

ES1086 Course Outline – Fall Term 2026

1. Course Information

EARTHSCI 1086 650 LEC FW26 – Origin and Geology of the Solar System

Academic Term: Fall 2026 (2026F)

Delivery Mode: Primarily asynchronous, with synchronous, timed, Proctortrack-proctored midterm, midterm makeup and final examination.

Fully online via Brightspace <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>.

List of Prerequisites: None

List of Antirequisites: Earth Sciences 2232F/G, Astronomy 2201A, Astronomy 2232F/G.
(please refer to the UWO Calendar).

Prerequisite warning: Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from the Department of Earth Sciences to enroll in it, you may be removed and withdrawn from this course in accordance with university policy. This may be done after the add/drop deadline of the academic term, and the course will be marked as withdrawn (WDN) on your academic record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

2. Instructor Information

Instructor	Email	Office Hours
Dr. Debora Rios (Course Instructor)	drrios2@uwo.ca	Online/Zoom by appointment only
TA – Deep Patel	sbian8@uwo.ca	
TA – Isaac Guerra	iguerra@uwo.ca	
TA – Shuqi Bian	dpate696@uwo.ca	

Student Communication and Support: Students **must use their Western (@uwo.ca)** email account for course-related communication.

- The assigned TA is the first point of contact for routine questions.
- The instructor should be copied when the matter requires instructor attention or concerns a personal/confidential matter.
- Students should use “ES1086” in the subject line.

E-mail Response Standard: TAs are expected to respond to student emails within 48 hours. The instructor will also aim to respond within 48 hours, subject to availability.

Student FAQ forum: A Brightspace FAQ forum will be available to students. Only the instructor and TAs may post in this forum. This is not part of the graded forums. Only the instructor and TAs may post in this forum. TAs will add frequent questions from students to this forum. Because everyone can access the FAQ, do not include

confidential, sensitive, or personally identifying information in FAQ posts. Confidential or sensitive matter must be discussed directly with the instructor. Please email me at drios2@uwo.ca.

Student forums: I encourage you to post questions related to course content in the **online discussion forums**, as this allows everyone in the class to benefit from the questions and answers.

Office Hours: There are no regularly scheduled office hours for this course. Your first point of contact will be your Teaching Assistant (TA), who will be available as needed.

Steps to follow if you have questions:

1. Before posting or emailing a question, please be sure to read the syllabus and the FAQ forum carefully, as many FAQs are already addressed here.
2. Remember: Short emails (1-2 sentences) are easier to read and respond to.
3. Email the TA. Cc me. They are the first point of contact. Always put "ES1086" in the subject line.
3. If you need to speak with me directly, please send me an email (drios2@uwo.ca).
 - a. Put "ES1086" in the subject line.
 - c. I will do my best to respond in a timely manner, in general less than 48h.
 - d. I **will not** respond to emails over the weekend.
4. If we need to meet, email me directly (drios2@uwo.ca). I will be happy to schedule an appointment to meet over Zoom or Teams.

TAs Distribution: (will be updated soon!)

Your first point of contact is your assigned TA. **TA assignments are final.**

Please update your Brightspace profile with a short introduction and, optionally, a photo to help your instructor, TA and classmates connect with you. **Find Your TA here!**

Last Name A to G:

Last Name H to P:

Last Name Q to Z:

3. Course Description, Objectives, Learning Outcomes, Schedule & Delivery Mode

This half-course explores our current understanding of the origin and evolution of the Solar System, including the formation of stars, the structure of our Universe, and the role of the Milky Way Galaxy in the broader cosmic context. We will examine the hypotheses and theories that seek to explain the formation and geological evolution of the Sun, planets, moons, asteroids, comets, and meteorites.

Particular attention is given to understanding why and how Earth evolved along a pathway that is fundamentally different from other planetary bodies. Throughout the course, students will be introduced to the scientific reasoning that drives planetary science: how ideas are developed, how hypotheses are tested, and how observations, data, and discoveries refine or reshape existing theories.

By applying geological principles developed through the study of Earth to other planetary environments, students will explore comparative planetology and gain a broader perspective on Earth's place within the Solar System. The course concludes with a discussion of the conditions required for life and the possibility of life beyond Earth.

As technology advances and an increasing number of spacecrafts explore the Solar System and beyond, our understanding of planetary systems continues to expand. This course emphasizes qualitative understanding, scientific reasoning, and interpretation of evidence, making it accessible to students from diverse academic backgrounds.

Course Objectives. The objectives of this course are to:

- Introduce students to current scientific understanding of the Solar System and the methods and evidence used to develop this knowledge;
- Provide an overview of the formation and evolution of stars, planetary systems, and planetary bodies;
- Explore the diversity of planets, moons, asteroids, comets, meteorites, and other objects in the Solar System, recognizing that Earth represents only one possible evolutionary pathway;
- Introduce the process and logic of scientific investigation, from observation and data collection to hypothesis development, testing, evaluation, and theory refinement;
- Develop foundational skills in scientific reasoning and communication through the interpretation of evidence and structured assignments.

Course-Level Learning Outcomes. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the origin, structure, and major components of the Solar System;
- Explain the physical and geological processes that shape planets, moons, asteroids, comets, and other planetary bodies;
- Apply fundamental concepts from Earth sciences and geology to the study and interpretation of other planetary environments;
- Evaluate scientific hypotheses and explanations using observational, experimental, and geological evidence;
- Interpret scientific observations and data to recognize how evidence supports, challenges, or refines existing scientific ideas;
- Communicate scientific concepts clearly and effectively through structured written scientific communication.

4. Course Materials, Brightspace and Technical Requirements

All course materials will be posted on Brightspace: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>

There is **no additional textbook** required for this course. Study guides and course notes are provided through Brightspace.

The course is fully online and primarily asynchronous. This means that you can engage with the course content and complete most activities according to your own schedule, provided you meet the established deadlines.

This course emphasizes active learning, hands-on practice, and opportunities for immediate feedback. Weekly readings, discussion forums, practice exercises, and quizzes will help you engage with the course material and track your progress throughout the term.

