

W-COURSE CERTIFICATION REQUEST

Thank you for your interest in planning and offering a Writing-Intensive (W) course. Writing-Intensive courses help meet Simon Fraser University’s commitment to the education of undergraduate students as defined by the new curriculum. This form is intended to:

- determine whether proposed or existing courses meet the W criteria;
- estimate the number of W seats available to students;
- assist faculty to think through the elements of a W course

FUNDING NOTE: Courses approved for W certification will receive additional instructional assistance funds (extra TA support) at a rate of \$75 per enrolled seat in the semester in which a W course is offered, disbursed to Faculties and then distributed to Programs. Course development funds are no longer available.

This form is divided into TWO sections:

- Section I** requests instructor, program and course information;
- Section II** requests detailed course content information.

Please contact Susan Rhodes at slrhodes@sfu.ca or Local 3312 if you have any questions about completing this form. Completed forms can be sent either electronically to the email address above or through campus mail to Susan Rhodes, Curriculum Office, VP Academic.

Course Title: Professional Responsibility and Ethics

Course # (if known): CMPT 322

Is the course (double-click the applicable box, select “checked” from the Default Value and click “OK”):

- a new course?
- a modification of an existing course to meet the W criteria?
- a course that has previously been piloted as a W course?
- an existing course that fulfills the W criteria for certification?

To be considered, this form must be approved by the Chair/Director of your program and by the Associate Dean of your Faculty. Please have them sign off as noted below, or send an email confirmation to slrhodes@sfu.ca

Chair/Director: _____ Date approved: _____

Associate Dean: _____ Date approved: _____

Section I

INSTRUCTOR/PROGRAM INFORMATION

Name of Instructor(s): Harinder Khangura, Toby Donaldson, John Edgar, Rob Cameron

Department: School of Computing Science

E-mail: khangura@sfu.ca Telephone: 27575

If not the instructor named above, who will develop or revise the course? Harinder Khangura

Familiarity with W courses

Has the instructor(s) previously taught a writing-intensive course? (Please specify.) No.

Has the instructor(s) attended any writing workshops? (Please specify.)

The instructor has not attended any writing workshops at this time. The W proposal was developed in collaboration with the FAS W Coordinator (Chantal Gibson) to ensure all W criteria are met. The course instructor and TAs will receive writing & feedback training during the course redevelopment process. Course specific writing and teaching support will be available during the delivery of the course.

If the course has multiple instructors, how will the department ensure there is a consistency of instructional approach and that the varying course content will routinely meet the W criteria?

All instructors are based at the Surrey campus as part of a close-knit faculty complement. Resources and experiences will be routinely shared among faculty who teach this course.

COURSE ENROLMENT AND OFFERING INFORMATION

If this is a new or modified course:

- when will it first be offered? Spring 2009
- how often will it be offered? Twice annually
- what is the expected enrolment per offering? 40 students

If this is an existing course:

- how often is it offered? n/a
- what is the current average enrolment per offering? n/a
- what is the expected enrolment increase, if relevant, with W designation? n/a

Section II

THE W CRITERIA

1. Students have opportunities to use writing as a way of learning the content of the course and are taught to write in the forms and for the purposes that are typical of disciplines and/or professions.

Writing is not used simply as a medium through which students can be evaluated on whether they have understood course material. Rather, students are given opportunities to use the process of writing as a way of exploring and critiquing complex concepts and coming to understand them. They are also given instruction and practice in writing in such disciplinary forms as lab reports, literary analyses, or policy briefs.

2. Examples of writing within the disciplines are used as a means of instruction about typical structures, modes of reasoning, styles of address, and the use of technical language and of evidence.

*As part of the engagement with and instruction in writing, students read samples of typical forms of the writing in their discipline, not only for **what** they say but **how** they say it and what that means for them as writers who need to produce such texts themselves. To this end, they may analyze various kinds of texts in the discipline, focusing on matters of structure, logic, style, and evidential support and learning to recognize how successful writers use strategies that will meet the expectations of their readers.*

3. Students receive appropriate feedback and response to their writing that is based on explicit criteria and is directed at improving the quality of their writing.

One of the fundamental means by which all writers improve their writing is through response intended to assist in improvement. Such response, however, is more likely to be understood and acted upon when students know what is expected of them. They need to be well informed about what will receive comment, how and by whom comment will be given, and what qualities and characteristics in their writing will be reflected in the grades received. The criteria on which writing an assignment is evaluated should be clearly expressed in writing when the assignment is given and should coincide with the analyses of the features and goals of academic and disciplinary discourse (as discussed in Criterion 2).

4. Revision is built into the process of writing for formal assignments, usually in terms of revisions of the same paper, or alternatively, in revisions accomplished through successive similar assignments.

