University of Kentucky
School of Library & Information Science (SLIS)

UKC101-007 Information Literacy & Critical Thinking

Instructor
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* email is preferred method of communication

Office Hours
• Email or call for appointment
• Will respond within 24 hours

Class Information
• White Hall, room 345
• Mon/Wed/Fri, 11:00-11:50am

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description
Emphasizing critical inquiry and critical thinking through creativity, that is using and manipulating information in nontraditional ways, this course will explore the theories and definitions surrounding the term “information literacy.” Students will put this theory into practice by developing problem-solving skills that allow them to meet information needs throughout their lifetimes. Students will gain a better understanding of how information and knowledge function in society and will discover methods of finding, accessing, evaluating, and using different information sources in an effective and ethical manner throughout the semester by engaging in assignments that transform the information learned from the texts into knowledge situated in multiple contexts including text and visual.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe and apply information & digital literacy in various nontraditional contexts.
2. Comprehend how knowledge is produced in society and gain experience in nontraditional knowledge production.
3. Develop critical thinking skills enabling them to apply, analyze and evaluate sources then synthesizing the information encountered to create new sources.
4. Create appropriate research questions for pertinent information discovery in various situations with the goal of generating knowledge.
5. Determine and access the most appropriate information sources for different contexts.
6. Evaluate information and information sources to meet different information needs.
7. Utilize information processes to solve problems and understand current issues in society.
8. Understand the ethical responsibilities of using information in many different contexts including print and online.

Required Reading
All readings available online, through UK’s Online Journals, or through course e-reserves.
STUDENT EVALUATION

Grading Parameters

- Mid-module assignments (3) 20%
- Module Projects (3) 40%
- Group Synthesis 15%
- Participation 15%
- Quizzes (weekly) 10%

Grading Scale

- 90% – 100% = A (Exceptional Achievement)
- 80% – 89% = B (High Achievement)
- 70% – 79% = C (Average Achievement)
- 60% – 69% = D (Below Average)
- 0% – 59% = E (Failing)

Course Assignments

This course is process-focused and structured around four (4) learning modules: (0) General issues in information literacy and critical thinking; (1) Information Organization; (2) Information Seeking; (3) Information Production and Sharing. Successful completion of each module requires the completion of a mid-module assignment, as well as a larger module project. Students must, also, actively participate in the weekly discussion of readings and quizzes.

Assignment due dates are indicated on the daily schedule. Work submitted late will be reduced in grade by one letter grade (e.g., A- \(\rightarrow\) B-) for each 24-hour period (or portion thereof) following the due date or deadline unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Reasons for deadline extensions must be significant and not simply a request for more time.

Submission of Assignments

All homework must include your name, my name, the course, and the date. When submitting assignments on Blackboard, make sure to give your work a document name to indicate what the item is. For example, you may title your evaluating information activity “Last Name Info Eval.” You are responsible for keeping back-up (I recommend several) copies of all your work since electronic texts can be lost. All assignments must be written in Standard English with correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Assignments are to be completed solely by the individual.

Mid-module assignments

Starting with week 5, students will complete a variety of exercises every two (2) weeks. These assignments apply skills, concepts and processes covered in the readings and class materials. In addition, these assignments allow students to use online tools to which they will be introduced. The mid-module assignments are: (1) mind mapping; (2) web resource mini-evaluation; (3) mini-interview. Your instructor will provide more details.

1. This assignment allows students to visualize how information can be organized by requiring them to choose a topic and “map” it. The maps must show at least 10 levels and be accurate at each level.

2. Using whichever search engine you choose search for the topic of your choice (i.e., science, comic books, leprosy). **Examine the top 3 results.** Who is the source of this information? By examining the URL on the search results page can you tell whether this information will be
credible? Why or why not? Is any additional information provided? Does this information add to the authority/credibility of the site? Why or why not?

