

# iSTEP: Technology Field Research in Developing Communities

## 15-302

**Website:**

<http://www.techbridgeworld.org/istep/15-302>

**Units:**

You will earn 6 units for successfully completing this course.

**Lectures:**

Mondays and Wednesdays

8:00AM – 9:20AM Pittsburgh time and 4:00PM – 5:20PM Doha time

Baker Hall A53/CMUQ building 2147

**Instructor:**

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail
M. Bernardine Dias	1015 CMUQ building	+974-454-8647	<a href="mailto:mbdias@ri.cmu.edu">mbdias@ri.cmu.edu</a>

**Course Assistants:**

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail
Ermine Teves	Newell-Simon Hall 2104	+1 412-268-1289	<a href="mailto:eteves@cs.cmu.edu">eteves@cs.cmu.edu</a>
Sarah Belousov		+1 412-268-7147	<a href="mailto:sarahtbw@ri.cmu.edu">sarahtbw@ri.cmu.edu</a>

**Course Description:**

The ultimate goal of this course is to teach students practical skills necessary to conduct field research in the area of ICTD (information and communication technologies for development) and to show them that computing technology can have a positive impact on the lives of people in developing communities. A secondary practical goal of this course is to prepare iSTEP internship (<http://www.techbridgeworld.org/istep>) participants for their upcoming summer internship experience. The course will focus on Bangladesh this year, the selected community for iSTEP 2010. Students will be given an overview of the field of ICTD, introduced to real partners in Bangladesh, work within a multidisciplinary team to understand specific challenges in that community and design relevant technology solutions to those challenges. The outcomes of this course will be deployed in Bangladesh this summer through the iSTEP internship.

**Course Objectives:**

The objectives of this course are as follows:

- Introduce students to the emerging field of ICTD (Information and Communication Technologies for Development)
- Teach basic practical skills necessary to work in ICTD
- Enhance students' basic research, team-work, writing, and presentation skills
- Enhance students' analytical and critical thinking when applied to real-world scenarios, especially in ICTD
- Prepare students for field experience in ICTD work through the iSTEP program

**Office Hours:**

In general, send the instructor or course assistants email if you wish to meet with them, and they will arrange to meet with you. Remember to start working on your assignments long before they are due. If you wait to start your assignment the day before it is due, there is very little the instructor or course assistants can do to help you – don't expect the impossible!

**Grading Policy:**

Your grade will depend entirely on your performance on assignments and class participation. In all cases, the instructors' decision on the grade is final – you may ask for clarification or supply additional information in support of a request to change a grade, but any modification is entirely at the instructors' discretion. Your course grade will be determined as follows:

<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Assignments (Total)</b>	<b>90%</b>
Research Assignment	30%
Team Plan Assignment	25%
Media Plan Assignment	25%
Automated Tutor Assignment	10%

**Collaboration:**

In general, we encourage collaboration in this course. In fact, a key learning objective in this course is effective team work in ICTD field work settings where teams are multidisciplinary and globally distributed.

**Late Work:**

Due to the short duration of this course, we cannot accept late work. So any work turned in late will automatically get a grade of zero unless prior permission has been obtained from the instructor of the course. Note that late work of an individual affects the performance of the whole team so it is important to make sure you complete your work on time.

**Acknowledgements and References:**

Always make sure you acknowledge others who help you in any written or oral assignment. In general, you should be generous in acknowledging contributions of others. Also make sure you include adequate references to publications, communications, and websites that you use to support different claims in your written and oral assignments. Most arguments are made stronger by supporting citations. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and will be treated according to Carnegie Mellon University policies on cheating as specified in your Student Handbook. All contributions to any assignment from external sources should be clearly cited in the written document or presentation.

**Attendance and Class Participation:**

You are required to attend classes unless otherwise informed by your instructor. We will be taking attendance, and your attendance and participation will be part of your final grade. This is a small group and each absent student will be missed. Except in emergencies, you will only be excused from class if you inform the instructors at least 90 minutes **before** class time and get instructor permission to miss that class due to a valid reason.