

Media and Information Technology Policy

MIT 3500F Course Outline – Fall 2024

Wednesdays 3:30-6:30, in-person, HSB 11.

Instructor: Prof. [Tom Streeter](#), Faculty of Information & Media Studies, FNB 4091, Western University

Phone: 519-661-2111x84347; email: tstreet2@uwo.ca

Office hours: Wednesdays 11:00-12:30, or by appointment. You can sign up here: <https://tstreete.youcanbook.me/>).

Requisites: restricted to years 3 and 4 FIMS modules. Not open to MIT minor module.¹

What is media policy? Have you ever wondered what those cryptic symbols and numbers on the back your smartphone or your TV are about? They may seem unimportant, and they are certainly not alluring, but they are small glimpses into the very large world of media and information technology policy.



Media policy is as important to the media as microchips or rock and roll. The media devices that shape our world would not work without elaborate and constantly changing national and international frameworks of laws, regulations, technical standards, and systems of governance. In other words, without policy, your smartphone would be just a pricey paperweight.



Those frameworks are also a matter of great debate worldwide. From Trump's Twitter ban to Canada's face-off with Google and Meta over Bill C-18, controversies rage, sometimes in the headlines.

What will it be like to take this course? The goal will be to create a community of active learners, who go beyond memorizing the material to actively engaging, as a group, the controversies and problems of media policies today. Showing up and participating in a community of active learners is better for you and better for those around you. To make it work, some mutual care and respect for each other will be essential.

¹ Please check to make sure you have the proper requisites. Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll 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.

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There is one **textbook** for this course available via the Western bookstore: Sara Bannerman’s, [Canadian Communication Policy and Law](#) (Canadian Scholars, 2020). A print version of a book works better for most people. (Studies show people remember and understand things they read on paper better than on screens – but it’s up to you if you want the [ebook](#).) The rest of the readings can be accessed through the course OWL Brightspace website.

Topics and readings				
Do the readings before each class: The readings are sometimes challenging, so you won’t be expected to have fully mastered all the readings by the beginning of class on the day they are assigned, but you should have thought about them, flagged the parts you don’t understand, and come to class ready to ask questions. The required discussion list postings will help you get prepared for class.				
Date	Topic	Canadian Law and Policy	U.S. Policy and beyond	Assignments
Week 1 Sept. 11	Introduction: why does policy matter? + Understanding legal and government documents			
Week 2 Sept. 18	The big picture: Why do we need media and technology regulation?	Bannerman Chapter 1: Whom Do Law and Policy Serve? 7;	Pickard, Victor (2016). Toward a People’s Internet: The Fight for Positive Freedoms in an Age of Corporate Libertarianism, <i>NORDICOM</i> , 61-68.	Post reading question or answer
	How does it work?	Bannerman Chapter 2: Introduction to the Canadian Legal System 37	Introduction to the American legal System: https://www.lexisnexis.com/en-us/lawschool/pre-law/intro-to-american-legal-system.page Introduction to administrative law: https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/administrative_law)	Post reading question or answer

<p>Week 3 Sept. 25</p>	<p>The case of Canadian Content Regulations: what, why, how?</p>	<p>Bannerman Chapter 9: Broadcasting Regulation 189; Massey Commission, (Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. (1951). <i>Report</i> . Ottawa : King's Printer), Ch 18: Broadcasting.</p> <p>Aidan Hailes, "The Surprising Quality of Canadian Comedy: A Primer for Americans," 25YL https://25yearslatersite.com/2018/08/10/the-surprising-quality-of-canadian-comedy-a-primer-for-americans/</p> <p>Grant, Peter S., and Chris Wood. "Creative Clusters." In <i>Blockbusters and Trade Wars: Popular Culture in a Globalized World</i>, First Edition, 25–41. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2004.23</p> <p>Robert Wright, "Gimme Shelter" Chapter 3 in <i>Virtual Sovereignty: Nationalism, Culture, and the Canadian Question</i>. 1 edition. Toronto, Ont: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc., 2004), pp. 79-98.</p>		<p>Post reading question or answer</p>
<p>Week 4 Oct. 2</p>	<p>Broadcasting and telecommunications Regulation</p>	<p>Bannerman Ch. 8, Telecommunication Regulation</p>	<p>Lessig, "Commons and Layers" from <i>Lessig, Lawrence. The Future of Ideas: The Fate of the Commons in a Connected World</i>. New York, NY: Vintage, 2002, pp. 19-25.</p>	<p>Post reading question or answer</p>
	<p>Intellectual Property</p>	<p>Bannerman Ch 7, Intellectual Property, 137</p>	<p>Rose, Meredith Filak. "Spotify's Copyright Royalty Board Appeal, Decoded." Public Knowledge, April 10, 2019. https://publicknowledge.org/spotify-copyright-royalty-board-appeal-decoded/.</p>	

