

MIT 3470B / CA 4099B / Special Topics: Advanced Video Production Course Outline – Winter 2023

1. Contact Information



Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
Juan A. Bello	e-mail: jbello@uwo.ca	Thursday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm (online—appointments required: please use the ‘Sign-up’ tool on OWL)

2. Course Overview and Important Dates



Delivery Mode	Day	Time
In-Person	Wednesday / FNB-2070	4:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Details about design and delivery of the course are listed below in Section 6

Classes Start	Reading Week	Classes End
January 12	February 18 - 26	April 10

January 17, 2023: Last day to drop a first-term half course or a first-term full course without penalty

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

3. Office Hours



Office hours will be held online on Thursday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm . Appointments are required, please use the ‘Sign up’ tool on OWL. You can also contact the instructor via email to request a meeting outside of office hours.

Land Acknowledgement:

We 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.

More than words: As a way of implementing the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission: [Calls to Action](#)**, we will dedicate time to explore the work of Indigenous creators and producers.

4. Technical or PPE Requirements



Stable internet connection



Laptop or computer



Working microphone



Working webcam



Mask

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.

Students are expected 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.

5. Resources



Weekly Readings:

All weekly readings are available on OWL > Course Readings



Equipment Access

MIT 3470 assignments are to be produced using a **Sony HXR-NX100** Camera Kit.

This year, the booking, pickup and return process takes in consideration the necessary sanitization and physical distance requirements. Please read the **Policies and Procedures** for the use of technical equipment: <https://equipmentsupport.fims.uwo.ca>. This website will be available after the last day to add a first-term half course (January 17, 2023).

The Equipment Support website gives you access to [manuals](#), [help-sheets](#) and [video tutorials](#) on how to work with the technical equipment. You will also be able to utilize the [online booking system](#) for making your equipment reservations.

It is your responsibility to book the necessary equipment well in advance for the completion of your assignments. Do not leave the booking for the last minute since it is likely that it will not be available.

Missing a deadline because of a late booking won't be considered as an exception. Late assignment penalties will apply.



FNB 2070 (Mac Computing Lab)

MIT 3470 gives you access to FNB 2070 (Mac Computing Lab), where you will have individual access to an iMac for your course work.

During class time, you're expected to use one of the iMacs (not your personal computer). This includes in-class activities involving Adobe Premiere, as well as meetings with the instructor to discuss your work.

Please do not use the Lab computers or any other device—laptop, tablet, or phone—for other purposes during class time. Using the classroom for other activities not only distracts you, but also has the potential to disturb your instructor and classmates.

When working in the classroom, all notifications for personal messages are to be disabled. Messages popping-up in the middle of in-class activities or meetings with your instructor will be penalized with a deduction of 10% in the evaluation of the activity.

If working on assignments for other courses or engaging in text messaging and social media interactions during class time, the instructor may ask you to leave the classroom and it will have a negative impact on your participation grade.

You are allowed to use facilities in FNB 2070 outside of class times – whenever the room is not used for teaching. You can check the room schedule at <http://fims.uwo.ca/2070>. Do not enter when there is a class in progress.



Adobe Premiere:

This course requires the use Adobe Premiere and Adobe Media Encoder software. As part of the required materials, you are expected to purchase a subscription to **Adobe Creative Cloud from Adobe**. The student rate is CAD \$25.99 per month. You will be able to access your Adobe Creative Cloud on any other computer or device you use, including the Mac computers in FNB 2070.

By using Adobe Creative Cloud, you will be working on industry standard software, and it will be possible to work on your projects across devices. Students are expected to pay for their subscription, as you would for any other materials, such as textbooks, lab books, or software, required for courses taught at Western.

Organization and Management of Media Files:

Please consult the Help-Sheets database (available on OWL and the Equipment Loan System). You are responsible for the correct download, management and back up of your data.

6. Course Description and Design



Course Description

Advanced Video Production is a project-based course. Students will work individually or in small crews, using narrative, artistic and technical resources for the production of a creative media project. The course will provide students with the opportunity to explore their personal areas of interest with respect to themes, point of view, style, and audience engagement strategies.

Prerequisites: MIT 2601A/B.

FIMS Prerequisite statement:

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, 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.

Delivery Mode: in-person

Students will be expected to participate in activities based on each week's lectures, readings, and screenings. Attendance will be taken, do not forget to sign the attendance sheet at the end of each session. No corrections will be made for forgetting to sign this control.