3. The reading this week focused on the use of humans as sources of information. As such, this week’s assignment asks you to use a classic method of obtaining information from other people: the interview. Find an expert on a topic that interests you, and ask them at least 5 questions related to that topic. You may interview them by phone, in person, or by sending them questions using email or other social media. As part of your assignment, explain why you consider this person an expert and provide the contact information for your expert. If you use email or other social media to contact your expert, provide a record of your conversation by Storify, screenshot or other transcript. If you speak to the expert in person or by phone you must transcribe your conversation and turn it in.

Module projects
Starting with week 5, students will complete larger module projects every four (4) weeks. These module projects allow the student to synthesize the material covered in the modules, and use information in a creative process. The module projects are: (1) Creating an Organization system using Pinterest; (2) Evaluating information; (3) Creating an infographic.

1. This project asks you to navigate to the Pinterest board entitled, “ICT 200: Info Literacy,” which contains an array of pins. Your task is to create a system of organization that applies to all of the pins. Place the pins into categories and provide an explanation of their categories and create the rules (a classification system) for the categories. More information will be provided in class.

2. Since evaluation of information is key to choosing the correct information to use, write a 2 – 3 page review of a resource of your choosing to determine its strengths and weaknesses and decide if it meets its audience’s needs. You may use the CRAAP checklist as an evaluation tool. Resources chosen may be analog or digital.

3. Using the software, or process, with which you feel the most comfortable, create a simple infographic reporting the pertinent statistics and other information about a topic of your choosing, with instructor approval. Students will present these infographics during the final week of class.

Group Synthesis
During the semester students are placed in groups to offer peer evaluation discussion of assignments produced by others in their groups. Students should offer helpful commentary and analysis of their colleagues’ work in an effort to assist other students in refining their products as well as offering new ways to consider the processes.

Participation
You are expected to come to class having read the assigned material and to be prepared with questions and comments about the readings. Engaged and respectful discussion is necessary for the success of this class. Students with thoughtful, original, and frequent comments/questions will receive full points.

Students must also engage in weekly discussion posts online. Each week, one discussion question will be posted that the students must answer with a post of at least 100 words. The post should consider the discussion question within the lens of the course readings and lecture. Students are expected to post their answers online by the middle of the class week: since this is a M/W/F class, the discussion must be completed by Wednesday. Students will then discuss their answers during class during the rest of the week. As follow up to in-class discussion, students must respond to at least two of their classmates’ online posts with responses of at least 50 words, by the end of that course week.

All class discussions, both in-class and online, should be respectful and intellectually stimulating. I don’t expect problems to occur in our discussions, but if someone attacks you we will deal with it in class. If
you must reply, do not attack the individual in turn.

**Quizzes**
Students are expected to complete weekly quizzes on Blackboard by the middle of the class week: since this is a M/W/F class, the quiz must be completed by Wednesday. The quizzes will be used to determine student comprehension of readings, discussions, and lectures. They are “open book” quizzes that can be taken from home; however, it will be necessary to have the readings fresh in your mind when you take the quiz on Blackboard. If you are not familiar with the content, you may run out of time and receive 0 points for the questions you did not have time to answer.

**Course Policies**

**Plagiarism**
Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities (6.3.1; online at [http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html](http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html) under the section called “VI - Student Academic Affairs”) states:

> All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self–expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

> When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

> Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else’s work, whether it be published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or whatever. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.

> When a student’s assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

Make sure to cite properly in all your assignments. Plagiarized work may be given a zero. Repeat offenses will result in a failing grade for the course.

**Attendance**
This is a face-to-face class. Therefore, we will rely heavily on class discussion as we discover methods of research and inquiry. This course follows the University of Kentucky policy on class attendance: **If a student misses more than one-fifth of the course contact hours, he/she cannot receive credit for the course. For a course meeting twice a week, students must withdraw or receive a grade of E upon the sixth absence; for a course meeting three times a week, students must withdraw or receive a grade of E upon the ninth absence; for a course meeting four times a week, the maximum is twelve absences.** This policy will be strictly enforced.