Week 5 Oct 9	Freedom of expression, censorship, and defamation	Bannerman, Chapter 3: Freedom of Expression and Censorship 47; Chapter 4: Defamation 79 ;	<p>Mill, J. (2011). Excerpts from, "OF THE LIBERTY OF THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION," Ch. 2 of <i>On Liberty</i> (Cambridge Library Collection - Philosophy, pp. 31-99). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Wu, Tim. "Opinion The First Amendment Is Out of Control." <i>The New York Times</i>, July 2, 2024, sec. Opinion. https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/02/opinion/supreme-court-netchoice-free-speech.html.</p> <p>Nott, Lata. "A Quick Guide to Libel Law Freedom Forum Institute".</p> <p>[optional] Drucker, Mitchell. "Canadian v. American Defamation Law: What Can We Learn from Hyperlinks Commentary." <i>Canada-United States Law Journal</i> 38 (2013): 141–66.</p>	Paper proposal due; Post reading question or answer
Oct. 16	UWO Reading Week			
Week 6 Oct 23	Midterm exam		MIDTERM	
Week 7 Oct. 30	Research paper prep	Bannerman Ch. 12, Legal research and writing		

	Competition and anti-trust	<p>Keldon Bester, “ Moose, Maple Syrup and Monopolies: Is Canada Finally Taking on Its Oligarchs?” Jan. 19th 2024, https://www.thebignewsletter.com/p/moose-maple-syrup-and-monopolies</p> <p>https://www.thestar.com/opinion/news-media-produce-the-news-meta-and-google-distribute-it/</p>	<p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_History_of_the_Standard_Oil_Company</p> <p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Antitrust_Paradox</p> <p>https://macleans.ca/technology-3/should-we-break-up-the-tech-giants/</p> <p>[optional] Jiang, M., Han, X. & Zhang, J. (2024). “Communications, media and internet concentration in China, 2019-2021.” Global Media and Internet Concentration Project. http://doi.org/10.22215/gmicp/2024.5.19.3.</p>	Post reading question or answer
Week 8 Nov. 6	Public Service and Ownership	<p>Nordicity, Inc. “International Comparison of Public Funding for Public Service Broadcasting, 2018, Final Report” April 2020. https://thehub.ca/2023-01-09/pierre-poilievre-wants-to-defund-the-cbc-heres-what-that-may-look-like/</p> <p>Donna Kennedy-Glans, “A conservative case for not dismantling the CBC: 'It’s just going to make things worse',” <i>National Post</i>, Sept. 1, 2024, https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/conservative-case-for-keeping-cbc-kenneth-whyte</p>	<p>Pickard, Victor. “Funding Democracy: Public Media and Democratic Health in 33 Countries.” Accessed November 8, 2023. https://www.academia.edu/68443455/Funding_Democracy_Public_Media_and_Democratic_Health_in_33_Countries.</p>	Post reading question or answer
Nov. 10th, Rough draft due				

Week 9 Nov. 13	Privacy and Surveillance	Bannerman, Chapter 5: Privacy 97; Chapter 6: Government Surveillance 123	Zuboff S (2015) Big other: surveillance capitalism and the prospects of an information civilization. <i>Journal of Information Technology</i> 30(1): 75–89. DOI: 10.1057/jit.2015.5.	Post reading question or answer
Week 10 Nov. 20	Internet Regulation	Bannerman Chapter 10: Internet Regulation	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_governance Flew, Terry. “Poicy Futures for Digital Platforms.” In <i>The SAGE Handbook of the Digital Media Economy</i> , 543–68. 55 City Road: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2023. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529757170 .	Post reading question or answer
Week 11 Nov. 27	Access to Information	Bannerman Chapter 11: Access to Information	https://www.foia.gov/about.html	Post reading question or answer
Week 12 Dec. 4	Research Paper Presentations			
Dec. 6	Final draft of term paper due			
TBA	Final Exam			

Learning Outcomes

Like most college courses, this one is designed to help you learn to think critically, read complicated material, analyze it, and write about it with clarity and sophistication. More specifically, this course is designed to help you:

- Understand the major themes, issues, and controversies that shape media policy in Canada and the U.S.;
- Make sense of and critically analyze complex media policy documents;

- Know how to construct a coherent policy argument rooted in an understanding of current policies; and,
- Understand how policy shapes media in general.