Missing a session won't only affect your attendance grade, it will also have an impact on your in-class activities performance. Please arrive on time to all sessions. Lateness and/or early departure will adversely affect your grade.

Screenings are mandatory—even if you have seen the material before or recently. Please don't use the screening time for other activities. As a general rule, laptops should be closed and phones should be silenced or, preferably, turned off.

If you miss a class, an outline of the session with key slides will be available on OWL.

All course readings, instructions for activities and assignments, selected materials, scores and grades will be posted on OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca>.

If students need assistance, they can seek support on the [OWL Help page](#). Alternatively, they can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

[Google Chrome](#) or [Mozilla Firefox](#) are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#).

7. Learning Outcomes



Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- ✓ Apply their knowledge of media theory, history, research, and analysis for the creation of a video project.
- ✓ Produce creative projects in line with professional standards.

8. Course Content and Schedule



Week	Dates	Topic
1	January 11	Fundamental Concepts: Video Journalism, Found Footage
2	January 18	Fundamental Concepts: Creative Documentary, Short Form Narrative, Video Essay, and Video Art
3	January 25	Workshops: Shooting, Recording and Editing
4	February 01	Production – Project # 1 (individual / due Feb 08)
5	February 08	
6	February 15	
7	February 22	Reading Week
8	March 01	Production – Project # 2 (group)
9	March 08	
10	March 15	Production – Project # 3 (group)
11	March 22	
12	March 29	
13	April 05	Final Screening

Course Readings

The course will start with a series of **introductory readings** that will provide students with the theoretical framework for the development of their first proposals:

Bloemheugel, Marente, et al. *Found Footage: Cinema Exposed*. Introduction, 10-12.

Bock, Mary Angela. "Video Journalism." In *Encyclopedia of Journalism*, 1424-25.

De Jong, Wilma. "Life does not tell stories: structuring devices in documentary filmmaking." In *Creative Documentary: Theory and Practice* edited by Wilma De Jong, Erik Knudsen, and Jerry Rothwell, 97-117.

Jech, Pavel, and Mary Angiolillo. *The Seven Minute Screenplay*. 7-25.

Mittel, Jason. "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method." *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019*. 224-242.

Rush, Michael. *Video Art*. Chapter 1, Shaping a History, 13-61.

Additional resources on aesthetic, narrative, and technical aspects will be provided based on the characteristics of each project.

9. Evaluation



Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any deviations will be communicated.

Assessment	Format	Weight	Due Date
<p>Weekly Activities</p> <p>Weekly activities (individual and group exercises designed for the analysis and application of the basic principles of media production).</p> <p>They will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Acquisition, Investigation, and Discussion: analysis of media content, quizzes, and production of reports ✓ Practice, Collaboration and Production: production equipment and editing software. 	<p>Attendance and Participation</p> <p>There will be 1 to 3 activities per week to be completed and submitted via OWL > Weekly Activities. It is your responsibility to write your full name on every exercise, to label all files according to the provided instructions, and to submit them via OWL.</p> <p>For some group activities we will use collaboration platforms (i.e., Vimeo-Review). Special instructions will be provided.</p> <p>Depending on its complexity, each activity will have a value between 1 and 10 points. Students will receive an assessment score for every activity. For detailed feedback please request a meeting with the instructor.</p> <p>The activities are to be completed and submitted during class time.</p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p> <p>If you add this course after the first day of classes, please contact the instructor (no later than January 17) to make up for the weekly activities that you might have missed.</p> <p>After Reading Week the number of weekly activities will decrease so efforts can be focused on the production of your creative projects.</p>	25%	Weekly
<p>Assignment # 1 Video Project / individual</p>	<p>Instructions will be published on OWL. Submission: OWL > Assignments</p>	25%	Wednesday, February 8 11:55 PM
<p>Assignment # 2 Video Project / group</p>	<p>Instructions will be published on OWL. Submission: OWL > Assignments</p>	20%	Wednesday, March 8 11:55 PM

Assignment # 3 Video Project / group	Instructions will be posted on OWL. Submission: OWL > Assignments	30%	Wednesday, March 29 3:30 PM
TOTAL		100%	