Course Content/Units & Chapters are provided as PDF files. A suggested reading schedule is provided below.

Discussion forums, readings, practice exercises, and most course activities are asynchronous. You may complete these activities at any time within the specified deadlines.

The **quizzes** are also online and asynchronous, but they are **timed** and must be completed within the designated assessment window. Each quiz allows one attempt and is administered using Proctortrack.

The **midterms and final examination are synchronous, timed, and remotely proctored through Proctortrack**. This means that all students must complete the examinations at the scheduled date and time using Proctortrack.

The **final examination** will be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (OOR) during the official final examination period. You are responsible for ensuring that you are available to complete the final examination at the scheduled time.

If you have a question about the course, please first check the relevant course materials and discussion forums. Questions that may be useful to the entire class are encouraged in the forums so that everyone can benefit from the response. For personal or confidential matters, please contact the instructor directly.

Students are responsible for checking Brightspace regularly for announcements, deadlines, assessment information, feedback, and other course communications.

For technical assistance, please visit the OWL–Brightspace Help page or contact **Western Technology Services at 519-661-3800 (ext. 83800)**.

Technical Requirements

- Students are responsible for maintaining **reliable internet access** for the duration of the course.
- Use of a computer (not a tablet, ipad or phone) is required for the midterm and final exams. Other electronic devices, including tablets, phones and smart watches, may not be used during exams.
- Students require a **reliable internet connection and a computer** (not a tablet or phone) with a working webcam and microphone for **all Proctortrack-proctored assessments**. Tablets and iPads are not supported.
- Students are responsible for ensuring that their **computer and internet connection** meet the technical requirements for the assessments. Proctortrack onboarding is provided to allow students to test their systems before graded assessments.
- **It is the student's responsibility to ensure they can access and complete all online exams successfully.**

5. Course Organization and Schedule

The course is organized into **seven units**. Each unit includes an introduction and study guide, course chapters, optional self-tests/polls, a graded discussion forum, and graded quizzes.

- **Weekly readings** — assigned to support and reinforce the course material. Includes an **Introduction, study guide & Unit Chapters** outlining key concepts and learning goals,
- **Unit-related Practice Exercises** — graded for completion (extra credits), not accuracy. You may retake these exercises as many times as you wish at your own pace. They are designed to help you practice the course material and prepare for the quizzes and examinations. Includes a practical **Self-Test /Poll** (optional, counts towards extra credits) to help you check your understanding,
- a **Graded Weekly Discussion Forum** graded for completion, not accuracy and that contributes to your final mark, and
- **Quizzes** — Proctored, online and asynchronous. Timed and graded for accuracy. Each quiz provides **one opportunity only** and must be completed online using Brightspace.
 - **9 of 11 Unit-related Quizzes are required** and contributes to your final mark.
 - **The Academic Integrity & Proctortrack Onboarding Special Quizzes** — **are mandatory**, graded, proctored, online and asynchronous (not timed). You may retake these exercises as many times as you wish at your own pace. They are designed to help you practice with Proctortrack and prepare for the quizzes and examinations. After the deadline the Proctortrack Onboarding will be offered only for training purposes and system checks, but no grade will be attributed to it (after the deadline).

The Learning Goals presented in each Unit Introduction are intended as a starting point for your studies. More detailed guidance on what to focus on is provided in the **Study Guides**, which can be found under “Contents” in the Course Notes section on Brightspace.

Additionally, you are required to complete:

- **Open-book midterm examination** — a timed, synchronous online examination administered using Proctortrack. You may access **only the official PDF course notes provided on Brightspace**. Personal notes, textbooks, websites, calculators, cell phones, tablets, or any other materials or aids **are not** permitted.
- **Open-book final examination** — a timed, synchronous online examination administered using Proctortrack during the official final examination period. You may access **only the official PDF course notes provided on Brightspace**. Personal notes, textbooks, websites, calculators, cell phones, tablets, or any other materials or aids **are not** permitted. The final examination is scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (OOR).

Because the course is primarily asynchronous, students are responsible for planning their study time and keeping up with the suggested weekly schedule. The schedule below is a planning tool; the deadlines listed in the outline and Brightspace are the operative deadlines.

Course Components:

It is recommended that you read the **study guides** and have them out while you do the readings (Brightspace → Content → Course Information → Reading and Studying the Material). This will help you pass the tests. Study guides and course notes are provided through Brightspace.

Students are responsible for **checking Brightspace regularly** for announcements, deadlines, assessment information, feedback, and other course communications. Please make sure that you complete all required activities by their deadlines.

By enrolling in this course, you agree to use **Turnitin** for plagiarism and academic integrity checks and **Proctortrack** for the proctored quizzes, midterm examination, and final examination. You also agree to complete the final examination during the official final examination period.

A suggested reading and **study schedule** is provided in the syllabus. All deadlines, assessments, and required activities are listed on the syllabus and on Brightspace.

See below some useful Information for Planning your Course/Agenda.

(all deadlines are Eastern Standard Time)

Key Sessional Dates – Fall 2026

Key 2026F Sessional Dates	Useful Information	Important Deadlines
Classes Begin		Wednesday, September 9th/2026
Last day to add a Fall/Winter 24-wk course or a Fall 12-wk course		Thursday, September 17 th /2026
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation		Wed, September 30 th /2026, NO CLASSES
Thanksgiving and Fall Reading Week		October 10-18 th /2026
Last day to withdraw from this course without academic penalty		Monday, November 30 th /2026
Last day of classes in the Fall term		Wednesday, December 9th/ 2026
December examination period		December 11 to December 22 /2026

Assessment Schedule – Fall 2026

All deadlines are firm and must be followed carefully. DEADLINES ARE NOT OPTIONAL!

