mount royal university
department of computer science and information systems

WINTER 2024 COURSE OUTLINE

course title

COMP 3309: Information Technology and Society

credits

3 (3 hours lecture per week)

instructor

Randy Connolly
rconnolly@mtroyal.ca
B175L, 440-6061
www.randyconnolly.com

office hours

I'll run office hours via Google Meet but the time will likely vary from week-to-week. I can also meet remotely via appointment.

lectures

MW 13:00 – 14:20 T-235

description

A study of the implications of information technology for society. Historical perspectives, social context of computing, legal and ethical problems, economic issues, and philosophical frameworks for analysis will be covered.

required text

Readings on D2L and MRU Library

masking

Appropriate mask use (covering your nose and mouth) is currently listed as optional in all classrooms and laboratories. If you are unwell or exhibiting any symptoms of Covid-19, please stay home and DO NOT come to campus.

land acknowledgement

Mount Royal University is located within the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuu t'ina, and the Iyarhe Nakoda. We are situated on land where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, and the traditional Blackfoot name of this place is "Mohkinstsis," which we now call the City of Calgary. The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation.

discord

There is a Discord server for the course. It is an optional resource for the course that will require creating an account on Discord.

The invite code for the course is: https://discord.gg/2W7EA9Y.

grading

The final grade for this course will be determined as follows:

Quizzes (2 @ 3.5% each)	7%
Midterm (Monday February 26, 2024)	15%
Major Assignment	15%
Participation	4%
Minor Assessments (4 @ 6% each)	24%
Final Exam	35%

Percentage grades will be converted to letter grades as follows:

95-100	A+	67-69	C+
85-95	A	63-66	C
80-84	A-	60-62	C-
77-79	B+	55-59	D+
73-76	B	50-54	D
70-72	B-	<50	F

The University's complete grading system is described in the Calendar.

topics

The general course topics are listed below. Not all topics will be covered in the same degree of detail and the sequence may differ somewhat from the list.

- History of technology and computing
- Social context of computing
- Ethical Theories
- Professional and ethical responsibilities
- Psychological impacts
- Risks and liabilities of computer-based systems
- Intellectual property
- Privacy and civil liberties
- Computer crime
- Economic issues in computing

attendance

Educational research shows that "class attendance [is] a better predictor of college grades than any other known predictor…including … high school GPA, study habits, and study skills" (Credé, Roch, Kieszczynka, 2010). You are strongly encouraged to be an engaged participant in every class meeting.

examinations

The midterm date is specified in the grading section. If any changes to this date are necessary, students will be notified well in advance. Students will not normally be permitted to write a missed test at a later date. If alternative arrangements are possible, they must be made with the instructor prior to the date of the test.

The midterm will focus on understanding and applying the concepts taught in class. These tests will be made up of short answer style questions, as well as a limited number of larger questions to test students' abilities.

The Final exam will be comprehensive with a focus on the second half of the course. It will be two hours long and will be held at a time and place scheduled by the University Registrar during the exam period, April 10 – April 20, 2024. A Final exam can only be rescheduled by following the University's deferred final examination policy.

All material covered in lectures and readings may appear on the exams.

assessments

There will be approximately one assessment every two weeks (either quiz or minor assessment). These assessments may ask you to:

• Answer open ended or directed questions

• Create a summary of one or more readings

• Research and provide details/examples about a concept or idea.

As a 3000-level course, **this course expects students to demonstrate a third-year university level of close reading and academic writing**.

The major assignment will be an essay designed to convince the reader to accept the writer's point of view or recommendation, building a case using facts and logic, as well as examples, expert opinion, and sound reasoning. While presenting all sides of the argument, the assignment must be able to communicate clearly and without equivocation why a certain position is correct.

Written assessments will have to be submitted both in paper and electronically (either as a Google Doc or a Microsoft Word Doc with Track Changes enabled) in order to provide evidence that the submission is the student's work.

late policy

Assignments will be accepted up to two days late; however, a penalty of 10% will be deducted, even for a partial day late. Assignments will not be accepted more than two days late (though this can be modified if negotiated with the instructor beforehand). This includes weekends!

citations

All outside ideas included in a submitted academic work must come from credible sources, and those ideas must be attributed in-text including page and/or paragraph numbers along with a References list that contains sufficient information to verify the source. Anything less will be considered plagiarism, a zero-grade awarded for the assessment, and the student will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

All submission must use IEEE referencing style. See both the SAIT IEEE Citation Style guide and the Victoria University IEEE Referencing guide for details.

artificial intelligence tools [PLEASE READ]

Over the past year, many students have found themselves very tempted to use AI tools like ChatGPT to write their assessments. This is a mistake on many levels.

First off, at present it is still quite easy for me to discern this, so this has resulted in students receiving a zero grade and a record added to their account with the University's Office of Student Conduct.

Second, current AI tools do not produce writing with the specificity required for academic writing, nor are they fully, properly, or even honestly attributed and cited. For a course that endeavors to inculcate an awareness of the ethical responsibilities of computing professionals, this type of unethical behavior is doubly offensive.