W courses acknowledge that writing is a process. Writing instruction will typically include instruction, assistance, and practice in all stages of the process, from initial brainstorming or other idea-generating strategies through organization, drafting, revising, and submitting a completed paper. These techniques not only assist in making a final paper worth reading, they also mean that students rethink what they are saying about a topic and are more likely to get it straight in their minds and on the paper. If successive similar assignments are employed, the characteristics being marked in each assignment should be explicitly identified and show that there is a planned, cumulative effect on students' development as writers over the course of the semester. Through revision, students have opportunities to make use of the responses described in Criterion 3, thereby enhancing their evolving knowledge and skills. This criterion assumes a process that includes responding to drafts; it does not assume, in the interests of not increasing workloads, grading drafts nor giving further extensive feedback on revised work. It also assumes that response and marking will not be left entirely to TAs but that some will be done by, and/or carefully guided by, instructors.

5. At least half the course grade is based on written work for which students receive feedback (see Criterion 3).

*The feedback received may be either before revising an assignment or on a succession of similar assignments (see Criterion 4). Writing on which no feedback is received by the student (including such things as essays in final exams) **is not** included the calculation of this 50 percent. The grade for written work encompasses all aspects of the assignment; it does not distinguish effective expression from knowledge of content as evident in the written work.*

INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES

1. Please give a one-paragraph description of the content and overall format (lecture, seminar, tutorial etc.) of the course.

This course explores the theory and practice of computer ethics: the basis for ethical decision-making and the methodology for reaching ethical decisions concerning computing matters will be studied. This course will involve lectures by the instructor, lectures by visiting lecturers, in-class discussion, individual and group class presentations, and case analyses. Writing as a means to understand and reason about complex ethical issues will be emphasized.

Writing assignments will include analysis of case studies, online forum postings, an informal essay, a critical analysis, a debate, and a final scholarly analysis of a chosen topic.

2. What writing will students do as a way of learning the content of the course?

Students will have opportunities to use writing as a way of learning the content of the course through low-stakes (few or no marks) and higher stakes (10 marks and up) writing assignments. Students will be taught to write in the forms and the purposes (critical analysis, scholarly research writing) that are typical to the discipline and related areas. Students will practice appropriate styles of argumentation and evidence, modes of reasoning (critical inquiry, critical analysis), styles of address and conventions, and audience awareness. Students will be given explicit criteria for each writing activity, including learning objectives, overview, process, guidance, expectations, and grading.

Students will receive appropriate response to their writing from instructors, TAs and peers. Revision will be built into the writing process for the formal assignments. For example, students will receive feedback on the research paper proposal that will inform the writing of the larger paper. Low-stakes writing activities are designed to support and scaffold the writing of higher-stakes assignments. For example, students will be required to compose **online forum postings** in response to weekly readings. Each short writing activity will ask students to *respond to questions and explore* a key concept that has been discussed in the lecture. Students are asked to revisit these concepts and processes of argumentation in the higher-stakes assignments, to engage content and process in more detail.

As well, students will participate in interactive **case study sessions** that require writing to think activities. After a brief description of the case study, students will break into informal groups and discuss the issues presented in the lecture. Students are required to take written notes, to record their insights, questions, and arguments. Students then present their ideas to the class for critique and notes are handed in at the end of the session for instructor review.

CMPT 322 Sample Assignment & Grading Overview:

In-class case-study analyses (peer review/critique) – 5%
 Online forum postings – 5%
 Informal Response Paper (with written feedback) – 5%
 Critical Analysis (with written feedback) – 10%

- Oral Debates (peer review/critique) – 10%
- Scholarly Analysis & Research
 - Preliminary Proposal (with written feedback) – 10%
 - Final Paper – 20%
- Final Exam – 35%

3. Please list and explain the type(s) of formal written assignments and instructional methods you propose for this course by responding to the following items:

- a. How is the form(s) of the writing used in the course typical of the discipline or profession? How does writing contribute to learning the course concepts and ways of reasoning?

The Critical Analysis assignment asks students to research a specific topic and write a short paper *summarizing* their findings and providing their opinions based on what they have learned in the research process.

Sample CMPT322 Critical Analysis Assignment:

From Wikipedia:

“Privacy is the ability of an individual or group to seclude information about themselves and thereby reveal themselves selectively.”

Internet companies routinely collect and retain personal information on Internet users. Companies like Yahoo and Google collect information on the browsing habits, search history, shopping patterns, and email use of their users. Other companies, such as Facebook and MySpace allow Internet users to create elaborate personal profiles and to create links to other users. Information collected, stored, used and lost by Internet companies can represent a threat to personal privacy.

Instructions:

Students will choose an Internet company to research (ex: Facebook, MySpace, Yahoo, or Google). Research will be based on publicly available information (ex: what they can find on the Internet, academic publications, and media reports) and, as well, their own knowledge. Research questions will encourage deeper analysis (ex: what if any privacy concerns do you have about the website/organization you selected?). Possible research directions include identifying other websites and/or companies owned/operated by the same organization, identifying companies that finance or operate the website and/or instances of how information revealed by users has been used by other people or organizations (ex: information used by governments, colleges, hackers, individuals, etc). This writing process encourages students to explore their thinking strategies (ex: compare and contrast or cause and effect) and present a thesis supported by clear modes of reasoning.