How this class works

Remember what all this is for: the point of a class like this is for you to learn useful and interesting stuff, both knowledge and skills, and to get a better understanding of how the world works. The requirements are a way to help you get what you want from the course. The farther you get in life the less your marks in classes matter. Exams, deadlines, and marks are not ends in themselves, and certainly not a measure of your worth to the world.

Basically in this course, the requirements are that 1) you participate, 2) write a research paper, and 3) take two short answer exams. Each of these requirements are broken down into smaller parts, not to create more work, but to help make things more manageable and to keep you on task.

Class participation is required and makes it easier to master the material. Lecture slides, where they exist, will be uploaded for everyone to consult a few days after each class. They will not work as a substitute for lecture notes or for class attendance.

In case unforeseen circumstances necessitate some modifications to the course, the website is the final word. Because the world of policymaking is in a state of change these days, there may be some small changes in the readings in response to current events. If you need assistance with computer related issues, you can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They also can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Assignment Details

1) Exams

- There will be a written, in-class mid-term examination (20% of your grade) on Oct. 23 and a final examination (20%) at an assigned time during the final exam period. Both exams will ask you to handwrite short (about three- to six-sentence) answers to questions about the course materials in your own unique words. There may be some questions on parts of the readings that were not fully covered in class. You must receive a passing grade across both exams to pass the course (i.e., if you do not receive a passing grade for the midterm, you must receive a better-than-passing grade for the final to pass the course.)

2) Participation

- Attendance: Remember, *life is better if you show up and ask questions*. Attendance will be taken, and each unexcused absence beyond three will reduce your attendance grade by 5% (and will take into account university policy about absences). (5% of your course grade.)
- Policy media clip (5% of your grade): you will find a < 1 minute media clip that illustrates the effect of policies on culture (from a TV show or movie, for example), and provide a <300 word explanation of how it illustrates a significant aspect of a media policy or law. You will be assigned a due date to show it to the class some time during the semester.
- Reading questions/discussion list postings: to help ensure engaged in class discussion and to help you keep up with the readings, before each class, you should post a question or comment about one or more of the readings to the weekly discussion list. These are credit/no credit; you get credit just for doing it, so

you should use this to ask questions about things you don't understand or perhaps something you agree or disagree with. Please reply to other's postings unless you are starting a new topic, and keep it lively and interactive. If everyone just says the same thing without reading anyone else's post, this will become tedious; do you part to keep it engaging. You can miss up to two postings without penalty during the term without penalty. (5% of your course grade.)

3) Research Paper

- Each student will write a research paper of at least 2500 words (not including references) on a contemporary media policy issue. The paper should address a minimum of two critical and/or analytical works on the topic, from at least two different policy positions. It should also use at least three original policy documents. It should make an *argument* about the issue in question. A one page proposal for the paper is due before class on Oct. 9; it will be ungraded, but it may be turned back for revision before it is approved. A rough draft of the paper (15% of your grade) is due no later than before class on Nov. 10th, and the final draft (25%) is due no later than Dec. 6th. During the last class or classes, students will present their papers (required, pass/no pass, 5%). Assignments should be delivered as PDFs via OWL Brightspace, and will be submitted to Turnitin.
- All assignments are due at 11:55 pm EST unless otherwise specified
- Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin. Students will have the ability to resubmit to Turnitin one time.
- Give yourself time to absorb feedback. After an assessment is returned, I recommend you wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting me to discuss it. I do encourage you to come talk to me about your work, even if you are happy with your marks.