The Academic Ombud requires that the following requirements be enforced:

- Students must notify the instructor of their absence prior to the absence or within one week after the absence.
- Students must submit any written documentation supporting their excused absence within one week after the absence.
- Absences for major religious holidays require advance written notification (within one week).

Class Schedule
Learning does not always happen on schedule, and so changes may be made to meet the individual needs of the class. You will be responsible for checking the online syllabus and schedule for any changes or updates before beginning your homework.

E-mail Policy
Please allow 24 hours for me to respond to your e-mail during the school week. On weekends, I will try to answer your e-mails, but I may not be able to do so until Monday. I ask that before you e-mail me with questions, please read your assignment information and syllabus carefully. If you have not heard from me within 24 hours, please send a follow-up e-mail or speak with me in person.

Office Hours
As a part-time lecturer, I do not have an office on campus. However, I am available for meetings or consultations arranged via email, on the phone, or in person after class. I can accommodate in-person meetings if you give me advance notice, although I will also hold virtual office hours through the Blackboard Virtual Classroom application. This allows us to chat and share links and files. Please do not hesitate to make an appointment to speak with me via the means that you find most convenient.

Reference Librarians
The reference librarians on the 2nd floor, North Wing of W.T. Young Library are more than happy to help you with your research for this class and any class you have. Please feel free to visit, call, e-mail, or chat with them, unless your assignment requests that you do not seek their assistance. See the Libraries’ Homepage for more information.

Writing Center
The Writing Center is located in the Hub of the W. T. Young Library, B108B (phone: 859-257-1368). You can walk in or make an appointment online (uky.mywconline.com). The staff can help you identify and correct problems with all aspects of your writing as well as work with you on visual design.

Academic Ombud
Dr. Sonya Feist-Price, the Academic Ombud will assist you with a variety of issues, including grade disputes. She is in 109 Bradley Hall and her number is 859-257-3737. You can e-mail her at ombud@uky.edu.

Disability Services
If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations in this course, please make your request to the University Disability Resource Center. The Center will require current disability documentation. When accommodations are approved, the Center will provide me with a Letter of Accommodation that details the recommended accommodations. Contact the Disability Resource Center, Jake Karnes, Director at 859-257-2754 or jkarnes@email.uky.edu.

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
Policies concerning academic integrity, excused absences, and academic accommodations due to disability are available online at: http://ci.uky.edu/lis/sites/default/files/policies.pdf
## COURSE CALENDAR

### Module 0: General Issues in Information Literacy & Critical Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 1    | Information Literacy | • Read the syllabus!  
    |       | • President Obama’s Proclamation on Digital Literacy Month  

### Module 1: Information Organization

**Mid-module assignment:** Mind map  
**Due:** End of Week 6  
**Module Project:** Organization system  
**Due:** End of Week 8

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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    | 10/6 – 10/12 | • Library of Congress Classification  
    |       | • Dewey Decimal Classification System (Wikipedia, all sections) |
| 8    | Taxonomy/Folksonomy | • Taxonomy and systematics (All sections) Natural History Museum.  
Note: October 20th is UK’s midterm. We will not have a midterm exam.

Module 2: Information Seeking

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>• UK Libraries Research Guide, Evaluating Information *Be sure to check out “The CRAAP Checklist.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>View:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• SMART: Evaluating Sources</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Module 3: Producing and Sharing Information

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Information Visualization</td>
<td>• Emerson, John, Visualizing Information for Advocacy: An Introduction to Information Design</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cairo, Alberto, “Forms and Functions: Visualization as a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<pre><code>       |                | - Data Journalism Handbook: “Introduction” &amp; “Delivering Data”       |
</code></pre>
<p>| 12/1 –  | Information  |                                         |
| 12/7    | Ethics        |                                         |</p>
| 16      | Information  | - danah boyd, “Social Network Sites: Public, Private, or What?”  
           | Ethics        | - Copyright Basics, pp. 1-5.                                         
           |                | - Tales from the Public Domain (comic book)                             
           |                | - View: Copyright and Creative Commons                                   |
| 12/8 –  |                |                                         |
| 12/12   |                |                                         |