

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

**IS/ICT 200-206: Information Literacy and Critical  
Thinking**  
**3 Credit Hours**  
**Spring 2018**

**Instructor**

Victoria Sherif, Ph.D.  
victoria.sherif@uky.edu  
(preferred method of  
communication)

**Office Hours**

- By appointment
- Please contact via email to schedule an appointment

**Class Information**

- Asynchronous via Canvas

**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, 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.

**Course Objectives**

Upon successful completion 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 to apply, analyze and evaluate sources then synthesize 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 Texts

This course requires reading across multiple sources. In addition to the required textbook listed below, students will be assigned additional reading materials including articles, cases, blogs, wikis, online resources, and/or videos.

Ruggiero, V. (2015). [Becoming a Critical Thinker](#) (8th ed.). Wadsworth Publishing

## 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 (For instructions on setting up the Google student account, [click here.](#)), and access to [Zoom](#) (which they should already have with their link blue user name and password).

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

## Commitment to Diversity

The University of Kentucky is committed to making diversity central to university policies, decisions, and practices to strengthen diversity within the Commonwealth. Efforts by a broad-based task force appointed by President Todd defined diversity as: embracing difference or promoting increased knowledge regarding race/ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, veteran affairs, and thought within an inclusive community.

This definition of diversity values an inclusive institutional culture, academic programs, and co-curricular activities that prepare students for active, global citizenship. This commitment further allows for an educational process that fosters growth among all members of the academic community by including a wide array of talents, and recognizing the human differences are organizational strengths (University-Wide Comprehensive Diversity Plan Task Force Report, April 2005, p. 6). Because the desired outcome is excellence in education, UK "does not practice discrimination on the basis of race/ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability" (p. 6).

The School of Information Science supports the university-wide definition of diversity and enhances it through an expanded interpretation. This broader conceptualization of diversity includes learning exceptionalities, native languages, socioeconomic status, and life experiences often created by residing in unique geographical regions such as Appalachia. Curricula within the UK School of Information Science, field experiences, and membership of its faculty and student body reflect a commitment to diversity.

## UK Policies

The adopted UK academic policies apply in this course and are articulated in the Students' Rights

and Responsibilities Handbook. Important policies and regulations applicable to this course include, but are not limited to, those concerning attendance, cheating and plagiarism, course withdrawal, incomplete grades, and acceptable standards of English. As the instructor, I retain absolute discretion concerning acceptance of required assignments after established due dates and reserve the right to lower grades on assignments submitted late.

**Participation.** Because this course is asynchronous, meaning that there will be no in-person meetings, you will be responsible for active and regular participation in course activities available in Canvas and completion of assignments. Students are expected to (a) read and consider applications of the information before class, (b) ask questions and/or consider applications in group discussions/activities, and (c) actively listen and engage in activities/discussions during class or through Canvas.

**Disabilities.** 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](mailto:jkarnes@email.uky.edu)

Go to [www.research.uky.edu/gs/bulletin/bullinfo.shtml](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/bulletin/bullinfo.shtml) for more information about UK policies.

### Academic Integrity

Per university policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic 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 forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information found at the following website: <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others properly credited.

Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities (available online <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html>) all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about the question plagiarism involving their own 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 else from another source without appropriate acknowledgement of the

fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend file, or something similar to this. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to 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 the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she 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 it. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic.

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

## STUDENT EVALUATION

### Quality of Student Work

Unless specified otherwise, all papers submitted to the instructor must be presented in the writing style and format described in the sixth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association<sup>1</sup>. All papers must be word-processed in Times New Roman 12-point font. Students are expected to follow rules of usage and principles of composition<sup>2</sup>. When the two resources listed in the footnote below present differing rules, students are to adhere to the academic writing guidelines in the APA Manual.

### Grading scale

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

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

### Student Responsibilities

Students assume major responsibility for their own learning. As members of a learning group, they are likewise responsible for helping their peers by consulting with them and engaging in collaborative problem solving before seeking assistance from the instructor.

### Submission of Assignments

All assignments must include student's name, instructor, the course, and the date. When submitting assignments, students must follow naming conventions on assignment instructions. 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.

You will be submitting all assignments through Canvas. Please do NOT email assignments. Assignment due dates are provided in the course calendar and on assignment links in Canvas. Assignments, activities, and discussions should be submitted before midnight of the respective due date.

- No credit will be awarded for contributions to discussions after the posted due date.
- Other assignments submitted within 48 hours after the posted due date will receive an automatic 20% point reduction. **No assignment submissions will be accepted more than 48 hours after the posted due date.**

### Group Synthesis

During the semester, students will be asked 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.

### Discussion

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

Students are expected to participate fully in discussions through Canvas. All class discussions should be respectful and intellectually stimulating. Should a problem arise, the instructor will take appropriate actions.

## COURSE POLICIES

### Excused Absences

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 *Students Rights and Responsibilities* or 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.

## 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, the instructor 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 gotten a response within 24 hours should send a follow-up e-mail or speak with the instructor.

## Office Hours

The instructor keeps flexible office hours and often times works off campus. The instructor will be available for meetings prior scheduled via e-mail.

## Reference Librarians

The reference librarians on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 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). Students can walk in or [make an appointment online](#). 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. Michael Healy, 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).

## Disability Resource Center

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, Mr. David Beach, Director at 859-257-2754 or [dtbeac1@uky.edu](mailto:dtbeac1@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. Visit <http://www.uky.edu/veterans> for more available resources.

### GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Policies concerning academic integrity, excused absences, and academic accommodations due to disability are available online at: <https://ci.uky.edu/sis/sites/default/files/policies.pdf>

### Assignment Description & Point Values

Assignment	Point Value	Addressed Course Outcome
Personal Introduction	10	
Case Studies Paper	50	1, 2, 3, 8
Journal Article Analysis Paper	75	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Midsemester Feedback	5	1, 2, 3, 6
Article Comparison Paper	40	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Podcast	50	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Peer Review of Field Topic Paper	10	1, 2, 3, 6
Field Topic Paper	100	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Field Topic Presentation	50	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8
Discussions	52	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

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

You will prepare a brief 3-minute introduction video and post it in Canvas. Your presentation should include name, major, year in school, and at least one fun fact about you. Also add a picture that best represents you. It can be YOU or some abstract representation of you. Tell us why you chose that picture. This will help your instructor and your fellow students get to know you.

#### Week 4: Case Studies Paper (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 a brief at least 150-word case study of each person.

#### Week 7: Journal Article Analysis Paper (75 points)

In a 500-word essay, critique a journal article in your field based on the principles described in your readings and in class. This includes but is not limited to the material from the CRAAP checklist, the clarity of the problem statement, the methodology, and the conclusions. In your opinion, is the article something you would use in a class paper, and why or why not?

**Week 8: Mid-semester Feedback (5 points)**

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

**Week 9: Article Comparison Paper (40 points)**

Find at least two written pieces of over 500 words or over 3-minute videos from sources on the same topic, and compare them using the principles outlined in your readings and in class. In an at least 500-word essay, compare the information the author shared, argue for why and how the pieces may be biased if at all, and describe how the sources tailored the information to appeal to particular audiences.

**Week 13: Podcast (50 points)**

Research an issue you would like to study, and in a 5-10 minute podcast, summarize the major sides of the issue as well as your opinion on the topic. Write the script for the podcast that will be peer-reviewed, cite at least three reputable sources (beyond course readings and materials), and upload the recording to Canvas.

**Week 15: Peer-Review of Field Topic Paper (10 points)**

You will review another student's paper based on the rubric provided by the instructor.

**Weeks 16-17: Field Topic Paper (100 points)**

You will research a controversial issue (preferably in your field), and, in at least a 1,000 word paper, summarize the major sides of the issue as well as your opinion on the topic.

**Weeks 16-17: Field Topic Paper Presentation (50 points)**

You will present the findings from your Field Topic Paper in a 5-minute digital presentation. The presentation should include infographics, audio, and video components.

**Discussions (52 points)**

Students participate in a discussion activity each week.

**Points possible: 442**

## Course Schedule

### Module 1: Basics of Information Literacy

Week	Focus	Assignment Due	Readings
Week 1	Introduction	Review Syllabus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruggiero pp. 1-20</li> <li><a href="#">Importance of Information Literacy</a></li> </ul>
Week 2	Critical Thinking in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century	Personal Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruggiero pp. 25-40</li> <li><a href="#">Concept of critical thinking</a></li> <li><a href="#">Why the modern world is bad for our brains</a></li> </ul>
Week 3	Creative Thinking and Problem Solving	Discussion 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Creative approaches to problem solving</a></li> <li><a href="#">Bloom's taxonomy revised</a></li> </ul>

### Module 2: Building Arguments

Week	Focus	Assignment Due	Readings
Week 4	Finding Quality Information	Case Studies Paper Discussion 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruggiero pp. 47-63</li> <li><a href="#">How search engines work:</a> Chapters 1, 4 &amp; 5</li> <li><a href="#">Deep web sources and info</a></li> </ul>
Week 5	Evaluating Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">CRAAP Test</a></li> <li><a href="#">Research bias</a></li> <li><a href="#">Deconstructing a research article</a></li> </ul>
Week 6	Reasoning	Discussion 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruggiero pp. 103-120</li> <li><a href="#">The thinker's guide to fallacies</a></li> <li><a href="#">Inductive and deductive reasoning</a></li> </ul>

**Module 3: Assessing Information**

Week	Focus	Assignment Due	Readings
Week 7	Bias	Journal Article Analysis Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruggiero pp. 168-176</li> <li><a href="#">American Historical Association: Propaganda</a></li> <li><a href="#">Types of media bias</a></li> </ul>
Week 8	Persuasion and Stereotypes	Mid-semester Feedback Discussion 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruggiero pp. 71-97, 131-137</li> <li><a href="#">The role of persuasion in critical thinking</a></li> <li><a href="#">The new rules of persuasion</a></li> <li><a href="#">Stereotype threat</a></li> </ul>
Week 9	Information Design	Article Comparison Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Infographics and visualization</a></li> <li><a href="#">Branding basics</a></li> <li><a href="#">Visualizing information for advocacy</a></li> </ul>

**Module 4: Transforming Information**

Week	Focus	Assignment Due	Readings
Week 10	Spring Break		
Week 11	Storytelling	Discussion 5	<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>
Week 12	Critical Writing & Speaking	Discussion 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruggiero pp.137-147</li> <li><a href="#">Critical essay</a></li> </ul>

**Module 5: Sharing Information**

Week	Focus	Assignment Due	Readings
Week 13	Information Ethics / Privacy	Podcast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Social networking privacy</a>, 1-4, 7-9</li> <li>• <a href="#">Four ethical issues of the information age</a></li> </ul>
Week 14	Copyright		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">U.S. Copyright basics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Copyright of social media sites</a></li> </ul>
Week 15	Workweek	Peer Review of Field Topic Paper Discussion 7	
Week 16	Workweek	Field Topic Paper	
Week 17	Workweek / Finals Week	Field Topic Presentation	