GBDA 306 – Ethics and Values in Design
(Winter 2022, Online Section 003)

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Fernandez
Email: sffernandez@uwaterloo.ca
Office Hours: Friday 10:30 am – 12:30 pm (EST), and by appointment (via Email & Zoom)

TA: Jin Sol Kim | **Email:** js2kim@uwaterloo.ca

Lecture: REMOTE – No Live Synchronous Sessions; Classes Take Place Asynchronously on LEARN

1. Course Description

This course will explore the ethical responsibilities that emerge from the intersection of design, business, and globalization. You will critically reflect upon the ethical considerations behind contemporary business and design practices.

In this class, we will assess how the values of designers – as well as their biases – come to be embedded into the design of everyday objects such as application interfaces, digital devices, and digital services. We will explore how these objects influence users to act in ways that may undermine their best interests. For example, we will learn how Dark Patterns in design are used to promote compulsive use of websites and digital services. We will analyze the pressures, norms, and socio-economic contexts that create the conditions for biased or unethical designs. We will also evaluate the strategies for promoting more ethical design practices as well as develop our own strategies to make design more ethical, accessible, and equitable to everyone.

This course does not cover everything there is to know about ethical design practice. As you encounter new ethical dilemma in your professional life, you will further develop your knowledge about ethical design practices. This course will introduce you to key challenges in ethical design and demonstrate how many issues in design practice tend to be more complex than the machinations of a few "evil" designers or corporations. The course will seek to demonstrate the value of products, services, and businesses that operate from principles of fairness and respect towards everyone involved. To that end, the course will equip you with language, tools, and resources to communicate and act in a thoughtful and reflective manner when you encounter ethical choices in your professional life.

1.1. Learning Objectives

- Understand how values and biases come to be embedded in everyday technologies, the impact of these values and biases, and the roles of designers and creative workers in these processes.

- Identify Dark Design Patterns and the contexts behind their increasing deployment.

- Assess and evaluate different approaches that promote more ethical design, such as professional, legal, and socio-cultural methods.

- Develop ethical reasoning skills via textual analysis, discussion, case studies, and debate.

- Reflect on how an individual's research, writing, and debate activities have shaped the individual's decision-making approaches and practices.

- Recognize an individual's structural position as a designer, understand the strengths, limitations, and responsibilities that come with this position, and work to develop a personal code of ethics.

2. What Makes an Online Course Different?

To facilitate online learning, we will do a few things differently, such as:

- **Socialization** is a critical domain in higher education. As such, the aim of the coursework is to encourage discussion and debate among all members of the course. The content of this course is delivered asynchronously through the provision of lecture videos and lecture slides, while the weekly office hours will occur synchronously. Approximately half of your class time each week will be spent in discussion forums. The other half of the class time will be spent reviewing lecture videos and lectures slides as well as working on **individual-based assignments** and **group-based assignments**.

- This course emphasizes **human engagement**. The online discussion forums provide opportunities for you to participate in a community of learners. Everyone is expected to contribute **one discussion post each week** that responds to the content of the assigned reading and lecture videos for that week of class. In turn, you are strongly encouraged respond to the discussion posts that your classmates present in the online discussion forums on LEARN. As your instructor, I will be right there with you and respond to your discussion posts regularly.

- Human engagement brings forth **learning engagement**. This course rewards consistent engagement with the weekly course content, the thoughts of your classmates in the

online discussion forums, and the main assignments, which consist of individual-based and group-based assignments. As you actively engage with the course content and the thoughts of your classmates in the online discussion forums, you will learn **about ethical reasoning** and **develop new approaches** towards designing digital objects and digital services that are **ethical, accessible, and equitable**.

- This course encourages **communication**. The capacity to communicate clearly and effectively is a life skill that everyone needs to learn and hone in their career and their personal life. By participating in the online discussion forums and working on the individual-based and group-based assignments, you will improve your communication skills and learn to engage with your classmates and grow with them. *Engaging with knowledge* requires the effective communication of ideas. Communication is a two-way street. As you research and write about a topic, particularly through the Ethical Design Awareness Exercises, you will learn to engage others constructively and respectfully.

3. Course Structure

The course consists of twelve modules. With the exception of the introduction (Week 1) and special lecture (Week 7) modules, each module comprises a package of assigned readings, the instructor's lecture video, and lecture slides. Complementing the package for each module is a specific discussion thread that engages with the module's topic and associated concepts. The discussion threads are nestled in the discussion forum on LEARN.