Assessment	Format	Weighting	Due Date	Notes
Attendance		5%	Taken every class	<i>Life is better if you show up and ask questions.</i> Credit given for illness if instructor is notified the day of. Three classes can be missed without penalty during the term.
Reading questions	discussion list posting	5%	Weekly before class	Credit/no credit. You get credit just for doing it, and you can miss up to two postings without penalty during the term
Policy video	~1 minute policy-relevant video clip presented to the class	5%	Scheduled throughout the semester	

Research paper proposal	One page description of your topic, argument and sources	Ungraded, but may require revision before approval	Oct. 9 th before class	
Midterm exam	~ 20 short answer questions	20%	Oct. 23 rd regular class time	Requires formal documentation for absence or accommodation in all circumstances.
Research paper rough draft	A complete rough draft, including references	20%	Nov. 10th	
Research paper presentation to class	A flash talk overview of your paper	5%	Dec. 4th	Pass/no pass
Research Paper final draft		20%	Dec. 6th	
Final Exam	~20 short answer questions	20%	TBA	

Marking Policies

Grades give you some feedback to help you learn, and the act of reading and evaluating assignments gives me some feedback about how well I am communicating to you. I encourage you to talk to me during office hours about how you did on your assignments; direct discussion is often more helpful to learning than just looking at a grade.

I will explain in detail how I evaluate particular assignments in class and in handouts. A grading rubric, however, in any of your classes, is not a substitute for the expert judgment of your highly trained instructors.

The mid-term and final exams will involve short answers to questions; for each question, the possible scores are 0, 1, 2, or 3. Zero means you communicated nothing showing you knew the answer to the question. One means you communicated something indicating you knew something about the question, but your answer is incomplete or not very coherent. A 2 shows that you understand the answer to the question pretty well, and are able to explain it clearly. A 3 means you truly hit the nail on the head, and provided an exceptionally precise, accurate, and/or particularly astute answer to the question.

Statement about the use of generative AI technology:

*Students in this class are reminded that plagiarism – using another’s work, ideas, or words without giving credit - is a serious scholastic offence. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence to create content that is submitted as one’s own. **Students who use of AI-content generators (such as ChatGPT) to complete assignments without attribution or permission from the instructor are committing a scholastic offence.***

Exams will be curved: to ensure that grading is fair and rigorous, assignments will be graded on a rough bell curve, a common practice at many universities, but perhaps not so common at Western. It’s no less fair than other systems of marking, and arguably is more fair than some of them. But some students find it confusing to discover that in a curved assignment, 75% correct may not translate into a grade of 75. The general idea is to set grades by comparing students to each other within a class. If most students do worse than 75%, then it could result in a grade of 80; if most students do better than 75% correct, that might result in, say, a grade of 70. Grading on a pre-established 100 point scale works best only if an instructor knows in advance exactly what will be hard for students and what will be easy; since much of the material here is new, I’d be guessing if I tried to mark without a curve. (If you want to better understand why many instructors think curves are a good thing, try this: <http://volokh.com/2011/05/01/grading-on-a-curve-2/>.)

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

Class Expectations and Academic Integrity

Professional Behavior: The main thing you should try to do in this class is, to the best of your ability, act **professionally**. This does not mean dressing a certain way or acting like someone you’ve seen in a movie. Rather, it means **doing your absolute best to be honest, reliable, and effective in a way that treats others around you with respect and shows support for the larger enterprise**. This means things like meeting deadlines, but also admitting when you don’t understand something. It means showing your instructor and the others around you that you are doing your best to do your part, and thinking about the good of the whole group. For

example, if you find that a link to a reading doesn't work, contact me to let me know; don't try to use it as an excuse not to do the reading. I and everyone else in the class will be grateful you took a little bit of time to help us all out. Similarly, in class discussions, it is fine if you disagree with something somebody said, but if you do so, do it with respect, with thoughtfulness and taking care to make sure you make an effort to understand the other person's point of view.

Respect everyone's privacy: You are probably aware that things that happen online can be easily recorded and distributed in ways that can be confusing or hurtful to others, even when intentions are benign. We all must take extra care not to share *anything* from the class online, even if inadvertently. Everyone must be genuinely secure in knowing that their class participation is just with the class. I will do everything I can on my end, but this will involve a collective effort. Depending on conditions, some class lectures may be recorded and may be made available to individuals or to the class; it will be absolutely forbidden to share those recordings, audio or images, with anyone. (Powerpoint slides from lectures will sometimes also be made available.)

Sharing your notes with other students in the class during the semester is fine, as long as you do not charge for them. I am not allowed to sell notes to other students, online or otherwise, or to upload notes to open websites like notehall.com or sharenotes.com.