- All assignments must be submitted through OWL. If you fail to submit your work by the due date and time, it will be considered a late submission. OWL's assignments section distinguishes between 'due by' and 'accept until'. Assignments submitted after the 'due' date will be considered as 'late' assignments.
- Failing to submit the weekly activities and/or the course assignments will be considered as "**insufficient engagement**".
- It is your responsibility to make sure that the video files are properly named and exported with the correct format, size, and resolution.
- No assignments will be accepted via email, Microsoft Office One Drive, Google Drive, WeTransfer, or any other file sharing platform.
- The files containing group assignments are to be submitted by one member of the group. For every assignment, please discuss with your teammates who will have this responsibility. However, each member of the group is expected to double check that the files have been submitted on time and correctly before the assignment is due.
- Producing a media project (assignment) in a language other than English requires special permission from the instructor. When an exception is granted, the subsequent submissions of any video files must include English subtitles.
- Please contact the instructor or TA if you have any questions about your grades and overall performance. Try not to wait until the last minute.
- Students will receive graded work worth no less than 15% at least 3 days prior to the deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty. Please note that students are responsible for keeping track of their grades.
- Students who are in danger of failing the course (F-below 50) because of insufficient engagement or performance will receive a written warning, in the form of an email, prior to the course drop date. However, not receiving this warning does not constitute guarantee that you will pass the course. If your performance diminishes after that date, or if you do not submit the remaining activities and assignments (see assessment schedule), you might put yourself at risk of failing the course.

Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning examinations 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

IMPORTANT: Please refer to the last page of this syllabus for the **Grade Ranges for Media Production Assignments**. That document has been developed uniquely for the evaluation of this course's assignments and activities. It is an adaptation of the 'Suggested Grade Ranges in the MIT program'.

Information about late or missed evaluations:

- **Weekly Activities:** If you miss an in-class activity, you will have a week to complete it on your own—individually (the instructions will be available on OWL, and the tasks might be slightly different from what

was done in the classroom). You have until the following Wednesday by 3:30 pm to complete them without a penalty. After that, there will be a deduction of 3% per-day for late submissions (“days” will count as 24hrs periods). The activities will remain open for two weeks: one week without a penalty, one week with the 3% per-day deduction. After that, they will be closed: you won’t be able to submit them unless the instructor receives a consideration request from your academic counsellor.

You can use this privilege for up to two consecutive weeks. If you miss three or more sessions in a row, you will need to contact your academic counsellor and provide documentation in order to receive an extension for those activities.

- **Assignments 1, 2, and 3:** there will be a deduction of 3% per-day for late submissions (“days” will count as 24hrs periods after the due date). No assignments will be accepted one week after the due date unless a request for consideration or accommodation has been received from your academic counsellor.

If one of the team members is not able to participate in the production of an assignment, please notify the instructor before the due date. Unless an extension has been granted, the rest of the group is still expected to submit the work (every assignment must include a list of the students who participated in its production). For any missed work that exceeds 10%, the student must contact academic counselling to request consideration.

10. Participation and Engagement



Students are expected to:

- attend lectures and workshops,
- read and watch materials,
- develop skills in the use of professional equipment and software,
- engage creatively and critically with the content, and
- complete all the activities and assignments.

Working in Groups:

Teamwork is essential in the production of media content. The instructor will establish the size of the groups (minimum and maximum number of members). For some activities the groups will be assigned by the instructor, in other cases you will be able to choose your partners.

For Assignments # 2 and 3, students will have the first option to form the groups and submit them to the instructor for approval. The first sessions of the term will provide opportunities to interact with other students and identify potential team partners. The groups for the final project will be decided in a special session that will be previously announced on OWL. If you are absent that day you will be assigned to a group by the instructor. The instructor will have the authority to reorganize teams for academic and logistic purposes.

When working in groups, it is very important to respond timely and to keep track of the conversations. All communications with the instructor will be through Western’s email system. Not responding to messages from the instructor or other members of the group will negatively affect your grade. Failing to respond to one of your classmates’ emails within 24 hours is something worthy to be reported. If at some point the communication within the group is not working smoothly, please notify the instructor.

The production of the project is expected to be a learning experience. Having previously acquired skills doesn’t grant a member the authority to rule the group, nor should any members rely on other students’ knowledge to avoid performing tasks.

You are responsible for keeping your team accountable. Each version (stage) of the video project should include final credits. Student/s should not be credited when failing to do their share of the work.

If one of the members of the group drops the course, the remaining member(s) is/are expected to start (or continue) working on the project (independently of its status of development). In these cases, the projects can be revised and adjusted taking into consideration the reduced number of members. It is your responsibility to contact the instructor to make the necessary arrangements. In these special circumstances, projects could be done individually instead of in groups.