The online discussion forum provides a venue for you to answer questions set by the instructor or raise questions and ideas of your own. **The discussion thread for each module will remain open for two weeks**. After two weeks, the discussion thread for the module will close. Take note of the dates on which each discussion thread opens and closes. You are also encouraged to respond to the thoughts and perspectives that your classmates present in their discussion posts in the online discussion forum for each week.

Your participation in the discussion forum will act as a chronicle (and a set of useful notes) of how you might apply what you have learned in the course to your everyday life and professional career.

Here is how each module is structured:

Lecture Videos and Lecture Slides	Instructor's Weekly Office Hours
(available on LEARN by Monday each week)	Friday, 10:30AM – 12:30PM, and by appointment

4. Course Objectives

What you will learn in this course and how you will learn it:

To learn this…	…you will do this:
What are ethics and values in design	The introductory modules that explain some of these concepts
What issues and ideas are significant for understanding ethical design practices	The readings and videos contained in the modules as well as the course lecture videos and lecture slides
Develop ethical reasoning skills via textual analysis, discussion, case studies, and debate	Participation in the online discussion forums (each thread remains open for 2 weeks)
The ability to analyze examples of unethical design in the real world and comment on ideas connected with ethics and design	The Ethical Design Awareness Exercises, which are individual-based assignments.
The ability to collaborate with your classmates to apply your knowledge of ethical design and develop guidelines to help designers to practice design ethically	The Design Project, which is a group-based assignment with two components: 1) Project Proposal & 2) Ethical Design Guide
Reflecting on one's own decision-making and practices	The Reflection Paper, which is an individual-based assignment.

5. Mode of Course Delivery

The course will be delivered fully online through LEARN. The assigned readings (journal articles and book chapters) for each week of class are available within the content modules of the LEARN course site. Note that the relevant lecture slides and the video recordings of lectures will be posted to the LEARN site by the Monday of each week. You may review the slides and the recordings at your own pace and draw insights from these materials to facilitate the completion of the assignments for the course.

Note that there will be **no live synchronous sessions** in this course. Instead, **all activities in the course will take place asynchronously**. If you need to discuss your ideas for any assignment, or if you have any questions about the course content, you should contact the instructor via email.

6. Virtual Office Hours

As your instructor, I will hold **virtual office hours on Fridays, between 10:30am and 12:30pm (EST)**. The office hours will be conducted **either by email or via the Zoom portal (appointment required)**. Email will be the more direct way of communication, whereas the Zoom route will need to be pre-arranged.

Note that **all students are required to meet the instructor at least <u>once</u> in the term**, and do so **by March 25, 2022**. This requirement is worth **3%** of the total grade for the course. Students can reserve a meeting time slot via **Calendly** (see information on LEARN for details).

7. Communication Policy

As email will be our primary channel of communication in this course, I will endeavour to respond to your message within 24 hours on weekdays (i.e., Monday to Friday).

Any message that arrives on a weekend will be attended to on the next available week day, provided that the week day is not a designated university holiday or a government-approved public holiday.

Note that I will not respond to messages with ambiguous subject lines, such as "What did I miss?". As young adults, you are expected to adopt a professional tone when crafting your messages. Think carefully about the content of your messages before sending them. Any disrespectful message that contains derogatory or discriminatory content will be reported to the Director of the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business.

8. Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services office collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum.

If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please **register with the AccessAbility Services office** at the beginning of each academic term. **Office Contact**: **access@uwaterloo.ca**

If you would like to discuss your specific learning needs in person, please let me know at your earliest convenience. If you require any course material in an alternative format, feel free to let me know. You can get in touch with me by email.

9. Special Note on Mental Health and Wellbeing

If you encounter any issue pertaining to mental health and wellbeing, please feel free to contact me via email to discuss the issue. You can contact me to arrange an appointment to discuss the matter privately. Rest assured that all discussions are strictly confidential. Your privacy will be fully protected.

If you require **professional counselling and psychological services**, please make an appoint with the **Counselling Services front desk** at **519-888-4567 ext. 32655**, and tell the receptionist that you would like to make an appointment in Stratford. The Stratford School's Counsellor, **Dave Logan**, is available every day Tuesday, from 8:30am – 4:30pm in Room 1009 at the Stratford campus building.