Laptops and cell phones Please, during class close down your devices, take notes on paper, and turn off your cellphone. You'll be able to focus better. Devices can be handy, and in some circumstances, they are necessary. They also can be incredibly distracting, for oneself and others. So using laptops during lecture is prohibited, unless you have contacted Prof. Streeter and provided a specific reason why you need a laptop. There is growing evidence that many students who take notes on paper and read paper books learn more than students who read and write electronically.

Academic Integrity: UWO has a [Student Code of Conduct](#) and a system of Academic Integrity and a set of strict policies to go with it (see [here](#)). But I think that just listing the rules does not always help folks understand what's really at stake.

Academic integrity is about much more than just not cheating in the obvious ways, like paying someone else to write your research paper for you or copying stuff and pretending it's your own. **It's about respect for the many-centuries-old disciplined human conversation we call scholarship**, and learning how to helpfully take part in that conversation.

By taking a university class, you are joining a unique kind of team: a community of scholars. That community is much larger than the students in the class. To feel part of that community of scholarship, you need to learn how it works and do your fair share within it. Learning how to, say, do a proper citation or write a good summary of a scholarly article is like learning to take care of a sick roommate, or making dinner for a group of your friends, or doing your best for your team. In the end, you don't do scholarly things only because the law says you have to, but because it's satisfying and makes it better for everybody if you do, and helps maintain your friendships, your connections to the conversation. Scholarly rules are not just an arcane set of hoops for students to jump through. Following them helps make you part of a community, a team.

So think of cheating on a term paper as more like stealing from your best friend than it is like skipping out on a

study hall in high school; it poisons your relationships to people and activities you care about. And cultivate an enthusiasm for the scholarly worlds your classes expose you to; talking about ideas with friends is just as important (and can be just as fun) as talking about, say, GOT. You just have to get in the right frame of mind.

Covid Contingency Statement:

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence, or other health emergency, 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.

If university policy and public health directives necessitate additional measures to manage the spread of disease, students may be required to resume masking in instructional spaces. Students who are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons should seek accommodation through [Accessible Education](#).

Accommodations and Considerations

In general, it is on your shoulders as an adult to adapt to a university's schedules. Class attendance and participation is in your interest: life is better if you show up and ask questions. If you do have to miss a class, powerpoint slides will be posted online; know that these will only make sense if you borrow another student's class notes, and once you've done that, you can check in with Prof. Streeter to discuss what you've missed.

Remember that whatever else is going on in your life, your job is being a student. If you have a lot of work in several courses all due around the same time, plan ahead and do some of it early. If you planned to be out of town on the day an exam gets scheduled, it's up to you to change your plans. (Don't promise someone you can go to a wedding or a vacation towards the end of final exam period until *after* all your final exam times have been announced. Previously-bought plane tickets are not an excuse for missing an assignment.) If you missed a ride and it will be therefore difficult for you to get to class, your choice is to either make the extra effort to get there -- e.g., a bus, a cab, an uber -- or make arrangements with a friend to get the notes and make an appointment with your instructor to go over the material.

And **always, always, back up your work on your computer!** [Malfunctioning computers are generally NOT an excuse for missing assignments](#), in university or in work life.

But if you think you will miss a lecture, assignment, or exam for reasons *truly* outside your control, here's the current set of procedures:

- 1) **Late assignments:** In accordance with the new [Academic Consideration Policy](#), you may turn in one assignment up to 48 hours late during the term without penalty without submitting documentation, with the exception of the midterm and the final exams. In all cases, exams will require supporting documentation and working through your Faculty's student services office if you need to take a makeup. Otherwise, assignments turned in late will be assessed a **five point (out of 100) penalty per day** they are late. Any exceptions to this rule requires students to seek consideration through the Dean's Office in their home

faculty. (FIMS students should contact Student Services at fims@uwo.ca.) Please refer to the Notes from the Dean's Office pages on the course outline for how to go about seeking academic consideration.