Use of Electronic Devices:

When working in the Lab, please do not use your personal computer or any other device—tablet or phone. Using your devices in the classroom for other activities not only distracts you, but also has the potential to disturb your instructor and classmates.

If working on assignments for other courses or engaging in text messaging and social media interactions during class time, the instructor may ask you to leave the classroom and it will have a negative impact on your participation and in-class activities grades.

When working in the classroom, all notifications for personal messages are to be disabled. Messages popping-up in the middle of in-class activities or meetings with your instructor will be penalized with a deduction of 10% in the evaluation of the activity.

11. Communication



- Announcements, detailed assignments instructions, links and references of interest will be posted on OWL Please check your UWO email regularly.
- Please use your UWO email account when sending messages to the instructor.
- Emails should follow professional standards of business communication:
 - ✓ Remember to always introduce your messages with a proper salutation.
 - ✓ Please double check that any request includes the word 'please' or a synonym.
 - ✓ Don't forget to say 'thank you' when receiving a response.
- Generally, emails will be responded within 24-48 hours during weekdays and regular work hours (9 am to 5 pm). You should not expect replies overnight or during holidays and weekends.
- Please make sure that you have read all the instructions and materials before asking specific questions.
- Emails will not be used to explain and discuss class concepts or to provide detailed advice on assignments. Please request an appointment with your instructor if you need some assistance.
- Grades will not be communicated or discussed via email.
- The instructor will meet with every group to review the production of the creative project throughout its different stages. In these meetings, one of the members of the group should serve as note taker, while all the members are expected to participate actively. Missing any of these meetings (or arriving late) will negatively affect your individual grade.
- The instructor might request to meet with a student or group to discuss issues related to their performance in the course. In those cases, you will receive a request via email. If you don't reply, that email will be followed by a maximum of two reminders. Failing to respond will count as insufficient engagement.
- The audio and/or video recording, storage, publishing and distribution of online meetings with the instructor or you classmates is prohibited.

12. Professionalism & Privacy



- Western students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Additionally, the following expectations and professional conduct apply to this course:
- The Instructor, Juan A. Bello, owns the Intellectual Property in the lessons and lesson materials even when such lesson or materials are posted online. Students are not to post these lessons and lesson materials to any other websites or platforms or use the lessons or lesson materials for any other purpose. The capture, recording, reproduction or distribution of the lessons or lessons materials is prohibited. All

course materials created by the instructor(s) are copyrighted and cannot be sold/shared.

- This course's viewing materials are used under Section 29 of the Canadian Copyright Act: "fair dealing for the purpose of research, private study, and education". Do not download, republish or distribute any of the video files that you will find on this course's OWL workspace.
- Recordings are not permitted (audio or video) without explicit permission. Permitted recordings are not to be distributed.
- Any recording (photo, video or audio) involving the participation of your classmates is not to be shared privately or publicly, in any media. Your classmates own the rights on their respective name, voice and likeness.
- For all video assignments, no material can be submitted without the written consent of all the people involved in its production (on and off camera). You must obtain releases (written consent forms) for the use of any interviews, locations, music, still images and footage. Forms and templates will be provided.
- Video assignments produced within the context of this course may be used at a later stage for academic purposes as a teaching resource, including public screenings and online distribution.
- The audio and/or video recording, storage, publishing, and distribution of online meetings with the instructor or you classmates is prohibited.

13. How to be successful in this class



Your performance will be assessed in relation to the **course's objectives (expected learning outcomes)**, the **assignments' instructions**, and the **guidelines to the MIT grade ranges**.

Students enrolled in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.

- Invest in a planner or application to keep track of your courses. Populate all your deadlines at the start of the term and schedule time at the start of each week to get organized and manage your time.
- Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
- If English is not your first language, we encourage you to set-up **English as the default language** when using OWL, collaboration tools (i.e. Microsoft Teams), and media production software and equipment. It will enhance your learning experience.
- Follow weekly checklists created on OWL or create your own to help you stay on track.
- Take notes as you go through the lesson material.
- When working on your course lessons, it is strongly recommended that the notifications for personal messages (and any other apps notifications) are turned-off, and that the only windows that are open or active are those related to this course. This will allow you to focus on your course work. This is especially important when watching video content. When possible, try to reproduce the viewing conditions of a screening room (dimmed lights, silence) and avoid interruptions.
- Connect with others. Try forming an online study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are struggling with a topic, contact your instructor(s) and or teaching assistant(s).
- Please refrain from asking the instructor for a certain grade to achieve personal goals: i.e. getting a scholarship, studying abroad, or being admitted into another program. This will not be acknowledged in the assessment of your performance.

