Information Literacy
UNL 205
Syllabus

Instructor:
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Office Hour: Tuesdays 3-4 p.m. [Exception: November 14: 4-5]

Course:
UNL 205: Information Literacy
Location: University Library, B48
Course Blog: http://liblogs.albany.edu/infolitgreg/

Ever-increasing access to information requires researchers to be able to critically assess and evaluate a variety of resources. Commensurate with these skills is the ability to utilize information responsibly and ethically. UNL 205, in recognition of the fact that each discipline has its own method of inquiry, prepares students to traverse the information terrain by introducing them to library infrastructure, information architecture, basic research methodologies, and the practical use of reference materials, print and online, for the enhancement of their potential to develop mature research skills.

General Education: Information Literacy

This course satisfies the Information Literacy General Education requirement, and provides students with the unique opportunity to learn and practice research skills under the guidance of library faculty. The course will fulfill the learning objectives for Information Literacy courses in the following ways.

1. You will learn how to effectively access and evaluate a wide variety of information sources. Evaluation skills are a critical component of this course because they enable you to choose the highest quality and most appropriate information for your needs. You will synthesize and use the information that you find throughout the course for your final projects.

2. Research tools and techniques vary from discipline to discipline. You will have an opportunity in this course to explore a variety of research techniques, while focusing on a particular field of interest.

3. Scholarly information production is organized and structured. Understanding this organization will increase your research abilities and options. Even information on the Web is found through tools which have their own structure. It is equally important to understand what is available through the Web and what is not, and how best to use these tools to find what is there.
4. There are a wide range of ethical and social issues connected with accessing and using information, from plagiarism to internet security to the digital divide. We will examine these concepts from different perspectives. Student participation in the discussion of these topics is highly encouraged, not only to increase your exposure to different viewpoints, but also to empower you in your own decision making processes.

Student Responsibilities:

Each student is expected to contribute to an environment conducive to the learning of all students. This contribution includes, but is not limited to:

- Respecting the opinion of others
- Being prepared to participate actively
- Taking responsibility for your learning and progress in the course
- Seeking help from the instructor as needed

Students are responsible for knowing and following the policies listed below. Students are also responsible for knowing and following the University policies outlined in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

Policies:

1. It is **always** the responsibility of the student to know when assignments are due. If you have any questions/problems related to the homework: ask questions in class; see me before or after class; call me; email me; stop in during office hours; arrange a meeting at a convenient time.

2. **Assignments are due on time**. A printer or computer access problem is not an acceptable reason for a late submission, so don't wait until an hour before class to start! Late assignments will not be accepted for credit.

3. Do not plagiarize. Cutting and pasting without acknowledging the source is plagiarism. You will fail the assignment that contains the plagiarism and in serious cases be reported to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

4. **Failure to complete the Annotated Bibliography constitutes a failure for the entire course because it is equivalent to a final exam.**

5. Cell phones must be turned off before class starts; the use of computers during class is restricted to instructional activities; food is not allowed. Water may be brought to class in a re-closeable container.

6. **Class attendance is required.** As already outlined, students are responsible for all class work, and work done in class (including quizzes) cannot be made up. The only excused absences are those accompanied by a letter from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

7. Students must attend the section for which they are registered.
Research Project:

Part of each week’s assignment contributes to a cumulative project, an annotated bibliography on a topic that you select and that the instructor approves. The parts of the bibliography are due as follows:

The **FINAL** annotated bibliography must contain **nine** citations and **nine** annotations:

1. Reference Book
2. Book
3. Website 1
4. Website 2
5. Popular Magazine article
6. Scholarly Journal article
7. One other article from any periodical
8. Government Document
9. Multimedia Source

TILT Web-Based Modules ([http://tilt.lib.utsystem.edu/](http://tilt.lib.utsystem.edu/)):

