *Information and support for international students and students seeking to go on exchange*

## FIMS Grading Policy

FIMS Undergraduate programs now have the following class average policy:

*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%.*

*Second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2025, 2100, 2200, 2500) are expected to have a course average between 70 and 75%. The third year required (MIT 3100) is expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%.*

*Elective courses and 4<sup>th</sup> year seminars have no recommended course averages.*

## 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.