For more information, please visit the UWaterloo Counselling Services website: https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/counselling-services

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10. Course Evaluation

Assignment	Abbrev.	Weight (%)	Due Date
Pre-Course Survey	SURV	2%	January 24
Meeting with Instructor (**once** in the term)	MEET	3%	March 25
Discussion Forum Posts (10 Posts) [**Individual** Work]	DISC	20%	Mondays (Till Apr 11)
Ethical Design Awareness Exercise 1 [**Individual** Work]	EDA1	15%	February 7
Ethical Design Awareness Exercise 2 [**Individual** Work]	EDA2	15%	March 14
Design Project [**Group** Work]	DP	35%	
- Project Proposal	>(*PROP*)	>(*10%*)	February 28
- Multimedia Ethical Design Guide	>(*GUIDE*)	>(*25%*)	April 4
Reflection Paper on the Ethical Design Guide [**Individual** Work]	RP	10%	April 11

** **NOTE**: Please refer to the specific Assignment Description documents on LEARN that contain detailed instructions for the Ethical Design Awareness Exercise 1 & Ethical Design Awareness

Exercise 2, which are individual-based assignments, as well as the group-based Design Project (with two separate components).

The two Assignment Description documents can be found in the COURSE SYLLABUS module of the LEARN course site for GBDA 306.

10.1. Important Note on the Discussion Forum Posts

The Grade for the Discussion Forum Posts is set at 20%.

Each week, you are expected to **post responses to the weekly course readings (e.g., journal articles and book chapters) and the weekly lecture using the Discussion Forum on LEARN**. The length of each response is **150 words**, even though you may choose to write a longer response.

Each response is worth 2.0%. By the end of term, you must post a **total of 10 responses** to the Discussion Forum, with **one response for each week's readings**. You must ensure that each response is posted to the appropriate discussion thread.

Note that the **discussion thread for each week** will remain **open for TWO (2) weeks** after the initial Monday of the week. For example, the discussion thread for Week 2 will remain open from Monday, January 10, at 12:01AM (EST) through to Monday, January 24, at 11:59PM (EST). In other words, every discussion thread will remain open for only two weeks.

After the closing date, the discussion thread for the week will be locked and no responses can be posted there. As a result, no marks will be awarded for the discussion thread for that week.

Students who enroll late into the course will have ample time to participate in the discussion thread for Week 2 and beyond. In addition, accommodations will be offered to students who are officially registered with the AccessAbility Service Office with documented learning needs.

Besides the weekly responses in the discussion forum, you will be evaluated on your participation in all assignments and activities. You are expected to review the course materials for each week of class and complete all assignments and activities in a timely manner.

10.2. Automatic Assignment of Groups for the Design Project

In the light of the online, asynchronous format of this course, the **Design Project groups** comprising of **five (5) students** in each group **will be automatically assigned**. The assignment of group members will proceed alphabetically with reference to the official class list published on the LEARN course site. No changes will be permitted without the instructor's approval.

10.3. Rules for Group Participation in the Design Project

All students participating in the completion of the group-based components of the Design Project must observe the following rules to satisfy the group-work requirement in the course.

10.3.1. All members in the group must actively participate in the completion of the group-based components of the Design Project.

10.3.2. Each group must select a **Project Manager (PM)** who will manage the group and coordinate all communications between the instructor and the group.

10.3.3. All members in the group are expected to foster and maintain a culture of respect towards other members in the same group.

10.3.4. In the event of disputes among members of the group, it is the responsibility of all group members to contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss the issue at hand. As a responsible adult, each student is expected to handle potential conflicts in a mature manner. Any statement or action that is deemed disrespectful or derogatory towards another person will be referred to the Director of the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business.

10.4. Policy Statement on the Late Assignment Penalty

Late assignments will incur a **5% grade deduction** for every day beyond the official due date.

Official documentation is required for any extension request. Such requests can only be made for **individual-based assignments**.

For individual-based assignments, extension requests must be made BEFORE the stipulated due date for these assignments (as indicated in the Course Syllabus). Requests that arrive after the stipulated due date for individual-based assignments will be rejected.

The instructor reserves the right to solicit official documentation from any student who seeks an extension on an assignment as well as the right to refuse such requests.

