

Course: DMED 540: Communication Skills | 3 credits
Term: Fall 2021
Instructor: Jason Elliott
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Course Description

In this course, learners will be given the tools and guidelines to ensure their successful communication with each other, with lecturers and advisers, and with clients and coworkers. Working in small teams, learners explore effective approaches to messaging for different purposes, summarizing (verbal and written), presenting in academic/professional environments, engaging in group discussion, sharing ideas appropriately, asking and answering questions, collaborating efficiently, and producing documentation (gist-based, executive summaries, Agile statements, one-pagers). Learners must maintain a minimum of A- on all assignments and mini projects.

In regards to the mini-projects, students will apply their English language communication skills while they learn about digital media problem solving, teamwork and agile methodologies through the development of project-based prototypes. Throughout the entire semester, each student is expected to be able to create and implement art, audio, and code into a variety of different prototypes, both on their own and within a team.

Course Competencies

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Effectively collaborate and communicate within a team
- Understand and apply the basic concepts of Agile Development
- Effectively ideate through a variety of different tools
- Effectively apply rapid prototyping methodologies
- Implement art and code assets into an interactive digital artifact

Format of the Course

Teaching at SFU in fall 2021 will be conducted primarily through remote methods. There will be in-person course components in a few exceptional cases where this is fundamental to the educational goals of the course. Instructors will let students know of the synchronous/asynchronous components of the course at the start of the course. Enrollment in this course acknowledges that remote study may entail different modes of learning, interaction with your instructor, and ways of getting feedback on your work than may be the case for in-person classes. To ensure you can access all course materials, we recommend you have access to a computer with a microphone and camera, and the internet. In some cases your instructor may use Zoom or other means requiring a camera and microphone to invigilate exams. If proctoring software will be used, this will be confirmed in the first week of class. Students with hidden or visible disabilities who believe they may need class or exam accommodations, including in the current context

of remote learning, are encouraged to register with the SFU Centre for Accessible Learning (caladmin@sfu.ca or 778-782-3112).

The course will run for 13 weeks with 2-hour weekly class sessions scheduled consisting of lectures, in-class activities, and student presentations. Students will work in teams assigned by the instructor and will be expected to work on the projects outside of class time.

Course Schedule

Week	Theme of Class	Assignment	Due
1	CORE QUESTION: WHAT IS THIS COURSE ALL ABOUT? Teams, Tools and Talking	Interactive Story	Week 4
2	CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE BE CREATIVE? TEAM 1 SELECTION DAY		
3	CORE QUESTION: DOES THE STORY MAKE SENSE?		
4	CORE QUESTION: WHAT IS USER CENTERED DESIGN? INTERACTIVE STORY DUE	Targeted Application	Week 8
5	CORE QUESTION: WHO IS THIS APPLICATION FOR?		
6	CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE PLAN BETTER FOR DEVELOPMENT?		
7	CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE KNOW IT WORKS?		
8	CORE QUESTION: APPLICATION DUE	AR Game	Week 12
9	CORE QUESTION: WHO IS THIS GAME FOR?		
10	CORE QUESTION: IS THIS GAME ENGAGING?		
11	CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE KNOW IF IT IS FUN?		
12	CORE QUESTION: WHAT IS LEFT TO DO?		
13	CORE QUESTION: WHAT DID WE LEARN THIS SEMESTER? GAME DUE		

Evaluation

This course focuses on developing the skills required to effectively work on a team and understanding the basics of agile development. This will be achieved through developing three different prototype projects throughout the semester. The focus will be on rapid iterations, team communication, and demonstrating the in-class lessons in an effective way. While much of the work might be in analogue formats, all submissions must be in a digital format.

Grades will be based on the following criteria (subject to revision if deemed necessary):

- **Individual Work 35%**
Individual work consists of three presentations that the students will create and present in class, as well as participating in the in-class exercises.
- **Prototyping Projects 40%**
There are three different projects that will be built during the semester, each of which will require multiple prototypes and presentations. This will include paper, physical, and digital artifacts to be created. These projects will be graded on a team basis and will be judged on a variety of metrics, such as exploration, creativity, quantity, and effectiveness.
- **Teamwork 25%**
All projects in this course are team based. Students will be judged upon how they work within their team on an ongoing basis throughout the semester. Students will be primarily judged upon applying the team tools and methodologies taught in class. This will also include communication and interpersonal behaviours within the team itself.

Note on assessment:

Unless specifically specified a student's grade will be based on their INDIVIDUAL contribution to team assignments, presentations, and projects.

There will also be an ungraded mid-term Self/Peer Assessment. This will provide a baseline and guidance for growth over the rest of the semester.

Attendance

Attendance and punctuality is mandatory. Repeated offences will not be tolerated and WILL affect your grade. You are responsible for making up for materials, in-class activities, and assignments missed. Students who are unavoidably absent due to illness or disability should notify their instructors of their situation. Note that late assignments/projects will not be accepted without prior arrangement or medical documentation.

Office Hours

Office hours will be announced at the start of the course. Please feel free to email for appointments outside of office hours, subject to availability. Questions pertaining to the overall program should be directed to your assigned program advisor.

Required Readings

There are no specific required readings for this course. However, there will be supplemental articles posted on Canvas that students are encouraged to read related to their coursework.

Written & Spoken English Requirement

As with all Pre-MDM courses, this course has a high expectation with respect to communication. You will be expected to write, speak and otherwise express yourself to a high standard in English. Written and spoken work may receive a lower mark if it is, in the opinion of the instructor, deficient in English. It is the student's responsibility to seek extra help if they are not able to perform to expectations. Please talk to your professors or to your advisors if you would like recommendations on getting extra help.

Religious Accommodation

The university accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably the first week of class, if you will require any accommodations on these grounds.

Academic Integrity

MDM considers plagiarism to be the most serious academic offense that a student can commit. Regardless of whether or not it was committed intentionally, plagiarism has serious academic consequences and can result in expulsion from the university. Plagiarism involves the improper use of somebody else's words or idea's in one's own work. It is the student's responsibility to ensure you fully understand what plagiarism is. Please see the SFU website for an explanation of the various types of plagiarism and to take the plagiarism tutorial: <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/plagiarism>

Grading Profile

A+	95-100
A	90-94
A-	85-89
B+	80-84
B	75-79
B-	70-74
C+	65-69
C	60-64
F	0 - 59



Laptops & Cell Phones

The use of laptops and cell phones during class is at the discretion of the instructor. Please respect your classmates and instructors and refrain from text messages, social media, games and videos during class and workshop times. Please note you should always bring pen and paper to class.

Policies

The student and academic policies of the Masters of Digital Media Program and of Simon Fraser University apply within this course. Relevant SFU policies can be found at:

- Graduate General Regulations

http://students.sfu.ca/calendar/for_students/grad_regulation.html

- Academic Honesty and Student Conduct Policies

<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/Students/index.html>

- Teaching and Instruction Policies

<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/index.htm>

- University Policies (complete site)

<http://www.sfu.ca/policies>