Short Polls	Optional / Extra Credits	
Short Polls & Practice Exercises related to units 1, 2, 3		Monday, October 19 th @ 6:00 pm EST
Short Polls & Practice Exercises related to units 4, 5, 6, 7		Monday, December 7 th @ 6:00 pm EST
Quizzes	Proctored & Graded Activity	Required 9 of 11
MANDATORY →	Academic Integrity Quiz (Quiz #AI)	Friday, September 18 th @ 6:00 pm EST
MANDATORY →	Proctortrack Onboarding (Quiz #PO)	Monday, October 26 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Quizzes #1, #2, #3, #4 (Units 1 to 3)	Monday, October 19 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Quizzes #5, #6, #7, #8, #9 (Units 4 to 7)	Monday, December 7 th @ 6:00 pm EST
Forums	Graded Activity	Required 9 of 11
MANDATORY Special Forum: “Introductions to ES1086”		Friday, September 18 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Forum Unit #1 - Basic Concepts	Friday, September 25 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Forum Unit #2 - The Solar System	Friday, October 2 nd @ 6:00 pm EST
Special Forum: “My Contributions to the Midterm”		Friday, October 9 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Forum Unit #3 - The Terrestrial Planets	Friday, October 23 rd @ 6:00 pm EST
	Forum Unit #4 - From Asteroids to Meteorites	Friday, November 6 th @ 6:00 pm EST
MANDATORY Special Forum: “My 2026F Sky Photo Show”		Friday, November 13 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Forum Unit #5 - The Gas Giant Planets	Friday, November 20 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Forum Unit #6 - Plutoids, TNOs, and Comets	Friday, November 27 th @ 6:00 pm EST
	Forum Unit #7 - Extraterrestrial Life	Friday, December 4 th @ 6:00 pm EST
Special Forum: “My Contributions to the Final Questions”		Friday, November 27 th @ 6:00 pm EST
Exams	Timed, Proctored & Graded Activity	Date and time pending approval from Exam Central. (2-hour assessment window within a 3-hour availability window)
Midterm Exam	Tentative Official time will be communicated through Announcement on the Brightspace site)	Friday, October 30 th @ 5:30 – 8:30 pm EST
Midterm MAKEUP Exam *	Tentative (with approved accommodations)	Tuesday, November 3 rd @ 5:30 – 8:30 pm EST
Final Examination	TBD Set by the Registrar’s Office 2026F Examination Period	December 11 – 22/2026

* The midterm, midterm makeup, and final exam provide a three-hour availability window. The examination itself is timed for two hours. After two hours, the assessment will close and be automatically submitted, except for students with approved additional time accommodations.

** The Midterm makeup is only available to students with an approved accommodation from your faculty councillors.

*** If you miss the makeup and or the final exam AND have an approved accommodation, you will be able to write the exam the next time the course is run. This is the only makeup available. No exceptions.

Suggested Weekly Schedule

The suggested schedule provided in this course outline is intended to help you pace your work throughout the term. Because the course is primarily asynchronous, you are responsible for planning your study time according to your own schedule, reading pace, and other commitments. Plan ahead, read regularly, and aim to keep up with the assigned material each week. The final week is intentionally left without new assigned readings to provide time for review and examination preparation.

UNIT	DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS	CHECKLIST	DETAILS AND DEADLINES
Introductions	Course Outline	Week 1	Starts September 9th, 2026
Read the Syllabus, introductory materials and familiarize yourself with course site on OWL-Brightspace			
	Introduction to ES1086		
Unit 1	Basic Concepts	Week 2	Starts September 14th, 2026 (36 pages)
	Introduction and Study Guide		Unit 1 Introduction
	Chapter 1: Scientific Theory and the Big Bang		Read Chapter 1
	Chapter 2: Time and Space		Read Chapter 2
	Chapter 3: Matter and the Nebular Hypothesis		Read Chapter 3
	Deadline for the MANDATORY Special Forum "Introduction to ES1086 Class 2026F"	Graded & MANDATORY	Friday, September 18th, 6:00pm EST
	Deadline for Academic Integrity Quiz (Quiz #A1)	Graded & MANDATORY	Friday, September 18th, 6:00pm EST
Unit 2	The Solar System	Week 3	Starts September 21th, 2026 (33 pages)
	Introduction and Study Guide		Unit 2 Introduction
	Chapter 4 – A Star Called the Sun		Read Chapter 4
	Chapter 5 – Geometry of the Solar System		Read Chapter 5
			Complete Self-tests / Polls
	Deadline for Forum Unit #1	Graded	Friday, September 25th, 6:00pm EST
	Deadline for Quiz #1	Graded	Monday, October 19th at 6pm EST
Unit 3	The Terrestrial Planets	Week 4	Starts September 28th, 2026 (47 pages)
	Introduction and Study Guide		Unit 3 Introduction
	Chapter 6 – When Two Planets Collide		Read Chapter 6
	Chapter 7 – Earth		Read Chapter 7
	Chapter 8 – The Moon		Read Chapter 8
			Complete Self-tests / Polls
	Deadline for Forum Unit #2	Graded	Friday, October 2nd, 6:00pm EST
	Deadline for Quiz #2	Graded	Monday, October 19th at 6pm EST
Unit 3	The Terrestrial Planets	Week 5	Starts October 5th, 2026 (27 pages)
	Chapter 9 – Mercury		Read Chapter 9
	Chapter 10 – Venus		Read Chapter 10
			Complete Self-tests / Polls
	Deadline for the Special Forum "My Contributions to the Midterm Questions"	Graded	Friday, October 9th, 6:00pm EST
	Deadline for Quiz #3	Graded	Monday, October 19th at 6pm EST

READING WEEK – October 10th to October 18th / 2026 (no assigned readings, quizzes, forums or exams)

Unit 3	The Terrestrial Planets	Week 6	Starts October 19 th , 2026 (29 pages)
Chapter 11 – Mars			Read Chapter 11
Independent reading and study time			Complete Self-tests / Polls
Deadline for Quiz #4		Graded	Monday, October 19th at 6pm EST
Deadline for Forum Unit #3		Graded	Friday, October 23rd, 6:00pm EST
DEADLINE for Units 1 to 3 self-tests, polls, and Quizzes 1, 2, 3, 4 is Monday, October 19th at 6pm EST			

This is the end of the material that will be on the MIDTERM

Units 1–3	Revision for Midterm	Week 7	Starts October 26 th , 2026 (152 pages in total)
In preparation for the Midterm:			Midterm Test Review Week
Check your computer system and Proctortrack Software			Complete and/or Retake Onboarding, Self-tests and polls
Exam will be open-Brightspace, on-line, proctored, timed (2 hours) and synchronous		Midterm	Friday, October 30th / 2026, @ 5:30 – 8:30 pm EST
The Midterm makeup is only available to students with an approved accommodation from faculty councillors.		Midterm MAKEUP	Tuesday, November 3rd /2026 @ 5:30 – 8:30 pm EST
Deadline for Proctortrack Onboarding Quiz		Graded & MANDATORY	Monday, October 26th, 6:00pm EST

The **mid-term exam** covers material from Unit 1 (Chapter 1) through the end of Chapter 11.