- b. What methods will you use to instruct the students on how to write for the assignments and the course?

i. *Lecture and Tutorial instruction*: The purpose of the writing activities, the processes for composing/revising them, and the grading criteria are discussed in lectures and tutorials. Writing is discussed as a professional practice, but it is also used as the *vehicle* for communication, to explore and demonstrate critical thinking and promote discussion in the classroom. For example, *Peer Review* during in-class debates provides immediate feedback AND promotes class discussion around writing and thinking.

ii. *Modeling*: Examples of critical writing and research papers in the discipline will be selected and shown to the class. Students will be asked to look at the writing strategies used in the works (ie: format, conventions, organization of ideas, argument, documentation) to communicate with their intended audiences.

iii. *Annotated Samples*: Samples writing and student assignments with annotated feedback will be used to illustrate and explain genre, conventions, argument with respect to audience expectations.

- c. How does each assignment relate to the previous one and build on it or lead to the next?

Scaffolding low-stakes to high-stakes: As noted in **Question 2**, online forum postings throughout the term will help students better understand key concepts presented in the readings. These *quick-writes* provide the instructor an opportunity to evaluate student knowledge and understanding and to clarify key concepts in preparation for the high-stakes assignments. Additional low-stakes activities, including case studies and oral debates, will help students build critical analysis skills, which will be expanded within the context of the Scholarly Analysis and Research assignment.

- d. Will students get feedback or response of some kind to their assignments and if so, when and how? How do you plan to make your criteria explicit?

Students will receive written and/or oral feedback from Instructors, TAs and or Peers (within 1-2 weeks) on the following writing assignments:

- In-class case study analyses: oral feedback will be provided
- Informal essay: written feedback when handed back
- Critical Analysis: written feedback when handed back
- Debate: Peer and Instructor/TA feedback will be provided
- Scholarly Analysis: Written feedback from Instructor/TA will be provided on the Preliminary Proposal

CMPT322 – Draft Rubric for Critical Analysis Assignment

	Criteria	Emerging Developing Mastering	Feedback
--	----------	----------------------------------	----------

DEPTH & INSIGHT (60%)	Provides a clear introduction to the technology.		
	Presents a strong and concise thesis statement.		
	Presents arguments that are coherent, organized, and connected by clear transitions.		
	Supports arguments and claims with credible evidence.		
	Concludes with a clear, concise summary of arguments.		
	Provides insight into the technology in various dimensions (e.g. social, individual, economic, ethical)		
RESEARCH (15%)	Shows evidence of substantial, relevant research.		
	Cites all references using proper conventions.		
COVERAGE AND ORGANIZATION (15%)	The paper covers all the details asked for in the assignment description.		
	Writing shows a logical flow of arguments.		
	Provides a concise and engaging introduction, and concludes with a clear, concise summary of the arguments.		
SYNTAX & GRAMMAR (10%)	Paper is free of spelling and grammatical errors.		
	Uses language that clearly and effectively conveys ideas.		
	Writes with clear sentence and paragraph structure.		

- e. If students do not revise a complete paper after getting instructive feedback on a draft, please explain how the successive writing assignments or the essay component of a mid-term exam would accommodate the criterion for revision?

Assignments are related in theme and gradually build towards the final scholarly paper, in which a substantial preliminary proposal is reviewed and feedback provided

4. Is at least half the course grade based on the written work/assignments?

The proposed course outline assigns 55% of the course mark to written work. This may vary slightly, but will be at least 50%.

DISTANCE EDUCATION OFFERINGS

If this course is also offered by Distance Education, please respond to the following questions:

- How do the pedagogy and evaluation methods for the DE section of the course differ, if at all, from the on-campus sections of the course?
- Is the course supervisor the same as the instructor of the on-campus offering?
- What involvement does the course supervisor have in providing instruction on writing?

No distance offerings are planned.

MARKING AND RESPONDING

Who will read and respond to student writing? Instructor_____ TA/TM_____ Peers_____ All X_____

If TAs/TMs or Peers will be responsible for marking, please explain what you will do to ensure that:

- TAs/TMs and/or Peers are trained to respond to specific writing assignments

Careful screening of TA/TMs will be done prior to course delivery. The Instructor will make clear the expectations and skills required to be a TA/TM for this course. TA/TM's will be strongly encouraged to attend various W course workshops scheduled during the beginning of the term. Peers will be used in the form of classmates evaluating their fellow students in, for example, the debates.

- Marking and grading are consistent

The class size will be small enough that there may only be one or two TA/TMs. Consistency should be easy to maintain.

- Marking and grading are monitored by the instructor

Again, small class sizes mean that the instructor should be able to read more than one assignment of each student over the course of the semester in order to monitor the appropriateness of the grading.

