

INF 1502: Culture and Technology II

Winter 2017

Instructor Information

Instructor: Matt Ratto
Office hours: Wed, 12-2pm
Office: Robarts, 7020
Email: matt.ratto@utoronto.ca

Schedule: Wed, 9-12

Location: BL417

Statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Land

I wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Course Description

C&T is designed to support the examination of how society, culture, and understanding of the human condition influence, and are influenced by, technological development. In past C&T courses, students have engaged with scholarship on culture and technology, learned methods for addressing the interconnections between the two, and carried out initial research on a specific topic. In this final course of the concentration, previous course work will be used as a starting point for further explorations of a particular culture and technology issue. Students will select a particular community for engagement and design a research project that is intended to support interventions within their chosen context. The results of this course will be outward-facing research objects - research treatise, white paper, web site, or other forms.

Learning Objectives

The purpose of the course is to provide students with experience in specifying and carrying out a short project aimed at deploying concepts and practices learned during the C&T concentration within chosen contexts and communities. Forms of knowledge mobilization will be examined and utilized to communicate complex C&T concepts and research results to wider communities and practitioners.

Course learning outcomes

Students who have successfully completed the course will be able to:

- Review research on culture and technology and determine what insights would be useful for specific communities;
- Understand the possibilities and limitations of knowledge mobilization and translation activities;

- Design and critique knowledge mobilization plans;

Relationship between Course Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes

(<http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/studies/learning-outcomes>): Carrying out and reviewing cultural and technology research requires students to be able to apply concepts, theories, and practices derived from a range of information-related disciplines (Program Outcome 1). Moreover, understanding and developing the skills necessary to translate key research insights will facilitate access to knowledge particularly for those in decision-making roles in information institutions (Program Outcome 2). Finally, in determining and producing knowledge translation objects, students will engage both pragmatically and theoretically with emerging information technologies thereby developing both insight and skills regarding use. (Program Outcomes 4 & 5).

Organization

The course will be organized in a seminar style, focused on student projects. Most courses will involve review and critique of readings and student project work with some time spent in small groups for peer evaluation.

Assignments

Students will be graded on 5 assignments, due either in class or turned in via Blackboard. All written assignments should be in PDF format, formatted using 12 pt fonts and standard margins and justification. File names should include the course (inf1502), the students first initial and last name, and the brief assignment description, e.g. inf1502_mratto_draftbrief.pdf.

Assignment	Due	%
Draft Research Project description	Week 2	10%
Research Project Brief	Week 4	20%
Draft KMB plan	Week 6	20%
KB Object description, plan or draft	Week 9	20%
Final KB plan and Object	Week 13	30%

Draft Research Project description (~250 words)

Write up a short description of the past course/research work that you would like to ‘mobilize’. Include some brief details as to its relevance for non-academic communities. Include enough details so that another person, unfamiliar with your project would be able to understand the project and help you evaluate potential audiences.

Research Project Brief (~1500 words)

This document, written in the style of a ‘policy brief’ should include relevant details regarding the past course/research work that you plan to ‘mobilize’. This should be based on the draft

description provided in week 2 and incorporate peer review carried out in class. For specific sections and information that you should include, see:

<http://www.researchtoaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/how-to-write-a-policy-brief.pdf>

Knowledge Mobilization Plan (~2500-4000 words)

This document should answer the questions; ‘What? Why? Who? How? When? Measure?’. We will use the template below for planning:

http://www.kmbtoolkit.ca/sites/all/themes/kmb/assets/images/Knowledge_Mobilization_Planning_Form.pdf

KB Object Description, plan or draft (~2500 words or other form)

This object might be a white paper, a plan for a conference or other event, a social media campaign, a web site, or any other dissemination object/activity. The format of this is variable depending on your own decision. We will explore different genres of Kmb objects and activities during the course.

Final Kmb plan, Kmb object, and reflections (~5000 words or other form)

This will be a compilation of the previous work done in the course, revised based on feedback, and including a short reflection statement at the end regarding the challenges, benefits, and limitations of Kmb and your process.

Readings and Schedule

See Blackboard

Week 1-3: Knowledge Mobilization and Transfer, “Soft and Hard”

Assignment: Knowledge Mobilization/Translation Plan

Week 4-6 (includes reading week): Planning Kmb activities

Assignment: Draft Kmb plan

Week 7: Reading week

Week 8-10: Showing Value, evidence/what counts/ epistemic issues

Assignment: Kmb Object, description, or plan

Week 11-13: Reflection

Assignment: Final KB Object, plan, and reflection.

Grading

Please consult the iSchool’s Grade Interpretation Guidelines

(<http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/grade-interpretation>) and the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy

(<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>). These documents will form the basis for grading in the course.

Writing Support

As stated in the iSchool's Grade Interpretation Guidelines, "work that is not well written and grammatically correct will not generally be considered eligible for a grade in the A range, regardless of its quality in other respects". With this in mind, please make use of the writing support provided to graduate students by the SGS Office of English Language and Writing Support (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/English-Language-and-Writing-Support.aspx>). The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers and all programs are free. Please consult the current workshop schedule (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Current-Years-Courses.aspx>) for more information.

Academic integrity

Please consult the University's site on Academic Integrity (<http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>). The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I.1.(d) of the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>). You should acquaint yourself with the Code. Please review the material in Cite it Right and if you require further clarification, consult the site How Not to Plagiarize (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>). Cite it Right covers relevant parts of the U of T *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (1995)*. It is expected that all iSchool students take the Cite it Right workshop and the online quiz. Completion of the online Cite it Right quiz should be made prior to the second week of classes. To review and complete the workshop, visit the orientation portion of the iSkills site: uoft.me/iskills

Accommodations

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or a health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Accessibility Services Office (<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>) as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and I know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.