

Information Overload

CORE 105-063

Spring 2020

M/TH 8:10-9:25am

3 credits

Instructor

Laura Ewing, PhD

We are bombarded by information constantly, some of which we seek and some of which we seek to avoid. In order to live full and healthy lives, we need and search for information about our work, classes, health, social lives, finances, hobbies, relationships, and much more. There is a great deal of information available, in many formats, of varying quality and usefulness. It is easy to become overwhelmed and frustrated by this flood of information or to settle for the first resource discovered regardless of quality or suitability. In order to navigate the information overload in our everyday lives, it is necessary to understand the concept of information, including the ways that we need, seek, evaluate, create, communicate, protect and organize it.

There is no one way to examine the information we constantly face. My role as your instructor in this class is to guide you to critically examine how you use information: both as a receiver and a communicator. This course will cover topics that include information creation and publishing, information literacy, fake news, seeking and evaluating information, privacy and trust, information access and ethics, scam and fraud, and personal information management. As a class we will consider how we evaluate and use information for problem-solving; consider the choices made by those creating and disseminating information to the public; determine ways to best manage our personal and professional information needs; and examine how issues of access, ethics, and equity impact our use of information.

Complex Problems Learning Outcomes

Your Complex Problems seminar uses scholarly methods of inquiry—like diverse perspectives, critical reading, communication, reflection, and integrative learning—to study multi-faceted real-world problems or enduring questions. The content of your seminar is designed as a vehicle for learning and practicing those methods of inquiry, which are the course's learning outcomes. These outcomes will help you to enact your curiosity and cultivate intellectual flexibility in preparation for future work at the university and beyond.



Diverse Perspectives

- A. Complexity
- B. Multiple Perspectives
- C. Awareness
- D. Civility



Communication

- A. Audience
- B. Sources
- C. Organization



Critical Reading

- A. Summary
- B. Response
- C. Conversation



Reflection

- A. Feedback
- B. Metacognition



Integrative Learning

- A. Connect

Assignment Submission

All work will be formatted following APA guidelines.

Discussion posts, the final ethics analysis essay, infographic, and final reflection will be submitted on Blackboard. Blackboard submissions are due by 11:59pm on the date posted on the calendar. Late submissions will be accepted up to one week past the due date with a 10% grade deduction. No late work will be accepted beyond that date. Late work will not receive feedback.

You are responsible for ensuring that your work is submitted successfully. Double check BlackBoard to be sure an assignment is viewable for the instructor. BlackBoard accepts .doc, .docx, and .pdf files, save your work accordingly. Work that is not uploaded correctly (e.g., document didn't fully upload, upload failed, document is the wrong file format, etc.) is considered late or missing. Work will not be accepted via email. Backup and save everything.

In class exercises and assignments missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.



Co-Curricular Activities

Learning does not solely occur in the classroom. Living in a city like Washington, D.C. provides the opportunity to learn from a wide variety of learning experiences. As such, we will have three activities outside of class this semester. Students are required to attend all three events (see attendance policy). These events may occur both on and off campus. Specific details regarding locations and times of co-curricular activities will be covered the first week of class.

Selected Course Readings, Podcasts, and Videos:

- Watch: Pariser, [Beware online filter bubble](#)
- Watch: Brown, [How to choose your news](#)
- Read: Georgetown “[Evaluating Internet Sources](#)”
- Watch: UWF, [Evaluating Information from the Web](#)
- Read: NPR, [Students have 'dismaying' inability to tell fake news from real](#)
- Read: New York Times, [Whales in the Minnesota River?](#)
- Watch: Lewinsky, [The price of shame](#)
- Read: Mortleman, [Virtuous Circles: Skilling up for an Ethical Web](#)
- Read: Nichols, [Big Data is so Large, It's Raising Privacy and Ethical Issues](#)
- Read: Huggins, [2018's Top 5 Social Media Ethics Issues](#)
- Watch: Shirky, [How Social Media Can Make History](#)
- Watch: [Seven Deadly Sins](#)
- Read: Waisberg, [Tell a meaningful story with data](#) (be sure to watch the embedded Aaker video and read the Stikeleather article linked in it)
- Read: [How to properly tell a story with data](#)

- Watch: McCandless, [The beauty of data visualization](#)
- Read: Souppouris, [Clickbait, fake news and the power of feeling](#)
- Listen: Radiolab, [Breaking News](#)
- Read: NPR, [We tracked down a fake-news creator in the suburbs](#)
- Read: BuzzFeed News, [This analysis shows how viral fake election news stories outperformed real news on facebook](#)
- Read: Koerner, [Online Dating Made this Woman a Pawn in a Global Crime Plot](#)
- Read: FTC, [FTC Charges Operator of Crowdfunding Scheme](#), [Scams and Older Consumers](#), [Donate with Honor](#)