Unit 4	From Asteroids to Meteorites	Week 8	Starts November 2 nd , 2026 (33 pages)
Introduction and Study Guide			Unit 4 Introduction
Chapter 12 – Asteroids			Read Chapter 12
Chapter 13 – Meteorites			Read Chapter 13
			Complete Self-tests / Polls
Deadline for Forum Unit #4		Graded	Friday, November 6th @ 6:00pm EST
Deadline for Quiz #5		Graded	Monday, December 7th @ 6pm EST
Unit 5	The Gas Giant Planets	Week 9	Starts November 9 th , 20 (29 pages)
Introduction and Study Guide			Unit 5 Introduction
Chapter 14 – Jupiter and Its Moons			Read Chapter 14
Deadline for the MANDATORY Special Forum “My 2026F Sky Photo Show”		Graded	Friday, November 13th, 6:00pm EST
Deadline for Quiz #6		Graded	Monday, December 7th @ 6pm EST
Unit 5	The Gas Giant Planets	Week 10	Starts November 16 th , 2026 (38 pages)
Chapter 15 – Saturn and Its Moons			Read Chapter 15
Chapter 16 – Uranus and Neptune			Read Chapter 16
			Complete Self-tests / Polls
Deadline for Forum Unit #5		Graded	Friday, November 20th @ 6:00pm EST
Deadline for Quiz #7		Graded	Monday, December 7th @ 6pm EST

Unit 6	Plutoids, TNOs & Comets	Week 11	Starts November 23 rd , 2026 (33 pages)
Introduction and Study Guide Chapter 17 – Plutoids and Trans-Neptunian Objects (TNOs) Chapter 18 – Comets			Unit 6 Introduction
			Read Chapter 17
			Read Chapter 18
			Complete Self-tests / Polls
Deadline for the Special Forum “My Contributions to the Final Exam Questions”		Graded	Friday, November 27 th , 6:00pm EST
Deadline for Forum Unit #6		Graded	Friday, November 27 th @ 6:00pm EST
Deadline for Quiz #8		Graded	Monday, December 7 th @ 6pm EST
Unit 7	Extraterrestrial Life	Week 12	Starts November 30 th , 2026 (22 pages)
Introduction and Study Guide Chapter 19 – Life in the Universe			Unit 7 Introduction
			Read Chapter 19
			Complete Self-tests / Polls
Deadline for Forum Unit #7		Graded	Friday, December 4 th @ 6:00pm EST
Deadline for Quiz #9		Graded	Monday, December 7 th @ 6pm EST
Units 4–7	Revision for the Final Exam	Week 13	Starts December 7 th (155 pages)
In preparation for the Final Exam: Check your computer system and Proctortrack Software Exam will be open-Brightspace, on-line, proctored, timed (2-hours) and synchronous			Final Exam Review Week
			Complete and/or Retake Onboarding, Self-tests and polls
		Final Exam	TDB. Set by the Registrar’s Office December 11 th to December 22 nd
Deadline for retaking the Proctortrack Onboarding Quiz		UNGraded	Wednesday, December 9 th @6:00pm EST

The **Final Exam** covers material from Unit 4 (Chapter 12) through the end of Chapter 19 (Unit 7).

DEADLINE for Units 4 to 7 self-tests, polls, and Quizzes 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 is Monday, December 7th at 6pm EST

Have you completed the course and instructor evaluation survey?

FINAL EXAM – TBD:

* The **Final Exam** is not cumulative and covers material from Unit 4 Introduction through Chapter 19 (Unit 7).

Because the course is primarily asynchronous, students are responsible for planning their study time and keeping up with the suggested weekly schedule.

The schedule is a planning tool; the deadlines listed in the outline and Brightspace are the operative deadlines.

6. Methods of Evaluation

The overall course grade will be calculated as listed below:

Grading Scheme and Assessment Dates: (All dates and deadlines are Eastern Standard Time (EST))

Midterm Exam	Final Exam	Quizzes	Forums	Extra-Credits (Polls & Self-Tests)
30%	30%	30%	10%	Up to 5%

Description / Marking Scheme	Breakdown	Availability / Deadlines	
Midterm Exam - Exam will be on-line, open book (only aid available is online Brightspace pdfs), proctored, and synchronous (timed, 2 hours). - This covers Units 1, 2 and 3 inclusive (to the end of Chapter 11) - This exam always require documentation when requesting academic consideration.	30%	Friday, October 30 th @5:30 pm to 8:30 pm EST (Tentative = To be announced on Brightspace) MAKE-UP: Tuesday, November 3 rd @5:30 pm to 8:30 pm EST (Tentative = To be announced on Brightspace) Synchronous, timed, open-book, Proctortrack-proctored; Units 1–3 through Chapter 11.	
Final Exam - Exam will be on-line, proctored and synchronous (timed, 2 hours). - This covers Units 4, 5, 6 and 7 (Chapters 12 to 19). The final exam is not cumulative. - This exam always require documentation when requesting academic consideration.	30%	(Date and time to be determined by the Registrar's office) Synchronous, timed, open-book, Proctortrack-proctored; Units 4–7, Chapters 12–19.	
Graded Quizzes - Quiz AI: Academic Integrity Quiz (MANDATORY) - Quiz PO: Proctortrack Onboarding Quiz (MANDATORY) - There are 11 graded quizzes (numbered AI, PO, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9). - Quizzes are built in flexible completion. The best 9 of 11 quizzes counting toward the grade. MANDATORY quizzes cannot be skipped. They are excluded from the best 9 of 11 flexibility policy. - students cannot request academic consideration for quizzes, since the missed work is already accounted for by design. - There are also self-tests and/or polls available as practice. These are not graded although they count toward extra credits (up to 0.5% per self-test or poll).	30%	You should try to complete the quizzes each week as you read the related chapters. Don't wait to submit your quizzes until the last minute! Last minute computer problems will not be accepted as grounds for accommodation.	Mandatory Quiz AI: Monday, September 21 st @ 6:00 pm (EST) Quizzes 1 to 4: Monday, October 19 th @ 6:00 pm (EST) Mandatory Quiz PO: Monday, Oct 26 th @ 6:00 pm (EST) Quizzes 5 to 9: Monday, December 7 th @ 6:00 pm (EST)