Third, the functional value of a course such as this is to help you develop your capability to think and write about non-trivial topics. Remember: employers are not interested in hiring people for their copy and paste abilities.

Written assessments will have to be submitted electronically (either as a Google Doc or a Microsoft Word Doc with Track Changes enabled) in order to provide evidence that their submission is the student's work.

matching software

In this course, you may be asked to submit material in electronic form to a text matching service to which MRU subscribes called Turnitin.com. This is a service that checks textual material for originality. MRU authorizes the use of text Matching Software for educational purposes. Limited personal information should be entered into the software. It is recommended that personal information entered be limited to MRU identification number, institutional email address and course work.

By submitting your material, you agree that your paper will be subject to a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Submitted data resides with the software company outside the University and is used to provide comparisons that promote academic integrity. Once submitted, your materials will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database and used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Students have the right to opt out of using the software and may choose another form of originality checking, subject to the agreement of the instructor. Students must notify their instruction of their intention to opt out by February 3, 2024. Inquiries regarding the use of Turnitin.com in your course can be directed to the instructor [title, business address and phone number]. General information about Turnitin.com including training materials and the University's reasons for using it can be found on MRU's Matching Software Policy.

accessibility statement

If you are a student with an Academic Accommodation Memo and Professor Acknowledgement form from Accessibility Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your Accommodations in a private and confidential setting. Requests to review and sign Academic Accommodation documents should not be made during or between classes. If you are a Student Experiencing a Disability who may require Academic Accommodation and have not yet registered with Accessibility Services, please contact their office at accessibility@mtroyal.ca or find additional information at www.mtroyal.ca/accessibility . You must be registered with Accessibility Services to access Academic Accommodations. If you require Academic Accommodations for a reason other than Disability, please make an appointment with me to discuss or contact Diversity and Human Rights Services at 403-440- 5956.

recording of lectures

Mount Royal University has contracted Google to provide educational technology software for its courses; where, the instructor will record lectures using Google Meet and make them available to registered students on D2L for up until 10 days after the course is completed. Users, including any recorded student participants, are advised that the personal information collected during the recordings will only be used for educational purposes and is collected under the authority of the FOIP Act – section 33(c) and the Post-Secondary Learning Act in the Province of Alberta.

Users are further advised that the downloading of posted videos other than for the purposes of student personal learning through D2L, may violate the copyright of the course instructor or others. For additional questions regarding the collection, use, disclosure and protection of personal information please contact: Amy McCarthy, Department Administrative Assistant, Faculty of Science and Technology, 4825 Mount Royal Gate SW - Calgary, AB - T3E 6K6 - amccarthy@mtroyal.ca

educational outcomes

Mount Royal University had identified six university-wide learning outcomes that it believes are critical in order to prepare its graduates for workplace success and a life of continuous learning. Generally speaking, "outcomes" are goals, results, objectives that you should derive from the University, from a program of study, and from a particular course.

University-Wide Learning Outcomes

This course covers many of the University-wide learning outcomes, but emphasizes Computer Literacy, Thinking and Communication Skills, and Ethical Reasoning such as:

- Understand relationship of technology to individuals and society (lectures, midterm).
- Problem solving (assignments, exams)
- Creative thinking (coming up with alternative plans for assignments)
- Analytic thinking appropriate to discipline of information systems (assignments)
- Understand and use vocabulary and concepts appropriate to the discipline (assignments, exams)
- Interpret and evaluate meaning (assignments)
- Communicate clearly and concisely using visual and written formats appropriate to the audience (assignments, exams)
- Analyze and reflect on ethical dimensions of legal, social and scientific issues (assignments, exams).

Skills in Group Effectiveness will also be developed through classroom exercises.

general department policy

Students are responsible for attendance at all lectures and labs, for completion of assignments in open lab time, and for requesting assistance from their instructor or from the instructional assistant when they are having difficulty with the course material.

If this course is a prerequisite for other courses, the minimum grade required in order to take the subsequent course is stated elsewhere in this course outline.

The midterm test dates are indicated in the Assessment section. Should changes become necessary, students will be notified well in advance. Students will not normally be permitted to write a missed test at a later date. If alternative arrangements are possible, they must be made with the instructor prior to the date of the test.

The final examinations will be scheduled by the Registrar during the period from April 10 – April 20, 2024. Do not make any plans for that period until the final examination schedule has been posted.

Programs will be graded for documentation and style, as well as for correctness. All files must be left in the student's directory until the marked program has been returned.

As a rule, the deadline for assignments will not be extended for computer downtime of less than 24 hours; however, this will be at the instructor's discretion. Any exception will be communicated to the class as quickly as possible.

Students should familiarize themselves with the University policy on the integrity of student work as described in the Calendar and with the departmental policy on cheating detailed on the attached sheet. Cheating of any form is a serious matter and will be dealt with severely.

The last day for withdrawal from this course is March 15, 2024.

Students should familiarize themselves with the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities contained in the University Calendar.