

**University of Kentucky**  
**School of Information Science**

**ICT 200-004: INFORMATION LITERACY & CRITICAL THINKING**

**Instructor:** Ms. Ashley D. DeWitt, MSLS, MA

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**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday, 9-11am or by appointment

**Class Information:** Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-1:45 pm, LCLI 312

## COURSE INFORMATION

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to the concepts and practices of information literacy. It explores how to effectively and ethically find, evaluate, analyze, and use information resources in academic and everyday-life situations. Emphasizing critical inquiry and critical thinking, 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. (Same as IS 200.)

### COURSE OUTCOMES

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

1. Describe and apply information and 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. Utilize information processes to solve problems and understand current issues in society.
5. Understand the ethical responsibilities of using information in many different contexts including print and online.

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

All readings available online or through [Canvas](#).

### **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

Students may be required to participate in class activities online in addition to other class requirements. Students must have access to Canvas through their UK ID to successfully complete this course. Students may also need access to Google Drive ([instructions to set up the Google student account](#) and access to [Zoom](#).

Students are not required to have a webcam and microphone, although they may come in handy. Please review UK's Analytics and Technologies Department's [minimum requirements for technology for e-learning](#).

## **STUDENT EVALUATION**

### **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)

### **MID-TERM GRADE**

Mid-term grades will be posted in myUK by the deadline established in the [Academic Calendar](#).

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

Due dates are indicated on the Course Calendar in this document and in Canvas. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due at the beginning of the first class period of the week identified in the Assignment Descriptions and Point Values section of this syllabus. Late work submitted within 24 hours will receive a 10% penalty. Late work submitted within 48 hours will receive a 20% penalty, and late work received before 72 hours will receive 30% off. No late work is accepted after 3 days.

## **SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

All assignments must include the student's name, instructor's name, course, and date.

When submitting assignments on Canvas, students must follow naming conventions on assignment instructions. Emailed assignments are not accepted. Students are responsible for keeping back-up copies of all 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.

## **RESEARCH SUBJECT POOL**

The School of Information Science is committed to providing students a broad and comprehensive education. Students in this class are provided the option to participate in one or more research studies for 3 credit points which is equal to 15 points towards the total points in the class (3 percent of your grade). If you are enrolled in multiple courses that participant in the RSP, you must contact the RSP coordinator after you have completed the required 3 credit points and the RSP coordinator will ensure that points are prorated across classes. Detailed information about available research studies can be found on the Research Participant Management System website found (<https://uksis.sona-systems.com>). If you have questions about the research or about credit, please contact the researcher for the specific study about which you are inquiring. Participation is voluntary and there are alternative options for credit. Please see the complete description of the procedures for alternative research credit. If you elect to participate in the alternative assignment, you must sign up for this by the midterm. More information about the alternative assignment can be found under the course content tab on the learning management system.

## **GROUP SYNTHESIS**

During the semester, students will be asked to offer peer evaluation and discussion of assignments produced by others in the class. 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.

## **DISCUSSION**

Students will engage in discussion posts online or face-to-face. The goal is to have students think about and discuss the weekly readings/topics, and students will then engage in discussion.

All class discussions, both in-class and online, should be respectful and intellectually stimulating. Should a problem arise the instructor will take appropriate actions. Participation

## PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to participate fully in class. Students are expected to (a) read and consider applications of the information *before* class, (b) ask questions and/or make applications in small group and large group class discussions/activities, and (c) work to facilitate classroom interaction. Students are also expected to participate fully in discussions/activities completed in class or through Canvas.

## COURSE POLICIES

### Attendance

This class is a community whose success is dependent on everyone's participation. There is a strong correlation between class attendance and grades. Therefore, attendance is vital for students' achievement. Students will only be permitted to make up work missed due to an excused absence.

Roll will be taken by use of the framing activities students will complete at the beginning of class. Students who enter late and are not present when roll is taken must notify the instructor at the end of class.

For any emergency situation that arises, **e-mail your instructor** as soon as you know about the situation.

### Excused Absences

Students need to notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible. *Senate Rules 5.2.4.2* defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit "reasonable cause for nonattendance" by the professor.

Students need to notify the instructor of absences prior to class when possible. Please refer to the definition of an excused absence in the current edition of Student Rights and Responsibilities on the web at <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/>

S.R. 5.2.4.2 defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit "reasonable cause for nonattendance" by the instructor. You will be asked to provide official written documentation for absences.

Excuses for university-sponsored activities must be made *prior* to such absences. Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of

such holidays no later than the last day in the semester to add a class. Information regarding dates of major religious holidays may be obtained through the religious liaison at 859-257-2754.

### **Verification of Absences**

Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. Senate Rule 5.2.4.2 states that faculty have the right to request “appropriate verification” when students claim an excused absence because of illness or death in the family. Appropriate notification of absences due to university-related trips is required prior to the absence.