Please note that the **due date for group-based assignments cannot be extended**.

Absolute Final Due Date:

No assignment will be accepted for grading (with late penalty) after April 18, 2022.

11. Weekly Schedule

IMPORTANT: ALL TIMES EASTERN (as per University Policies)

*All due-dates for assignments and activities are **11:59PM (EST)** on LEARN

**Topics and readings may change during the term.

Wk	Topic	Readings	Assignments / Activities	Due Date
			Pre-Course Survey Weighting: 2%	**Jan 24**
		Reserve Meeting Time Slot (once in the term) via **Calendly** (see information on LEARN)	**Zoom Meeting with Instructor** Weighting: 3%	**Mar 25**
1-13			**Weekly Discussion Forums** (Total of 10 posts) Weighting: 20%	Fridays (**Last thread ends on** April 11)
1.	Course Syllabus Review (JAN 5)	Course Introduction on LEARN		
2. JAN 10 - JAN 14	What is Ethical Design?	Falbe, T., K. Andersen, M. M. Frederiksen. (2020). The Need for Ethics in Design. *The Ethical Design Handbook*. Freiburg: Smashing Media AG. (Reading available as a **PDF document** on LEARN)	→ **Discussion Thread for Week 2 Lecture** Opens Jan 10	Thread Closes Jan 24

3. JAN 17 - JAN 21	What Does it Mean to be an Ethical Designer?	Barendregt, W., Becker, C., Cheon, E., Clement, A., Reynolds-Cuéllar, P., Schuler, D., & Suchman, L. (2021). Defund Big Tech, Refund Community. *Tech Otherwise*. https://doi.org/10.21428/93b2c832.e0100a3f	→ **Discussion Thread for Week 3 Lecture** Opens Jan 17	Thread Closes Jan 31
4. JAN 24 - JAN 28	Designs that Exclude	Whittaker, M., M. Alper, C. L. Bennett, S. Hendren, L. Kaziunas, M. Mills, M. R. Morris, J. Rankin, E. Rogers, M. Salas, and S. M. West. (2019). *Disability, Bias, and AI*. (AI Now Institute at NYU Report, pp.1-32). New York University. https://ainowinstitute.org/disabilitybiasai-2019.pdf & Buolamwini, J. "Response: Racial and Gender Bias in Amazon Rekognition - Commercial AI System for Analyzing Faces." *Medium*. 25 January 2019. https://medium.com/@Joy.Buolamwini/response-racial-and-gender-bias-in-amazon-rekognition-commercial-ai-system-for-analyzing-faces-a289222eeced	→ **Discussion Thread for Week 4 Lecture** Opens Jan 24	Thread Closes Feb 7

5. JAN 31 - FEB 4	Diversity in Design: Decolonizing Design through Play	Cassim, F. (2020). Decolonizing Design Education through Playful Learning in a Tertiary Communication Design Programme in South Africa. *International Journal of Art and Design Education* Vol.39, No.2, pp.523-535. https://doi.org/10.1111/jade.12294	→ **Discussion Thread for Week 5 Lecture** Opens Jan 31	Thread Closes Feb 14
6. FEB 7 - FEB 11	Accountability, Regulation, and Code of Ethics	IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of Autonomous and Intelligent Systems. (2019). Methods to Guide Ethical Research and Design. In *Ethically Aligned Design* (online, pp.124–139). Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). https://standards.ieee.org/content/dam/ieee-standards/standards/web/documents/other/ead1e_methods.pdf	**Ethical Design Awareness Exercise 1 (EDA1) DUE** & → **Discussion Thread for Week 6 Lecture** Opens Feb 7	**Feb 7** Thread Closes Feb 21
7. FEB 14 - FEB 18	**Special Lecture Feb 15 (Guest Lecture by Nasr Ahmed):** Exploitation and Unionization in Tech Industries	Mann, A., & Manek, H. (2017). *Media Works: A Labour Rights & Reporting Handbook* (p. 41). Canadian University Press. https://canadianfreelanceguild.ca/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/mediaworks2017.2.pdf	**No Discussion Thread for Week 7**	---
8.	**Reading Week – NO CLASS** **FEB 21 – FEB 25**	**NO CLASS**	**No Discussion Thread for Week 8**	---

