



Western  
UNIVERSITY • CANADA



## MIT 3776B – Podcasting & Audio Journalism

Winter 2024

FNB 2070, Wednesday 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

***Territorial 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 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).

**Instructor: Allison Devereaux**

**Email:** adevere2@uwo.ca • **Cell:** 519 871 2258

**Office Hours:** By appointment via Zoom or phone

**PLEASE NOTE: SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS A CONSEQUENCE OF PANDEMIC OUTBREAK. CURRENT AS OF DECEMBER 22, 2024.**

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### **Prerequisites:**

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

### **Overview:**

MIT 3776 – Podcasting & Audio Journalism is an introductory course in audio production. As well as reviewing the theory and practice of podcasting and audio journalism, it will provide students with the opportunity to produce, record and edit a pilot episode of their own original podcast.

The course combines in-person lectures and discussions with audio assignments completed during the winter semester. Officially, it runs from **Jan 10 – April 3, 2024.**

During the winter semester, students will;

- complete a series of in-class exercises to practice audio skills
- provide professional feedback for peers
- plan, record and mix a field interview
- pitch and produce an original pilot episode and trailer

## Course Objectives:

At the end of MIT 3776B – Podcasting & Audio Journalism, students will have:

- Learned the best practices for quality sound: planning, gathering and mixing
- Pitched and produced an original podcast
- Improved broadcasting skills, such as conducting interviews and narrating
- Expanded their understanding of the possibilities of audio storytelling

## Course Materials:

You are not expected to purchase equipment or a textbook for this course. The technology requirements are a computer or laptop, earphones and audio editing software. These will be available to you. Some students have their own equipment or software, which they're free to use for exercises or assignments.

Additional audio equipment – such as microphones and field recorders – will be available through the FIMS equipment office. You'll learn how to sign out the gear, as well as how to book the recording booth and podcast studio.

You're welcome to use the audio editing software you're most comfortable with. Adobe Audition is preferred because technical support is available through FIMS. A monthly subscription is \$29.99 + tax. One account can have multiple users so consider cost-sharing with a class member.

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## Assignments & Evaluation

### In-class exercises – 10%

Five in total, 2% each

### February 13 – 20%

Field Interview

### March 6 – 5%

Podcast Pitch

### March 26 – 40%

Original Podcast Episode

## **April 2 – 15%**

Podcast Trailer

## **Participation & Professionalism – 10%**

### **In-class exercises: 10% total (2% each)**

Building audio skills takes practice, and it's a tool you sharpen through trial and error. During the winter term, students will be expected to complete five short exercises.

Each is worth 2% (10% total) and will be graded as pass/fail. Feedback will be provided during in-class listening sessions.

**Exercise #1 (News voicer) due by 12:30 p.m. on January 23, 2024**

**Exercise #2 (Editing an interview) due by 12:30 p.m. on January 30, 2024**

**Exercise #3 (Narrating a script) due by 12:30 p.m. on February 6, 2024**

Please submit via OWL

**Exercise #4 (What makes audio great?) will be shared in class on March 13, 2024**

**Exercise #5 (Branded podcasts) will be completed in-class on March 20, 2024.**

## **Field interview: 20%**

Interviews are the foundation for audio storytelling: listening, thinking, keeping the conversation moving. They're also an art form. Knowing what to chop and what to keep, within ethical guidelines, is an essential skill. Students will head out with field recorders to conduct an interview, then bring back the tape and mix it.

**Due by 12:30 p.m. on Feb 13, 2024**

Please submit via OWL

## **Podcast Pitch: 5%**

Have a great idea? We'll refine it through this written proposal for a new podcast, including a production plan.

**Due at midnight on March 6, 2024**

Please submit via OWL.

## **Original Podcast Episode: 40%**

It's time to put everything together. Create an original pilot episode up to 20 minutes in length, completed solo or with a partner. This must include an opener, theme music, a host introduction and one additional piece of tape.

**Due by 12:30 p.m. on March 26, 2024**

Please submit via OWL

### **Podcast trailer: 15%**

Want your podcast to compete? This is a fun opportunity to really sell your idea. We'll use Dan Misener's rules for crafting the perfect trailer: make a clear promise, explain the who, what, when and *why*, be truthful, appeal to listeners and include a call to action.