Forums - Participation in online forums throughout the OWL-Brightspace Lessons pages is required. - Forums are built in flexible completion. The best 9 of 11 forums counting toward the grade. MANDATORY Special Forums cannot be skipped. They are excluded from the best 9 of 11 flexibility policy. - You will be required to post ONE photo that YOU took during the semester that relates to the course's theme. 2026F Photos MUST be taken from September 1st 2026 to November 13th, 2026. - Please see additional details below.	10%	11 graded forums; best 9 counts, subject to mandatory special forums. The photo could be: The Moon, a meteor, solar eclipse, a comet, the Northern Lights... Star tracks DO NOT count as those stars are beyond our Solar System. Tips on Night Sky Photography will be posted in the Announcements.	Mandatory Special Forum Introductions: Friday, September 18 th @ 6:00 pm (EST) Special Forum Photo Show: Friday, Nov. 13 th @ 6:00 pm (EST) For the other forums deadlines, see course schedule
Extra Credit Opportunity Short Polls/ Practice Exercises (Optional self-tests/polls and exceptional contribution, subject to the course limits)	Up to 5%	Throughout the course, you will also find short polls and self-tests embedded in the course notes. Please complete these and take some time to consider how your classmates responded. Extra credits may contribute for up to 5% of your final course grade .	

The grading scheme totals 100% before extra credit. Extra credit may increase the final course grade by up to 5 percentage points, subject to the course rules.

More about Discussion Forums

Brightspace includes discussion forums where you can engage with your classmates on topics related to the course material. These forums are an important part of the learning experience and provide opportunities to ask questions, share ideas, clarify concepts, and learn from one another. Forums are **graded for completion**, not accuracy.

Special Forums which are labeled as “MANDATORY” cannot be skipped and will always count towards the final grade.

All students are expected to read and contribute regularly to the forums. You are encouraged to help each other by answering questions and offering thoughtful comments. If you have a personal or confidential question, you are welcome to email the TA and instructor directly. Before sending an email about a general course question, however, please consider posting it in the forum first. This often leads to quicker responses and allows the entire class to benefit from the discussion.

Be sure to check the forums regularly for new posts. Please make your posts engaging, thought-provoking, and relevant. Try to provide clear, concise, and correct explanations that help others gain a better understanding of concepts. There may also be polls scattered throughout the course notes – please complete the polls and see how your classmates responded.

Remember that forums count for 10% of your grade. Participation Expectations:

Beginning **September 9**, you are expected to:

- post **one original contribution** to the forums each week; and
- respond to **at least two posts** made by your classmates each week.

Your contributions should be relevant, thoughtful, and constructive. Aim to go beyond simple answers by encouraging discussion, raising questions, making connections, or offering clear explanations that help others better understand the material.

Here are some guidelines we will use to evaluate your work:

- Do you make outstanding, original, and informative posts?
- Do you make attentive and constructive comments on other people's posts?
- Do you ask questions that are penetrating or help clarify?
- Do you contribute strategically (understanding that other students are in the class)?
- Do you actively encourage others to express their ideas?
- Do you use language that communicates interest in what others are saying?
- Do you complete forum posts on time?
- Do you interact constructively with the TAs and instructor?

You will not receive credit for posts and comments that are:

- Low effort (e.g. "Great idea", "Interesting", "I liked this chapter").
- A single line or overly terse.
- Disrespectful posts and comments.
- Irrelevant to the unit covered
- Plagiarized

Remember: the whole point is to engage with the course material, your classmates, your TA and the instructor.

You need to put in effort!

In the "Discussion page," you will also see forums for the Midterm and Final Exam Q&A.

What Does an Exceptional Contributor Look Like?

Exceptional contributions may be awarded additional points, up to the maximum of **5% by the end of the course**, at the instructor's discretion.

An exceptional contributor is someone who helps create a positive, inclusive, and intellectually engaging learning environment. This includes students who:

- make original, insightful, and informative posts;
- provide attentive and constructive responses to others;
- ask thought-provoking questions or help clarify complex ideas;
- contribute strategically, allowing space for others to participate;
- encourage classmates to share their perspectives;
- use respectful, engaging language that shows interest in others' ideas;
- submit assignments on time;
- interact constructively with the TAs and instructor; and
- demonstrate awareness of their responsibilities as outlined in this syllabus.

In short, an exceptional contributor is someone who makes the class stronger:

"The class was better because you were here".

7. Flexible Completion and Missed Assessments

This course uses flexible completion for quizzes and forums. Students do not need to submit Academic Consideration requests for missed quizzes or forums because the assessment design already accounts for missed work. The best-9-of-11 calculation is applied automatically.

The midterm is treated separately because it assesses the first part of the course and has a scheduled makeup examination. Supporting documentation is required for Academic Consideration relating to a missed midterm.

The final examination is not subject to reweighting. A student who misses the final examination for a legitimate, documented, and approved reason will receive an INC and write the final examination the next time the course is offered. No final-examination makeup is administered within the Fall 2026 course.

Students should consult the University's Academic Consideration and Registrar procedures for the formal process applicable to the final examination.

The course instructor does not adjudicate documentation submitted directly by students.