9. FEB 28 - MAR 4	Understanding "Dark Patterns" in Design	Brignull, H. (n.d.). Dark Patterns—Types of Dark Pattern. Dark Patterns. Retrieved October 25, 2021, from https://darkpatterns.org/types-of-dark-pattern & Ravenscraft, Eric. How to Spot – and Avoid – Dark Patterns on the Web. *Wired*. 29 July 2020. https://www.wired.com/story/how-to-spot-avoid-dark-patterns/	**Design Project: PROPOSAL for Multimedia Ethical Design Guide DUE** & → **Discussion Thread for Week 9 Lecture** Opens Feb 28	**Feb 28** Thread Closes Mar 14
10. MAR 7 - MAR 11	Dark Patterns, Deceptive Design, and the Impact on Our Right to Privacy	Forbrukerradet. (2018). *Deceived By Design: How Tech Companies Use Dark Patterns to Discourage Us from Exercising Our Rights to Privacy*. https://fil.forbrukerradet.no/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018-06-27-deceived-by-design-final.pdf	→ **Discussion Thread for Week 10 Lecture** Opens Mar 7	Thread Closes Mar 21
11. MAR 14 - MAR 18	**Guest Lecture by Dr. Jennifer Whitson:** Values in Design	Readings TBA	**Ethical Design Awareness Exercise 2 (EDA2) DUE** & → **Discussion Thread for Week 11 Lecture** Opens Mar 14	**Mar 14** Thread Closes Mar 28

12. MAR 21 - MAR 25	Artificial Intelligence and the Ethics of Digital Health Care	Karches, Kyle E. "Against the iDoctor: Why Artificial Intelligence Should Not Replace Physician Judgment." *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 39 (2018): 91-110. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11017-018-9442-3	<u>**Final Date** to Meet with Instructor</u> → **Discussion Thread for Week 12 Lecture** Opens Mar 21	**Mar 25** Thread Closes Apr 4
13. MAR 28 - APR 1	Rethinking Ethics in Design	Imbesi, L. (2019). Rethinking Ethics in Design. *Design Principles and Practices* Vol.12, No.1, pp.57-65. https://doi.org/10.18848/1833-1874/CGP/v12i01/57-65	→ **Discussion Thread for Week 13 Lecture** Opens Mar 28	Thread Closes Apr 11
14. **APR 4**	**Final Assessment Period** There are **NO final exams** for this course		**Design Project: Multimedia Ethical Design Guide** <u>**DUE**</u>	**Apr 4**
15. **APR 11**	**Final Assessment Period** There are **NO final exams** for this course		**Reflection Paper on the Ethical Design Guide** <u>**DUE**</u>	**Apr 11**

Intellectual Property Statement

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor and the University of Waterloo.

Intellectual property includes items such as:
- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);

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- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or used by the instructor with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student's educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner's permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor or the University of Waterloo for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor or the University is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

12. Academic Freedom at the University of Waterloo

Policy 33, Ethical Behaviour states, as one of its general principles (Section 1), "The University supports academic freedom for all members of the University community. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching and research on an honest and ethical quest for knowledge. In the context of this policy, 'academic freedom' refers to academic activities, including teaching and scholarship, as is articulated in the principles set out in the Memorandum of Agreement between the FAUW and the University of Waterloo, 1998 (Article 6). The academic environment which fosters free debate may from time to time include the presentation or discussion of unpopular opinions or controversial material. Such material shall be dealt with as openly, respectfully and sensitively as possible." This definition is repeated in Policies 70 and 71, and in the Memorandum of Agreement, Section 6.

13. University Policies

13.1. Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of

Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

See UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage: https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/ & Arts Academic Integrity webpage: https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behaviour for more information.

13.2. Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

When misconduct has been found to have occurred within the context of the course, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 – Student Discipline. https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71

For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties: https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties

13.3. Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 – Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4: https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70

13.4. Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72 http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.html

14. Writing Help at the UW Writing Centre

The UW Writing Centre works across all faculties to help students clarify their ideas, develop their voices, and communicate in the style appropriate to their disciplines. The Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, using and documenting research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit http://www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre

14.1. Additional Note on Writing Support

The Communication Specialists at the Writing Centre will guide you to see your work as readers would. The Specialists can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not change or correct your work for you. Please bring hard copies of your assignment instructions and any notes or drafts to your appointment.