**Due by 12:30 p.m. on April 2, 2024**

Please submit via OWL

### **Participation & Professionalism 10%**

This grade will reflect your attendance, as well as your contributions during class time. Feedback is essential in creative industries, and you'll be expected to listen closely and participate generously. Your feedback for peers should meet these professional standards: respectful, thoughtful and helpful. Etiquette is expected in class: listening, contributing and avoiding cell phone use.

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### **Important Dates**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Classes start	Monday, January 8
Reading Week – no classes	Feb 17-25
Family Day	Feb 19
Last day to withdraw from a course without academic penalty	Thursday, March 7
Good Friday - no classes	March 29
Classes end	Monday, April 8
Study days	April 9-10
Exam Period	April 11-30

Check the Academic Calendar for a complete list of [sessional dates](#). Dates for commonly observed religious holidays can be accessed through the diversity calendar housed on the [Human Rights site](#).

## Schedule at a glance

### **Jan 10: Introduction to course**

### **Jan 17: The craft of audio storytelling**

- The “whale” technique and writing for the ear
- Adobe Audition workshop – Editing and mixing with Jacob
- Exercise #1: News voicer

*(Jan 23: Exercise #1 due 24 hours before class)*

### **Jan 24: Interviewing – Asking the best questions**

- Editing with ethics
- Exercise #2: Editing an interview

*(Jan 30: Exercise #2 due 24 hours before class)*

### **Jan 31: Getting good sound– Workshop with Jacob**

- Brainstorming sound & best practices
- Using your voice as a tool
- Exercise #3: Bringing a script to life

*(Feb 6: Exercise #3 due 30 mins before class)*

### **Feb 7: Field Interview workshop**

*(Feb 13: Field interviews due 24 hrs. before class)*

### **Feb 14: Listening session**

### **Feb 21: NO CLASS – Reading Week**

### **Feb 28: Podcasting 101 + The perfect podcast trailer**

### **March 6: Podcasting pitching**

*(March 6: Podcast pitches due at midnight)*

### **March 13: Improv + Compelling conversation** *(Exercise #4: bring to class)*

### **March 20: Branded + corporate podcasts** *(Exercise #5: in-class)*

*(March 26: Podcasts due 30 mins before class)*

### **March 27: Listening session**

*(April 2: Trailers due 24 hrs. before class)*

### **April 3: Listening session + The future of audio**

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## **Academic Performance**

The course uses the following grading scale:

A+ 90-100 A 85-89 A- 80-84 B+ 77-79 B 73-76 B- 70-72 F <70

## **Deadlines & Duplication**

Deadlines are crucial in journalism, and learning to meet them is essential.

If allowance is needed – for medical or other emergencies – please email or phone to request more time. Requests for extensions will only be considered up to 24 hours before deadline. Extensions may or may not be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

Assignments filed after the deadline will lose 5% daily, unless an extension has been granted beforehand.

Duplication of assignments between courses is an academic offence. If in doubt, please consult your instructor.

## **Scholastic Offences/withdrawal from course**

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

**The deadline to drop a course without academic penalty is March 7, 2024.**

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

## **Health/Wellness Services**

Students who are in distress should refer to [MentalHealth@Western](mailto:MentalHealth@Western)

(<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

## Health Emergency Contingency Statement

In the event of a 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](#).

## 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 AI-content generators (such as ChatGPT) to complete assignments without attribution or permission from the instructor are committing a scholastic offence.**

Should a concern about plagiarism arise, instructors may require the student to share their rough work, research notes, or previous drafts. Students are advised to retain these materials until the graded assignment is returned.

## Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with **Accessible Education Western (AEW)**, a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both **AEW** and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate



academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

## **Academic Integrity**

FIMS enforces the highest standards of academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the policy [here](#).

## **Guides for Journalistic Ethics**

We apply journalistic integrity to audio storytelling and podcasting. Seek the truth, minimize harm, be transparent and act independently.

The Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) [Ethics Guidelines](#)

CBC's [Journalistic Standards and Practices](#)

Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) [Code of Ethics](#)

# NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 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-content generators (such as ChatGPT) 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.

## 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 Advising office of their home Faculty (for FIMS students this is [Undergraduate Student Services](#)).

Students are required to provide

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 Advising 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 Advising 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 Advisor.

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 Advisors with valid documentation.

## Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Advisor. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

## Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone

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

## Support Services

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

## SUPPORT SERVICES – LINKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## FIMS Grading Policy

FIMS Undergraduate programs now have the following class average policy: **First year courses required** for entry into 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 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.