Evaluations, Accommodated Evaluations and Assessments Flexibility Policy

Midterm Examination

Students with an approved academic accommodation (granted by an Academic Counselor) for an excused absence will be eligible for the following arrangements:

- The midterm is an **open-book, synchronous, Proctortrack-proctored examination**. Students may access **only** the official PDF course notes provided on Brightspace. Personal notes, textbooks, websites, calculators, cell phones, tablets, or **other aids are not permitted**.
- The midterm covers Units 1–3, through the end of Chapter 11.
- The midterm is the **designated in-term assessment in this course for which supporting documentation is required** when Academic Consideration is requested. Students who miss the scheduled midterm for an approved reason may write the midterm makeup.
- A scheduled makeup midterm is available for approved absences and approved accommodations. A make-up midterm will be offered on **Tuesday, November 3rd / 2026 at 5:30 pm EST** (tentative). There is no automatic reweighting of the midterm to the final examination because a makeup midterm is provided.
- Students who have an approved reason for missing both the scheduled midterm and the makeup will **receive an INC** and will write the midterm the next time the course is offered.

Final Exam

- The final examination is a **synchronous, open-book, Proctortrack-proctored examination**. Students may access only the official PDF course notes provided on Brightspace. Personal notes, textbooks, websites, calculators, cell phones, tablets, or **other aids are not permitted**.
- The final examination is **not cumulative** and covers Units 4–7 (Chapters 12–19). The non-cumulative final is intentional for this course design; the midterm assesses the first part of the course and has a scheduled makeup. The final exam is and will not be re-weighted under any circumstances. No exceptions. No makeups are available for the final exam.
- Students who have a legitimate, documented, and approved reason for missing the final examination will **receive an INC** and will be required to write the final examination the next time the course is offered, in accordance with applicable University procedures.
- The midterm and final exam are examinations for which Academic Consideration and supporting documentation are required through the applicable University process.

Quizzes

- There are **11 graded quizzes**: Academic Integrity (AI), Proctortrack Onboarding (PO), and Quizzes 1–9. The **best 9 of 11** quiz grades count toward the **30% quiz** component.
- Quizzes are automatically administered and graded through Brightspace. TAs do not grade quizzes. Therefore, if you have questions about the quizzes, you can ask your TA for clarification.
- Because quizzes are automatically graded, students should report any apparent grading or question inconsistency to the instructor/TA through the course communication process.
- **Academic Consideration is not required or accepted for missed quizzes.** The best-9-of-11 structure is the course's flexible-completion mechanism. The two lowest quiz grades are excluded from the calculation, and there are no makeup quizzes.
- Students are strongly advised to complete quizzes **well in advance of the deadline**. Don't wait to submit your quizzes until the last minute! Computer problems / technical issues occurring at the last minute **will not** be accepted as grounds for accommodation.
- The Academic Integrity Quiz and Proctortrack Onboarding Quiz **are mandatory**. The mandatory quizzes **ARE** included among the 11. **Therefore, they cannot be skipped and ARE excluded from the “best 9 of 11” calculation.** Students should complete these requirements well before their deadlines.

Forums

- There are **11 graded forums**. The best 9 of 11 count toward the 10% forum component, subject to the mandatory special forums described in the schedule.
- **Forum participation expectations** include one original contribution and responses to at least two classmates when required by the specific forum instructions. **Posts should be** relevant, constructive, respectful, and sufficiently developed to demonstrate engagement with the course material.
- Forums will be checked and **graded by your TA** through Brightspace. TAs grade forums for completion and participation according to the published instructions. Students should receive feedback and grades no later than two weeks after the relevant deadline.
- **Posting:** unless you have accommodation for the entire term, there will be no accommodation for students who fail to post before the deadline.
- Academic Consideration is not required or accepted for missed forums. The best-9-of-11 structure is the course's flexible-completion mechanism. Students cannot request academic consideration for items falling within it, since the missed work is already accounted for by design.
- Confidential or sensitive student information must never be posted in the student-accessible FAQ forum.
- **The mandatory special forums ARE included among the 11, and they ARE excluded from the “best 9 of 11” calculation.**

Extra Credit

Optional self-tests and polls may contribute to extra credit, up to the maximum stated in the course. Exceptional contribution may also be recognized at the instructor's discretion, subject to the course maximum.

Student Learning and Responsible Learner Expectations

This course is designed to support students in becoming responsible, independent learners. Because the course is primarily asynchronous, students are expected to plan their study time, monitor Brightspace regularly, read instructions carefully, complete activities by the published deadlines, and seek help early when they encounter difficulties.

Students should use feedback actively: review comments from TAs and the instructor, identify areas for improvement, and apply that feedback to subsequent work. Asking questions, participating constructively in forums, and using available practice activities are important parts of responsible learning.

The course's flexible-completion design is intended to give students reasonable room to manage occasional missed activities while preserving clear expectations and responsibility for keeping up with the course. Flexibility should not be understood as an invitation to postpone work until deadlines.

Step-by-Step Checklist for Students

Use the checklist below to guide your work and ensure you meet all course requirements:

- 1 Carefully read the assignment instructions and rubric on OWL/Brightspace.
- 2 Take notes in your own words; do not copy text into your draft.
- 3 Properly cite all sources according to the required citation style.
- 4 Review your work for clarity, structure, and scientific accuracy.
- 5 Submit Assignments through OWL-Brightspace before the deadline.
- 6 Carefully read the feedback provided by your TA.
- 7 Revise your assignment meaningfully.
- 8 Keep all submission confirmation emails for your records.

Course-Specific Requirements to Pass

In accordance with Western University regulations, students must meet all of the following requirements to successfully pass the course:

- Achieve a **minimum** overall course grade of **50%**.

8. Academic Integrity and Use of Sources (Western University Policy)

This course follows Western University's Academic Integrity and Scholastic Discipline policies. Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty.

Academic integrity is taken very seriously in this course.

- You are not allowed to copy and paste any text (even partial sentences) from any source, including:
 - websites,
 - books or journal articles,
 - other students' work,
 - generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT or similar).
 - You may not generate text using artificial intelligence and include it directly in your paper.
 - Replacing a few words in copied text or rearranging sentences still counts as **plagiarism**.
 - All sources must be properly cited according to the guidelines provided on OWL.