- 2) Attendance will be taken. You can miss up to three of the 12 class meetings without penalty. After that, each missed class without consideration will reduce your attendance mark by 5%.
- 3) **Covid-19:** If you need to isolate for covid-related reasons, such as symptoms, a positive test, or a roommate who tested positive:
 - a) Take the [Covid-19 Self Assessment](#).
 - b) If the self-assessment says you should isolate, let Prof. Streeter know: tstreet2@uwo.ca. Do not email him the completed self-assessment.
- 4) **Accommodated exam:** Have you already been approved for relevant special accommodations for Accommodated Exams by Accessible Education?
 - a) If you need extra time or other accommodations for an exam, **you must schedule a time with Accommodated Exams at least ten days before the exam**, preferably sooner. You may contact your assigned accommodations counselor for help. Your instructors can not schedule these for you.
 - b) *After* you have scheduled the accommodated exam, **let Prof. Streeter know** that you have done so.
- 5) **Deadline flexibility:** Do you have already-approved accommodations for flexibility for deadlines or attendance?
 - a) Know that "flexibility" means that on occasion you might get **up to** a week's extension on some assignments, or the instructor might be able to spend extra time to help you if you miss one or two classes.
 - b) As soon as possible, contact your Faculty's **Undergraduate Students Services**, which if you are a FIMS student is fims@uwo.ca, and let them know full details. It is generally up to them, not your instructor, to determine how to proceed.
 - c) Only **after** contacting UGSS, let Prof. Streeter know, providing full details.
- 6) **Other issues beyond your control (illness etc.):** If you have some other circumstance truly beyond your control preventing you from attending class or an exam or turning in an assignment, and you have already used your one no-documentation case for the term, you should as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the assignment:
 - a) If you missed a class or an assignment worth 5% or less, contact Prof. Streeter as soon as possible.
 - b) For all other assignments, go through the Student Absence Portal, and **after** that, you should **also** contact Prof. Streeter.
- 7) If none of the above apply, or if you are told that your circumstances do not warrant considerations, **plan to make your own adaptations** to deal with the situation.

Makeup midterm exam: In the case of a missed exam with Academic Consideration approved by a student's home faculty student affairs office, a makeup will be scheduled at the instructor's discretion, typically at a specific time such as a Friday or on a weekend. The format of the exam might differ from that of the originally scheduled exam.

Privacy Policy: We adhere to an Ontario Provincial Government privacy legislation known as "FIPPA" (Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act). As such we cannot email you a grade or discuss a case with you via the internet unless we know it is you. As such, I will only answer UWO emails. For further information please see: <http://www.uwo.ca/privacy/links.html>

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, if they occur for this course, may be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals under special circumstances. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Land Acknowledgement

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Fall 2024

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 [Academic Calendar](#).

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 [here](#).

Plagiarism

Students in this class are reminded that plagiarism – using another's work, ideas, or words without giving credit -- is a serious scholastic offence. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence to create content that is submitted as one's own.

Students who use AI technologies (such as ChatGPT, but also automatic translators and grammar checkers) to complete assignments without attribution or permission from the instructor are committing a scholastic 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.

Academic Relief and Accommodation

Academic Accommodation

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

Academic Consideration

Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of the student's Faculty of Registration through an online portal available through the Office of the Registrar's website.

Requests for academic consideration must include the following components:

- Self-attestation signed by the student
- Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) affected by the request
- Supporting documentation as relevant

Requests without supporting documentation

are limited to one per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. In such cases, the instructor must provide the student with another opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in the content evaluated by the missed assessment, within the time frame of the course.

Documentation for medical illness, when required, must include the completion of a Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner.

Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Once the request and supporting documents have been received and reviewed, appropriate academic consideration, if granted, shall be determined by the instructor in consultation with the academic advisor, in a manner consistent with the course outline.

Academic consideration may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, or re-weighting of course requirements. Some forms of academic consideration, such as arranging Special Examinations, assigning a grade of Incomplete, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty, may only be granted by the Academic Advising office of the Faculty of Registration.

An instructor may deny academic consideration for any assessment that is not required in the calculation of the final grade (e.g., "8 of 10 quizzes"). This assessment flexibility must be indicated on the course outline.

An instructor may deny academic consideration relating to the timeframe submission of work where there is already flexibility in the submission timeframe (e.g., 72-hour submission window). This assessment flexibility must be indicated on the course outline.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give at least 2 weeks 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 a FIMS module (MIT 1020E; MIT 1025F/G) have an expected course average between 68-72%. Second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2025, 2100, 2200, 2500) have an expected course average between 70 and 75%. The third year required course (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, DC and CAP

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 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 the bulk 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 decide. 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.