- Meeting deadlines is an essential requisite to succeed in any workplace. This course is organized in a way that replicates the fast-paced rhythm of a media production environment.
- Engage creatively and critically with the course content. Do all the readings. Be selective in terms of your watching / bingeing habits: get exposed to new content, formats, and authors. This can be the best source of inspiration for your work.
- FIMS Undergraduate Services (fims@uwo.ca) and [Western Student Experience](#) are resources to help students succeed.

Please read the attached pages:

Grade Ranges for Media Production Assignments

Notes from the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Grade Ranges for Media Production Assignments

Juan Bello / MIT 3470 – CA4099B

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The project 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 (course readings, visual principles and technical procedures) and **ideas** is immediately evident.

The topic is treated with **sensitivity and subtlety of thought**.

The quality of the **camera work, mise-en-scène, screenwriting and editing** and background **research** is **exemplary**.

A+ = exceptional student, someone who has mastered the techniques or theories and applied them in **novel** (original) **ways**. “**Exemplary**”

Work could be exhibited in a professional media festival (emerging talent categories) / or could be included in the portfolio for admission into a graduate program / or could be used as a ‘work sample’ for the application to an entry level grant program.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The project 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.

“*Getting to the heart of the matter*” applies both to:

The subject of the video project (What the project is about)

The use (application) of concepts, principles and techniques.

Screenwriting-Structure > It is clearly focused and logically organized.

Mastery of complex material (course readings, visual principles and technical procedures) and **ideas** is demonstrated.

The project is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that **the result is meaningful, not simplistic**.

The quality of the **camera work, mise-en-scène, screenwriting** and **editing** makes the project immediately **understandable** (and also **compelling and engaging**).

A = excellent work (complex, not simplistic)

Work could be exhibited in a local or juried student media festival.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The project shows **above average** analysis, critical thinking and independent thought.

(**Above average** use–application–of concepts, principles and techniques in a meaningful and thought-provoking manner).

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.

Screenwriting-Structure > The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed.

The project 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. (See the concept of *cinécriture*. In media production assignments, this ability to write refers to the quality of the **camera work, mise-en-scène, screenwriting** and **editing**)

B+ = work is very good, above average

Work could be shared publicly i.e. FIMS Media Arts Festival–non-juried student media festival.

70-74 (Good, B)

The project shows **an attempt at analysis and critical thinking**.

(an attempt at using–applying–concepts, principles and techniques in a meaningful and thought-provoking manner).

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**.

Screenwriting-Structure > The analysis is organized around focal points.

The project is generally **well** written (**filmed, produced, written and edited**) and well argued.

B = average, good work

60-69 (Competent, C)

The project demonstrates **adequate comprehension** of the topic.

“*adequate comprehension of the topic*” applies both to:

The subject of the video project (What the project is about)

The use (application) of concepts, principles and techniques.

The project 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 **camera work, mise-en-scène, screenwriting** and **editing** is **sufficiently intelligible** with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a viewer to understand the point of the project.

C = work is competent > correct use (application) of concepts, principles and techniques.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The project shows **less than adequate comprehension** of the topic and of the material covered by the course.

The project is a **less than adequate summary of sources** and/or is **considerably off-topic**.

Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously;

The writing (**screenwriting** and **editing**) style is **difficult to follow;**

There is **insufficient elaboration to permit viewer's comprehension** of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the project.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The project demonstrates a **failure to comprehend the topic**.

The material is **disorganized and unintelligible**.

The project clearly **does not meet the minimal requirements** of the assignment.

Grading Criteria for Weekly Activities:

In-Class Activities	Grade	Maximum Point Value*						
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	8.00	10.00
Outstanding	A+	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	8.00	9.00
Excellent	A	0.85	1.75	2.65	3.50	4.50	7.00	8.00
Very Good	B+	0.75	1.50	2.25	3.00	4.00	6.00	7.50
Good	B	0.70	1.25	2.00	2.75	3.50	5.50	7.00
Competent	C	0.50	1.00	1.75	2.50	3.00	5.00	6.00
Marginal	D	0.25	0.75	1.50	2.00	2.50	4.00	5.00
Unacceptable	F	0.00	0.50	1.00	1.50	2.00	3.50	4.50
			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

(*): Every weekly activity has a different point value, depending on its length and complexity.

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

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 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.

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 4th 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.