Failure to follow these rules may result in academic penalties in accordance with university policy.

All essays are submitted through Turnitin to support originality checking. Suspected breaches of academic integrity will be addressed in accordance with Western University policy, which may include penalties ranging from a grade reduction to more serious academic sanctions.

If you are unsure about proper citation, paraphrasing, or acceptable use of sources, please ask your TA or instructor before submitting your work.

Western's Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

The university relies on the instructor to define the use of AI as a violation of academic policy. Hence, instructors must inform students that the use of AI is prohibited in *each* of their assessments. Think of this in the same way we need to tell our students about the prohibited use of calculators when they are not allowed.

Use of Generative AI Tools

Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini) are **permitted with limitations**. Generative AI tools are prohibited in this course for all graded activities.

Students **may not** use generative AI to create text for discussion forums, answer quizzes, answer or generate responses for the midterm or final examination or complete any other graded activity. Unauthorized use of generative AI in a graded activity will be treated as a scholastic offence.

Students may use ordinary spelling, grammar, accessibility, or technical tools only where their use does not generate substantive academic content and is consistent with the assessment instructions. When in doubt, students must ask the instructor/TA before using a tool.

All required written work may be subject to Turnitin review. Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams may be subject to SCANEX-style answer-pattern review.

Students must properly acknowledge all sources and must not present another person's work, words, ideas, or generated material as their own.

Electronic Devices During Assessments

Unauthorized electronic devices are prohibited during assessments, including mobile phones, smart watches, smart glasses, wireless earbuds/headphones, tablets, and other devices not expressly permitted by the instructor. The presence of an unauthorized device may constitute a scholastic offence even if the device is not used.

Only devices expressly permitted by the instructor may be present during an assessment.

Remote Proctoring / Proctortrack

Remote proctoring software will be used for designated quizzes and examinations. By taking the course, students acknowledge that the proctoring service involves collection of personal information, including some biometric information, and recording of assessment sessions.

Students are responsible for ensuring that their device and internet connection meet the technical requirements.

Information is available at <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>

9. Student Review of Examinations and Grades

Students do not receive or retain the examination answer key. Examination questions are visible to the student for review, but an examination may be opened for review only during a Zoom meeting that is recorded.

To review an examination, the student must email the instructor, copy the TA, and explain the reason for requesting the review. If the request is approved, the TA will open the examination during a recorded Zoom session and share the TA's screen with the student. The student may view the questions and their submitted responses/feedback through the shared screen.

TAs should not disclose answer keys or grading materials to students. Questions about grading should be documented and referred to the instructor when they involve an inconsistency, possible grading error, or a request for re-evaluation.

Because examinations are primarily automatically graded, TAs do not need to review multiple-choice questions routinely. TAs will review:

- (1) Proctortrack red flags;
- (2) Short-answer and fill-in-the-blank responses and comments; and

- (3) Student requests to view or review an examination or its grade. Multiple-choice questions should be reviewed only when a student reports a specific inconsistency, or the instructor requests a review.

10. Academic Accommodation and Support

Students with disabilities should contact Accessible Education for accommodation recommendations. Instructors and TAs should not request or retain confidential medical documentation directly from students.

Science Academic Counselling: Students should consult the Science Academic Counselling webpage for information about academic planning and support: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/advising/> .

Students experiencing emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western: <https://uwo.ca/health/>

Western's support for gender-based and sexual violence is available at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

Case-manager contact: support@uwo.ca.

Registrar Services: <https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>

Religious Accommodation

When a recognized religious holiday or observance conflicts with an examination, test, or other scheduled academic obligation, students should submit a request through the Student Absence Portal (SAP) **as early as possible and normally no later than two weeks before** an examination or one week before a midterm test or quiz. Religious accommodations are treated as scheduling conflicts; the course will provide an appropriate alternative sitting when required by University and Faculty policy.

Policy: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf

Western Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Diversity Calendar: <https://www.edi.uwo.ca>

- This request should identify the conflict and specify which course component(s) (e.g. test, midterm, exam) are affected.

Note that in the Faculty of Science, religious holidays and university-sanctioned varsity events (e.g., intercollegiate competitions) are treated as scheduling conflicts. In such cases students are offered an early sitting or a make-up opportunity.

For more information on recognized religious holidays, please visit the Diversity Calendar posted on the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion website - <https://www.edi.uwo.ca>

General Academic Policies

Students are responsible for monitoring their official **@uwo.ca** email account, which is Western's official university email address.

Requests for Relief from Academic Decisions are governed by University policy and procedures. Students should consult the Registrar and University Secretariat websites for the applicable process.

Scholastic Offences policy: https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

Undergraduate Scholastic Offence Procedures: https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_scholastic_offence_procedure.pdf

General information about missed coursework

UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION POLICY

Policy: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Procedures:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_procedure.pdf

The following points, drawn directly from the university policy, govern whether documentation is required for a request, and whether a request can be made at all.

- The university policy allows students **one academic consideration without supporting documentation per half-course**.
- The university policy permits an instructor to **designate one assessment in the course for which documentation is always required** when requesting academic consideration. Absence from **the final exam already requires documentation** by university policy and does not draw on this designation. Utilizing this designation comes with the obligation that a makeup must be offered. Instructors should reserve this designation for an assessment covering essential learning outcomes of the course; e.g., a key presentation, or the midterm when the final exam is non-cumulative.
- The university policy permits an instructor to deny a request for academic consideration for any assessment that is not required in the calculation of the final grade, where the course design already builds in **flexible completion**, for example the best 6 of 10 quizzes counting toward the grade. This flexibility must be stated in the course outline. Where it applies, students cannot request academic consideration for items falling within it, since the missed work is already accounted for by design.
- The university policy permits an instructor to deny a request for academic consideration relating to submission timing where the course already provides a **no-late-penalty period**, for example a 48-hour submission window during which late work is accepted without penalty. This flexibility must be stated in the course outline. Where such a window applies, students cannot request academic consideration for late submission within it, since it is already accounted for by design.
- This policy does not apply to requests for Academic Consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person.
- The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult [Accessible Education](#).
- For procedures on **how to submit Academic Consideration** requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage: https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/
- All requests for Academic Consideration must **be made within 48 hours** after the assessment date or submission deadline.
- All Academic Consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request without supporting documentation in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this and, therefore, always require formal supporting documentation:
 - **Final Examinations** scheduled during official examination periods (Defined by policy)
 - **Midterm** (Designated by the instructor as the one assessment that always requires documentation when requesting Academic Consideration)
- When a student mistakenly submits their one allowed Academic Consideration request without **supporting documentation** for the assessments listed above or those in the **Coursework with**

Assessment Flexibility section below, the request cannot be recalled and reapplied. This privilege is forfeited.

