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

UKC101-003 Information Literacy & Critical Thinking

Instructor
Jasmine McNealy, JD, PhD
Assistant Professor
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859-218-2297
*Email is the best way to contact me

Office Hours
• Tuesday & Thursday 12:30pm-2pm and by appointment
• Email for appointment
• Will respond within 24 hours

Class Information
• T/Th 11am-12:15pm, CRH#2 Rm.003

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 or through UK’s Online Journals.
STUDENT EVALUATION

Grading Parameters
- Mid-module assignments (3): 20%
- Module Projects (3): 40%
- Group Synthesis: 15%
- Participation: 15%
- Quizzes (4): 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: (1) General issues in information literacy and critical thinking; (2) Information Organization; (3) Finding and Evaluating Information; (4) 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 on the Blackboard discussion forums.

Assignment due dates are indicated on the daily schedule. Late assignments are not accepted unless arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the due date.

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.

Self-Discipline
Distance learning courses require self-discipline and patience. Since technological issues can and will occur, do not wait until the last minute to work on your assignments. Schedule time to check the Blackboard site at least twice a week, if not more.

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; (4) mini-interview.

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 (ie, 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 synthesis the material covered in the modules, and use information in a creative process. The module projects are: (1) Creating a classification system using Pinterest; (2) Evaluating information; (3) Creating an infographic.

1. This project asks you to navigate to the Pinterest board entitled, “IS 200: Info Literacy,” which contains an array of 50 pins. Your task is to create a classification scheme that applies to all of the pins. Place the pins into categories and provide an explanation of their categories.

2. Since evaluation of information is key to choosing the correct information to use, write a 2 - 3 page review of a resource of you 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 with which you feel the most comfortable, create a simple infographic reporting the pertinent statistics and other information from a research report of your choosing, with instructor approval. You do not have to use all of the statistics/information contained within the report, but find a section of information in the report that you find the most interesting and make an infographic explaining that information. 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 mid-module 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**
This is a face-to-face class course. Therefore, we will rely heavily on class discussion as we discover methods of research and inquiry. 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.

All class discussions 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**
Quizzes will be given periodically to determine student comprehension of readings, discussions, and lectures.

**Course Policies**

**Plagiarism**
Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities (6.3.1; online at http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html) 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 properly cite in all your assignments. Plagiarized work may be given a zero. Repeat offenses will result in a failing grade for the course.

**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 before beginning your homework for any changes or updates.

**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**
I will be available to speak with you in my office, 317 Little Library, during office hours. During that time I will also hold virtual office hours through the Blackboard Virtual Classroom.
application for those of you with questions but cannot make it to my office. This allows us to chat and share links and files. If you cannot make it to the scheduled office hours, please make an appointment to speak with me.

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.

Academic Ombud
Lee A. Edgerton, the Academic Ombud will assist you with a variety of issues, including grade disputes. He is in 109 Bradley Hall and his number is 859-257-3737. You can e-mail him 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.

TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Distance Learning Students are expected to have a minimum level of technological acumen and the availability of technological resources. Students must have regular access a computer with a reliable Internet connection and audio capabilities. Internet Explorer 7 (IE) or Firefox 2.x are the recommended browsers for those using a Windows-based PC. Those using Firefox 3.x may encounter problems with assignment uploads. Those using an Apple computer with MAC OS X (10.5.x) may use Firefox 3.x or Safari 3.x.

Please be certain that your computer and/or browser allow you to view Adobe Reader documents (.pdf). Microsoft Office and other software products are free for students: https://iweb.uky.edu/MSDownload/.

As your instructor, I am your first go-to person for technology problems. If you need more immediate assistance, please contact UKIT.

Information Technology Customer Service Center (UKIT)
http://www.uky.edu/UKIT/; 859-218-4357

Library Services
Distance Learning Services
http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/DLLS
- Carla Cantagallo, DL Librarian
- Local phone number: 859 257-0500, ext. 2171; long-distance phone number: (800) 828-0439 (option #6)
- Email: dllservice@email.uky.edu
## GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Policies concerning academic integrity, excused absences and academic accommodations due to disability are available online at:  

## COURSE CALENDAR

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

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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***Quiz this week***

### Module 1: Information Organization

**Mid-module assignment**: Mind map **Due**: Feb 1, 11:59PM  
**Module Project**: Classification system **Due**: Feb 22 11:59PM

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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***Quiz this week***
## Module 2: Information Seeking

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<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>9 Mar 10-15</td>
<td>Ethics: Copyright</td>
<td>- Copyright Basics, pp. 1-5.&lt;br&gt;- Tales from the Public Domain (comic book)</td>
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<td>10 Mar 17-22</td>
<td>SPRING Break</td>
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**Mid-module assignment:** Web resource evaluation **Due:** Mar 8 11:59PM

**Module Project:** Evaluating info **Due:** Mar 29 11:59PM

## Module 3: Producing and Sharing Information

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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**Mid-module assignment:** mini interview **Due:** April

**Module Project:** Infographic **Due:** May 2 11:59PM
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<td>21-26</td>
<td><em><strong>Quiz this week</strong></em></td>
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