

iSTEP: Technology Field Research in Developing Communities

15-302 A4
Spring 2009

Website:

<http://www.techbridgeworld.org/istep>

Units:

You will earn 6 units for successfully completing this course.

Lectures:

Mondays and Wednesdays

8:00AM – 9:00AM Pittsburgh time and 3:00PM – 4:00PM Doha time

Wean Hall 4625/CMUQ Room 1106

Instructor:

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail
M. Bernardine Dias	1015 CMUQ building	+1 974-454-8647	mbdias@ri.cmu.edu

Course Assistants:

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail
Ermine Teves	Newell-Simon Hall 2117	+1 412-268-1289	eteves@cs.cmu.edu
Sarah Belousov	Newell-Simon Hall 2104	+1 412-268-7147	sarahtbw@ri.cmu.edu

Course Description:

The ultimate goal of this course is to teach students practical skills necessary to conduct field research in the field 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 living in developing communities. The practical goal of this course is to prepare iSTEP internship (<http://www.techbridgeworld.org/istep>) participants for their summer internship experience. The course will focus on a particular developing community based on the community selected for the iSTEP program that year. Students will be given an overview of the field of ICTD, introduced to real partners in the selected developing community, work with multi-disciplinary teams to understand specific challenges in that community and design and implement relevant technology solutions to those challenges. The outcomes of this course will be deployed in the chosen community in the 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 Technology for Development)
- Teach basic practical skills necessary to work in ICTD
- Enhance students' basic research, team-work skills, 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. Your class participation grade will primarily be determined by the class where you lead the discussion – each of you will get a chance to lead the discussion in class. 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:

Class Participation	10%
Assignments (Total)	90%
Research Assignment	35%
Work Plan Assignment	35%
Campaign Assignment	20%

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 multi-disciplinary 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.

Course Schedule:

The instructors may alter the course schedule during the semester – all modifications will be announced in class and be made available on the course web page.

Date	Monday Lecture	Wednesday Lecture
Week 1 March 16, 2009	<i>Brief introduction to course by M. Bernardine Dias</i> <i>Tanzania country and culture overview, and Swahili language basics by Karumuna Kaijage (Heinz College graduate), Anna Greenstone, and Sorael Elias Nnko</i> <i>All 3 assignments handed out</i>	<i>Introduction to iSTEP Partners by Sarah Belousov</i> <i>Introduction to University Computing Center by Eric Beda (to be confirmed)</i>
Week 2 March 23, 2009	<i>No class – work on assignments in relevant groups</i>	<i>No class – work on assignments in relevant groups</i>
Week 3 March 30, 2009	<i>Whirlwind tour of ICTD by M. Bernardine Dias</i> <i>Challenges of research in low-resource environments and importance of sustainability by Ayorkor Mills-Tettey</i>	<i>Evaluation and monitoring by M. Bernardine Dias</i> <i>Understanding research requirements/IRB/Tanzanian regulations by Sarah Belousov and Ermine Teves</i>
Week 4 April 6, 2009	<i>Documentation/ Marketing and Media by Matthew Richards and Chris Labash</i> <i>First draft of research report due</i>	<i>Needs Assessment and Evaluation plan discussion led by Rotimi and Bea</i>
Week 5 April 13, 2009	<i>Social Worker project discussion led by Daniel and Anthony</i> <i>First draft of campaign plan due</i>	<i>Braille Writing Tutor project discussion led by Brad and Ian</i>
Week 6 April 20, 2009	<i>Literacy Tools project discussion led by Hatem and Shakir</i> <i>First draft of work plan due</i>	<i>Work plan (including marketing and media plan) discussion led by Emily</i> <i>Course summary by M. Bernardine Dias</i>
Week 7 April 27, 2009	<i>No class – work on assignments in relevant groups</i>	<i>No class – work on assignments in relevant groups</i> <i>Final reports for all assignments due</i>