Evaluation Scheme for Missed Assessments

Missed assessment will be handled with an extension or reweighting.

[Important] For any assessment for which extensions are allowed, **December 9th/2026** is the last date when submissions will no longer be accepted, even with Academic Consideration granted. This is the date when the work is marked as a peer-reviewed exercise. This submission cut-off date is ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT for assessment where Academic Consideration can be granted without documentation (thus no end date).

Essential Learning Requirements

- Even when Academic Considerations are granted for missed coursework, the following are deemed essential to earn a passing grade.
- Any course-specific conditions related to essential learning objectives that are required to pass the course are outlined in this syllabus.
- In such cases, the consequences of not meeting the requirement (e.g., a grade of 50%) are specified.
- Note that students should not be penalized for failing to meet a requirement where Academic Considerations are granted. For example, a student who misses too many activities due to illness to receive course credit should be given an opportunity to complete those activities after they recover. However, for logistical reasons, that opportunity will be with the **next offering of the course**, in which case the student will receive **a grade of Incomplete (INC)** and their maximum course load may be reduced during the term in which they complete their course requirements.

Academic Accommodation Policies

- Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf.

- Students should note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.

General Academic Policies

The website for Registrar Services is <https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>.

Use of @uwo.ca email:

In accordance with policy, https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf, the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university email address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that emails received from the University at their official university address are attended to in a timely manner.

Requests for Relief (formally known as "appeals")

Policy on Request for Relief from Academic Decision:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/requests_for_relief_from_academic_decisions.pdf

Procedures on Request for Relief from Academic Decision (Undergraduate):

https://uwo.ca/univsec//pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_requests_for_relief_procedure.pdf

Procedures on Request for Relief from Academic Decision (Graduate):

https://uwo.ca/univsec//pdf/academic_policies/appeals/graduate_requests_for_relief_procedure.pdf

Scholastic Offences

Policy on Scholastic Offences: https://uwo.ca/univsec//pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

Procedures on Scholastic Offences (Undergraduate):

https://uwo.ca/univsec//pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_scholastic_offence_procedure.pdf

Procedures on Scholastic Offences (Graduate):

https://uwo.ca/univsec//pdf/academic_policies/appeals/graduate_scholastic_offence_procedure.pdf

Use of Electronic Devices During Assessments

In courses offered by the Faculty of Science, the possession of unauthorized electronic devices during any assessment (such as quizzes, tests, midterms, and final examinations) **is strictly prohibited**. This includes, but is not limited to mobile phones, smart watches, smart glasses, and wireless earbuds or headphones.

Unless explicitly stated otherwise in advance by the instructor, the presence of any such device at your desk, on your person, or within reach during an assessment **will be treated as a *scholastic offence***, even if the device is not in use.

Only devices expressly permitted by the instructor (e.g., non-programmable calculators) may be brought into the assessment room. It is your responsibility to review and comply with these expectations.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Unless otherwise stated, the use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, or similar platforms) is **not permitted** in the completion of any course assessments, including but not limited to: assignments, lab reports, presentations, tests, and final examinations.

Using such tools for content generation, code writing, problem solving, translation, or summarization—when not explicitly allowed—will be treated as a **scholastic offence**.

If the use of generative AI is permitted for a particular assessment, the conditions of use will be specified by the instructor in advance. If no such permission is granted, students must assume that use is prohibited. It is your responsibility to seek clarification before using any AI tools in academic work.

I acknowledge that some students may be interested in exploring the use of Generative AI as a learning tool. I have chosen not to ban its use in this course. Instead, I require that all assignments **MUST** contain one of the two following statements at the end:

- 1) I did not use artificial intelligence in creating this paper; or
- 2) I did use artificial intelligence in creating this paper. I affirm I did not generate text with artificial intelligence and directly copy it into my paper.

You may use Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, etc.) to get you started and/or help you when you are stuck. If you choose to do this, you must include a brief description of the following:

- Software and version used.
- A complete list of prompts.
- How the generative AI was used (e.g., brainstorming, preparing an outline, discovering facts about the topic, locating background information, improving grammar/spelling/punctuation/structure, etc.).

Why can't we directly copy words from an AI engine into my assignments?

There are multiple reasons:

- 1 This is considered plagiarism (which means presenting others' words as if they were our own).
- 2 We have already created several essays using various Generative AI models so Turnitin is already good at detection, and you will likely get a very high similarity index.
- 3 AI engines are notoriously unreliable on facts.
- 4 AI engines reproduce biases and prejudices from their source material; and
- 5 Using AI to generate text robs you of the chance to develop your own critical thinking on the subject. The point of assignments is to help you develop your ability to think critically. Writing is a mechanism to convey your critical thinking. The act of writing helps you cultivate your own intelligence. Not artificial intelligence.

TURNITIN:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

SCANEX:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

PROCTORTRACK:

Remote Proctoring Software WILL be used in this course, including in the event of a health lockdown!

Tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide **personal information** (including some biometric data) and the session will be **recorded**. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at:

<https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Advising webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, requests for relief, exam conflicts, and many other academic-related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, at:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an **alternate format** or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. If you have any questions regarding accommodations, you may also wish to contact Accessible Education at

http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Learning-skills counsellors at **Learning Development and Success** (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.