If you complete all **three** modules of TILT by midnight on the last day of class and e-mail your quiz results to me, I will give you extra-credit: two points toward your final grade. (Note: the two-point addition may raise your grade one letter, if it is borderline). In order for me to know you have completed all three modules, you must **register** as a TILT user, and go back in under this registration each time. You will have to e-mail your quiz results to me, or print them out and give them to me. Technical glitches occur with TILT, so do not leave this to the last minute if you plan to do it. I will not accept excuses for late submissions: all TILT quiz results must be in by midnight on the last day of class. **No other extra-credit assignments are available, don’t ask.**

Grading:

| Homework/Drafts of citations and annotations | 35% |
| Participation/In-class assignments/Quizzes | 30% |
| Class Presentation | 10% |
| Final Project | 25% |
**Class Presentation:**

Each student will make a 2-3 minute presentation on the last day of class. The presentation is to address the following:

1. The reason you selected your topic
2. A brief summary of what you found
3. Problems you ran into finding information
4. Interesting or unusual information/sources you came across

Effective creativity in your presentation will be rewarded by up to 2 points on your final grade. This might include, but is not limited to, showing key web sites or other visuals or using PowerPoint.

*You will also need to hand a brief, TYPED outline of your presentation on the last day of class.*

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**Blog assignments:**

There is a weblog for this class, which can be found at: [http://liblogs.albany.edu/infolitgreg/](http://liblogs.albany.edu/infolitgreg/)

Participation in the blog is part of your homework as follows:

- Each student must comment on at least 3 *different* posts by the end of the course: once during weeks 1-2, once during weeks 3-4, and once during weeks 5-6 of the course.
- Comments must actually pertain to the relevant post and contribute something substantial to the discussion. “I agree” or “I disagree” are not sufficient.
- Keep it polite, please. If I boot you for trying to start flamewars, etc. you will lose credit for any future blog assignments. Also, I read the comments before they go up, so your intended target will never see them anyway.

In addition to the blog assignments, the blog contains general information about the class including a copy of the syllabus and a list of links that you will need to use to complete the assignments.
Course Outline:

10/31|Class 1:  
Introduction/Syllabus/Policies  
Information Literacy and Information Technology  
Pre-test  
Intro to ULIB/Minerva  
Tour and call numbers - Where are the books?

Assignment: Due at the beginning of Class 2.

1. Choose a topic for your annotated bibliography and list three questions you would like to answer about the topic. **Post this as a comment to the blog under the post “Topics and questions”**.  
2. Using Minerva (library catalog), find one book on your topic and bring the book to class.

11/7|Class 2:  
Thesis Statements  
The Research Process  
Reference Sources  
Citing and annotating a book/reference book  
Information Ethics (privacy)

Assignment: Due at the beginning of Class 3.

1. Find one Reference Book and one Book on your topic and complete the Reference Book/Book Worksheet, including APA style citations and annotations.  
2. Write a paragraph or two describing a personal experience with one of the privacy issues we discussed in class, OR offering your point of view on one of the issues. **Post this to the blog as a comment under the topic “Privacy experiences” before the next class.**

11/14|Class 3:  
Types of Libraries  
Types of periodical articles  
Choosing and Using Databases  
Tour -Where are the periodicals?  
Citing and Annotating magazine and journal articles

Assignment: Due at the beginning of Class 4.

1. Find one Scholarly, one Popular and one other periodical article on your topic and complete the 3 Articles Worksheet.  
2. One of these articles must be from the original print copy of a journal or magazine that is owned by the University Libraries, as discussed in class.  
3. NONE of the three articles may be from a publication’s web site.
Assignment: Due at the beginning of Class 5.

1. Find two quality websites on your topic and complete the Website Worksheet.

2. Your second comment must be posted to the blog before Class 5.

Assignment: Due at the beginning of Class 6.

1. Find one Government Document and complete the Government Document worksheet, including citations and annotations.

2. Gather all of the sources you've found so far, and complete the Primary/Secondary worksheet.

Assignment: Due at the beginning of Class 7.

1. Find one multimedia source. Cite and annotate the source and include it as part of your final annotated bibliography.

2. Prepare written outline for class presentation.

3. Hand in final annotated bibliography project. This must be typed up and printed out according to the guidelines distributed in class.

4. Your final comment must be posted to the blog before Class 7.

The End
Pre-post test
Class presentations
Review