**Course:** DMED 500: Foundations of Digital Media (3 credits)
**Term:** Fall 2025 – Term 1
**Instructor:** Jason Lee Elliott
**Email:** Jason_elliott@thecdm.ca

*Acknowledgement of Coast Salish Peoples and Land*
We respectfully acknowledge the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples on whose unceded traditional territories our campus resides.

**Course Description**
The emergence and ongoing development of the digital media landscape is discussed through a historical exploration and critical analysis of the business, technical innovations, social, ethical, and legal demands which define it. Outcomes are critical perspectives from explorations of digital media aspects, which will act as a common basis for all subsequent discussion and collaboration between students with artistic, technical, or interdisciplinary backgrounds.

**Course Objectives**
After completing DMED 500, each student will be able to:

- Apply critical thinking skills across the various aspects of product development
- Identify and utilize various design thinking approaches to problem solving
- Effectively apply generative research and ideation methods
- Strategically identify market opportunities and business models
- Identify key history, legal, ethics, and biases that affect the digital media industries.

**Format of the Course**
The course will run for 13 weeks and adopts a flipped classroom model to maximize interactive learning and hands-on experience. In this approach, traditional lecture content is delivered outside of class time through various online resources, allowing in-class time to be dedicated to engaging activities, discussions, and practical application of concepts. It is expected that students will work on their assignments outside of class time.

**Course Schedule**
The course will run on Tuesdays, September 9 – December 2, 2025 from 9AM – 12PM. In Week 4 and Week 10, classes will be held on Monday to account for the statutory holidays.

The following schedule outlines the majority of the topics covered during the course. Based on the interaction with students as well as the topics covered by parallel courses, some topics may be added or modified during the semester at the discretion of the instructor.

| Class | Topic |
|---|---|
| Week 1 (Tuesday, September 9) | CORE QUESTION: WHAT IS DIGITAL MEDIA? |
| Week 2 (Tuesday, September 16) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE FIND THE USER'S PROBLEM? |

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| Week 3 (Tuesday, September 23) | CORE QUESTION: WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE RESEARCH? |
| Week 4 (Monday, September 29) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE COME UP WITH A SOLUTION? |
| Week 5 (Tuesday, October 5) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO CONSTRAINTS AFFECT THE PRODUCT? |
| Week 6 (Tuesday, October 14) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE VALIDATE OUR ASSUMPTIONS? |
| Week 7 (Tuesday, October 21) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE MAKE DECISIONS IN DEVELOPMENT? |
| Week 8 (Tuesday, October 28) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE FIND MARKET OPPORTUNITIES? |
| Week 9 (Tuesday, November 4) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO COMPANIES MAKE MONEY? |
| Week 10 (Monday, November 10) | CORE QUESTION: HOW DO WE SELL THE CONCEPT? |
| Week 11 (Tuesday, November 18) | CORE QUESTION: ARE WE GOING TO GET IN TROUBLE? |
| Week 12 (Tuesday, November 25) | CORE QUESTION: CAN WE GET SOME HELP? |
| Week 13 (Tuesday, December 2) | CORE QUESTION: IS THIS A GOOD IDEA? |

**Course Assignments**

*Note: Assignments, due dates, and weighting are subject to change before the start of the semester*

| Assignment | Due Date | Weight | Details |
|---|---|---|---|
| Research Ethics | Week 2 | 5% | TCPS2 Core 2022 |
| Reflections on AI Usage | Week 13 | 15% | Tracking, Analysis, Reflecting on AI |
| Industry Identification and Pre-Research Assumptions | Week 3 | 5% | Proposed focus of User-Centric Innovation |
| User-Centric Innovation Report | Week 5 | 20% | Applied user research, synthesis, and analysis |
| Technology Identification and Pre-Research Assumptions | Week 6 | 5% | Proposed focus of Technology Assessment |

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| Technology Assessment Report | Week 8 | 20% | Applied technology research, synthesis, and analysis |
| Venture Research Report | Week 13 | 25% | Business research and business model canvas |
| Elevator Pitch Presentation | Week 13 | 10% | 3 minute venture proposal |

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

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|---|---|
| **Class Requirements** | **20** |
| Research Ethics | |
| Reflections on AI Usage | |
| **User Centric Innovation** | **25** |
| Industry Identification and Pre-Research Assumptions | |
| User-Centric Innovation Report | |
| **Technology Assessment** | **25** |
| Technology Identification and Pre-Research Assumptions | |
| Technology Assessment Report | |
| **Venture Proposal** | **35** |
| Venture Research Report | |
| Elevator Pitch Presentation | |
| **Total** | **100** |

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

**Attendance and Participation**
Regular attendance is expected of students in all their classes (including participation, group work, tutorials, seminars, online etc.). Students who are unavoidably absent due to illness or disability should notify their instructors of their situation.

- Students are expected to attend every class on the schedule and be fully present**.** While sickness is sometimes inevitable, understand that due to the experiential nature of the material, classes cannot be made up.
- Due dates: Late assignments will not be accepted without the explicit permission of the instructors and may be subject to a late penalty.

https://www.sfu.ca/students/enrolment-services/policies-and-procedures/academic-concessions.html

**Grading Profile**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A+ | 95-100 | Exemplary expectations |
| A | 90-94 | Exceeding expectations |
| A- | 85-89 | Meet expectations |
| B+ | 80-84 | Approaching expectations |
| B | 75-79 | |
| B- | 70-74 | Below expectations |
| C | 60-69 | Far below expectations |
| F | 0 – 59 | Fail (Students must retake the course). |

A student in a master's or doctoral program must maintain a CGPA of 3.0. Under no circumstances will a student whose CGPA is below 3.0, be awarded a graduate degree.
https://www.sfu.ca/students/advising-resources/calculators/gpa-calculator.html

**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.

**Written & Spoken English**
English is the official language of the school and all communication (written and spoken) is expected to be conducted in English. SFU and the MDM Program provide a wide range of free language support for those who need and it's up to each learner to seek that support.

**Accommodations**
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. The Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) will make every effort to assist students with disabilities so that they achieve their educational goals. https://www.sfu.ca/students/accessible-learning/establishing-accommodations/accommodation.html

**Academic Integrity: Your Work, Your Success**
SFU's Academic Integrity website http://www.sfu.ca/students/academicintegrity.html is filled with information on what is meant by academic dishonesty, where you can find resources to help with your studies and the consequences of cheating.

Each student is responsible for their conduct as it affects the university community. Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, is ultimately destructive of the values of the university. Furthermore, it is unfair and discouraging to the majority of students who pursue their studies honestly. Scholarly integrity is required of all members of the university. http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html
If you are using generative AI to produce content that will be part of your graded work in the course, you must be transparent about the tools that you use. Undeclared use of the tool/technology will be considered a violation of the academic integrity policy. Be aware that any tool used will require you to evaluate the output for accuracies and be responsible for making the appropriate corrections.

***Inappropriate use of technology in coursework***
If you are using any technology, including generative AI, to produce or edit content that will be part of your graded work in the course, you must be transparent about the tools that you use. Undeclared use of the tool/technology will be considered a violation of the academic integrity policy. Be aware that any tool used will require you to evaluate the output for accuracies and be responsible for making the appropriate corrections.

**Graduate Studies Notes**
Important dates and deadlines for graduate students are found here: http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/current/important_dates/guidelines.html.