### **Late Work**

Late work submitted within 24 hours will receive a 10% penalty. Late work submitted within 48 hours will receive a 20% penalty, and late work received before 72 hours will receive 30% off. No late work is accepted after 3 days.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the University may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found on the [Ombud’s website](#). A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

### **Plagiarism**

*Senate Rules 6.3.1* (please refer to the [current set of Senate Rules](#)) states that 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.

**Please note:** Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS DUE TO DISABILITY**

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. It is located on the corner of Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407. You can reach them via phone at (859) 257-2754 and via email at [drc@uky.edu](mailto:drc@uky.edu). The [Disability Resource Center website](#) contains additional information.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE**

Learning does not always happen on schedule, and so changes may be made to meet the needs of the class. The student will be responsible for checking the online syllabus, schedule, and Canvas notifications for any changes or updates before reading or beginning activities.

### **E-MAIL POLICY**

Please allow 24 hours for the instructor to respond to an e-mail during the school week. On weekends, instructors will try to answer e-mails, but may not be able to do so until Monday. Before emailing the instructor with questions, students should read assignment information and the syllabus carefully. Students who have not received a response within 24 hours should send a follow-up e-mail or speak with the instructor.

## OFFICE HOURS

The instructor will be available for meetings based on the office hours printed on the first page of the syllabus. If students cannot make it to the scheduled office hours, they should contact the instructor using the preferred contact method to schedule another time.

## RESOURCES

### Reference Librarians

The reference librarians on the 2nd floor, North Wing of W.T. Young Library can help with research for this class or other classes. Students can visit, call, e-mail, or chat with librarians, unless the assignment requests they do not seek library assistance. See the [UK Libraries' Reference Services page](#) for more information.

### Writing Center

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

### Academic Ombud

Dr. Joseph McGillis, 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](mailto:ombud@uky.edu).

### Military Members and Veterans

UK recognizes the complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student. Members of the military or military veterans or dependents should inform the instructor if they need special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, mandatory training exercises, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran related developments can complicate academic life. If students are aware of any complications, they should contact the coordinator of the University of Kentucky Veterans Resource Center at (859) 257-1148 for additional assistance. The [Veterans Resource Center website](#) contains additional resources.

## GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

The [School of Information Science \(SIS\) policies](#) concerning academic integrity, excused absences, and academic accommodations due to disability apply to all students enrolled in SIS classes.

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS AND POINT VALUES

### **Week 2: Personal introduction (10 points)**

You will prepare and share a brief 2- to 3-minute introduction video. Your video should include your name, major, year in school, and at least one fun fact about you. This will help your instructor and your fellow students get to know you.

### **Week 5: Case studies (50 points)**

Using the readings and materials presented in class, consider whether you are largely a critical thinker, a creative thinker, or both. Then, think of three people in your field and describe what kind of thinker you believe them to be as well. Give examples for your opinions, and write an essay describing each person in four case studies that must be at least 250 words per person. Provide APA in-text citations (including page numbers) to indicate where you found the information used to support your claims.

### **Week 8: Deconstructing a journal article (75 points)**

In an at least 800-word essay, critique an academic, peer-reviewed journal article in your field that is at least 10 pages long based on the principles described in your readings and in class. Address the questions found on the assignment prompt in Canvas and provide APA in-text citations (including page numbers) to indicate where you found the information.

### **Week 9: Mid-semester feedback (5 points)**

You will complete a brief, anonymous survey about the course so that your instructor can address any issues and adjust for the remainder of the semester.

### **Week 11: Podcast (50 points)**

In a brief 3- to 4-minute podcast, discuss a topic from the course that you really liked and would like to learn more about such as fake news, information design, the deep web, media bias, propaganda, etc. Discuss (1) your topic's value in today's world, (2) what you wish would be different about it, and (3) what you see as its future. You will write a script and record the podcast as if it were for a professional outlet.

### **Week 15: Final project draft due (10 points)**

You will submit a script of what you will say in your final project video, the two infographics you selected to analyze, and your completed infographic.

### **Week 15: Peer review of final project (15 points)**

You will review a classmate's materials for the final project and will receive feedback about your work as well.

**Week 16: Final project: Image analysis video and essay (100 points)**

This project has two parts. **Part 1:** Compare two infographics that relate to the same topic and analyze the information provided, the visual and structural design, and the audience of each infographic based on the principles discussed in class. Then, create a new infographic that improves on the original infographics. Explain why you made the changes you did and discuss how you used critical and creative thinking processes to create your infographic. Create a 4- to 5-minute video showing both original infographics as well as your own and discuss the prompts above. You must appear on the screen at least at the beginning and end of the video. **Part 2:** In a 400-word essay, analyze one other student's video, explain how you would change the information and design of the infographics the students created, and then, based on what you've seen other people's approaches to the redesign, explain what you would do differently and why if you did your infographic over.

**Ongoing:****Research credit participation (15 points)**

Students in this class are provided the option to participate in one or more research studies for 3 credit points which is equal to 15 points towards the total points in the class (3 percent of your grade). Detailed information can be found on page 3 of the syllabus and on the Research Participant Management System website found (<https://uksis.sona-systems.com>).

**Pre-/Post-Test (10 points)**

Each student is required to complete a pre-test at the beginning of the semester and a post-test at the end of the semester for departmental assessment purposes. These will be completed online and you will receive credit for these assignments; your answers will not affect your grade and your instructor will not be aware of your individual responses.

A link and instructions for the pre-test will be sent directly to your university-issued email address on Wednesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. You must complete the assignment by 5:00pm Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

A link and instructions for the post-test will be sent directly to your university-issued email address on Monday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. You must complete the assignment by 5:00pm on Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Attendance/Online activities (60 points)**

You will receive points for attendance/in-class participation.

**Points possible: 400**

## COURSE CALENDAR

### MODULE 1: BASICS OF INFORMATION LITERACY

Week	Focus	Required Readings	Assignments
Week 1: Aug. 23	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review syllabus</li> <li><a href="#">Importance of information literacy</a></li> <li><a href="#">Why the modern world is bad for our brains</a></li> </ul>	
Week 2: Aug. 28, 30	Critical Thinking in the 21st Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical thinking and WISE reading (Canvas)</li> <li><a href="#">Concept of critical thinking</a></li> <li><a href="#">Bloom's Taxonomy Revised</a></li> </ul>	<b>Personal Introduction</b>  <b>Due: Aug. 30</b>
Week 3: Sept. 4, 6	Creative Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Creative approaches to problem solving (1-19)</a></li> </ul>	
Week 4: Sept. 11, 13	Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Creative approaches to problem solving (19-24)</a></li> <li><a href="#">Problem solving in the workplace</a></li> <li><a href="#">TED Talk: Creative Problem-Solving</a></li> </ul>	

### MODULE 2: ANALYZING INFORMATION

Week	Focus	Required Readings	Assignments
Week 5 Sept. 18, 20	Finding Quality Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">How search engines work</a> Chapters 1, 4, and 5</li> <li><a href="#">Deep web sources and info</a></li> </ul>	<b>Case Studies</b>  <b>Due: Sept. 18</b>
Week 6 Sept. 25, 27	Evaluating Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Research bias</a></li> <li><a href="#">CRAAP Test</a></li> <li><a href="#">Deconstructing a research article</a></li> </ul>	
Week 7 Oct 2, 4	Reasoning and cognitive biases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Types of media bias</a></li> <li><a href="#">Persuasive reasoning</a></li> <li><a href="#">Ruling in UK vs. KK case</a></li> </ul>	
Week 8 Oct. 9, 11	Persuasion and Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">The new rules of persuasion</a></li> <li><a href="#">The story of propaganda</a></li> <li><a href="#">The role of persuasion in critical thinking</a></li> </ul>	<b>Deconstructing a journal article</b>  <b>Due: Oct. 9</b>

### MODULE 3: PRESENTING IDEAS

Week	Focus	Required Readings	Assignments
Week 9 Oct. 16, 18	Storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">The psychology of storytelling</a></li> <li><a href="#">The science behind storytelling</a></li> </ul>	<b>Mid-semester feedback</b> <b>Due. Oct. 16</b>
Week 10 Oct. 23, 25	Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>History of ideas case studies (Canvas)</li> </ul>	
Week 11 Oct. 30, Nov. 1	Information Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Infographics and data visualization</a></li> <li><a href="#">The science behind design</a></li> <li><a href="#">Visual design for everyone</a></li> </ul>	<b>Podcast</b> <b>Due. Oct. 30</b>

### MODULE 4: TRANSFORMING INFORMATION

Week	Focus	Required Readings	Assignments
Week 12 Nov. 6, 8	Information Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Four ethical issues of the information age</a></li> </ul>	
Week 13 Nov. 13, 15	Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Social networking privacy</a></li> </ul>	
Week 14 Nov. 20 (Online)	Copyright	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">U.S. copyright basics</a></li> <li>Copyright and social media (Canvas)</li> </ul>	
Week 15 Nov. 27, 29	Work week	No required readings	<b>Final Project Draft</b> <b>Due. Nov. 27</b>
Week 16 Dec. 4, 6	Presentations	No required readings	<b>Final Video</b> <b>Due. Dec. 4</b> <b>Final Essay</b> <b>Due. Dec. 7</b>
Dec. 11, 13	Finals Week	No required readings	Good luck on your finals!