



Information Overload: Promoting Media Literacy in Students

Number of Credits: 2*

Course Instructors: Miriam Woods

Course Description:

Over the last decade, it has become increasingly true that teaching media literacy is an essential part of K-12 education. From conducting research, to socializing, to understanding what's going on in the world around us, media and information literacy is critical to being a responsible and informed global citizen, and an engaged student.

Digital learning, concerns around inaccurate and biased media sources, and political affiliations of intentionally non-partisan organizations such as the Post Office and the CDC, provide us a sense of urgency when it comes to helping our students dissect media they're consuming in order to inform their own critical thinking and conclusions.

This course provides educators with the tools they need to effectively analyze media, as well as in-class activities to help students understand the goals and innerworkings of various types of media, and to encourage critical thought and analysis.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between forms of media, and explain what different media are used for.
- Communicate the benefits of teaching media and information literacy to K-12 students.
- Identify best practices for gauging reliable media sources and ensuring credible resources for classroom instruction.
- Analyze strategies for helping students identify and articulate the difference between fact and opinion.
- Develop an implementation plan to take new learnings back to the classroom.

Resources: No texts are required to purchase in order to complete this course

- The mission of Iowa Safe Schools is to provide safe, supportive and nurturing learning environments for all students. Staff of the Iowa Safe Schools are experts in the fields of bullying prevention and intervention, developing positive school climate, and advocating for underrepresented and marginalized populations. GSAs are shown to be a best practice for increasing awareness of discriminatory school policies, reducing bullying, reducing deaths by suicide, and ensuring students feel safe and support in their schools and communities.
- Agarwal-Rangnath, R. *Social Studies, Literacy, and Social Justice in the Common Core Classroom: A Guide for Teachers*. 2013.

This book provides a framework (grades 3-8) to help educators literacy and social students for social studies. This text frames the lessons with the Language Arts Common Core Standards while also making it applicable for the daily realities of the classroom. Each chapter explains how teachers can restructure, reshape, and work with mandated curriculum materials to teach from a critical perspective. The book also discusses how to meet Common Core Standards by teaching language arts and social studies as complementary subjects.

- Baker, Frank W. *Media Literacy in the K-12 Classroom*. International Society for Technology in Education. 2016.

Today's average youth spends over 10 hours a day consuming media. Aided by technology, young people can instantly share and engage with media messages to find answers, get directions, shop or connect with friends. But access alone doesn't lead to critical thinking. Media are texts, designed to be read, analyzed, deconstructed and reconstructed. Understanding how to interpret advertising messages, check for bias or avoid stereotyping are among the skills students need to become knowledgeable consumers and producers of media. This book helps educators understand the importance of teaching media literacy and gives them the tools needed to bring this form of literacy into the classroom. – Publisher Synopsis.

- Foucault, Michael. *Knowledge/Power*. Vintage Press. 1980.

Michael Foucault's musings on knowledge and power really build the foundation for the direction of this course. In *Knowledge/Power*, Foucault asserts that power is established through accepted forms of knowledge. In other words, the two are always tied – to have knowledge is to have power, and power is always a function of knowledge. For Foucault, "every exercise of power depends on a scaffold of knowledge that supports it. And claims to knowledge advance the interests and power of certain groups while marginalizing others. In practice, this often legitimizes the mistreatment of these others in the name of correcting and helping them," (Explainer: The Ideas of Foucault). This course uses these ideas about knowledge/power to build a foundation on which our ideas, conversations, and commitments to truly expanding student knowledge and by extension, their power, stands.

***Course Requirements:** To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments and respond to specific questions outlined in each assignment. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a disqualification in the course and a failing grade.

Other Course Information:

Getting Started

- After registering for the course, you will be sent a confirmation email with your course dates. A few days before your course is scheduled to begin, you will receive an invitation from Canvas Instructure to join your course. Please follow the prompts in that email to log in and access your course.
- Access each assignment through the course home page or the "Modules" page in your course. All assignments will be submitted through the Canvas platform.
- Please save a backup copy of all course assignments and completed work.

Participation

- You are not required to be present (i.e. online) specific days or times. You will work at your own pace. The course is structured in 6 Weekly Units, however all assignments will not be due until the final day of the course.
- All responses will be posted online. Large documents, files, photographs or PowerPoint presentations may be attached as part of your response by using the "Submit A File" option.
- For all discussions you will be asked to respond to your classmates' posts. If you are the first poster for an assignment, or if there are not yet enough posts for you to respond to the minimum number of posts, you are responsible for returning to lessons you've already completed to ensure you are participating in class discussions. Not doing so may result in losing participation points. In the event that you are in a course with three or fewer students, your instructor will reach out with further instruction on meeting participation requirements.
- You may work collaboratively and submit *similar* responses on all assignments except for quizzes which must be done individually. **Under no circumstances may you copy/paste the same response as a classmate**, even if you

collaborate on the assignment. Copying and pasting your classmates' or colleagues' responses will be treated as plagiarism and may be grounds for failing the course. Please contact your course instructor with any questions.

INTASC Standards that are addressed in this course:

- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills.
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
- 9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
- 10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

Check the Iowa Teaching Standards that are addressed in this course:

X	1. Enhance Student Achievement		5. Monitoring Student Learning
	2. Content Knowledge	X	6. Classroom Management
X	3. Planning and Preparation	X	7. Professional Growth
X	4. Instructional Strategies	X	8. Professional Responsibilities

Assignment Checklist

Topic/Activity	In Class	Out of Class
Getting to Know the Class; Additional Readings: Take the time to get to know the class layout, read over the Help section, and review any other materials present in the class to get started. Take your time!		3 hrs
<u>Week 1 - Getting Started</u>		
Introductions: Take some time to introduce yourself and share what you hope to gain from the course.	.5 hr	1 hr
Discussion: What is media and information literacy? - In this lesson, participants will develop an understanding of what media and information literacy is, and how it has changed over the last decade.	1 hr	2 hrs
Quiz: Reading Literacy vs. Media Literacy - In this lesson, participants will analyze the difference between media literacy and traditional reading literacy. Participants will confirm their understanding with a short quiz.	1.5 hr	3 hrs
Discussion: Why is media literacy important? - In this lesson, participants will reflect on the importance of ensuring that their students develop fluent media literacy, and the benefits of being able to navigate the world of media..	1.5 hr	3 hrs
<u>Week 2 – The Breakdown</u>		

Discussion: Fact vs. Opinion - Participants will explore the differences between statements of fact and statements of opinion. Participants will engage with potential lesson plans to teach this concept at various grade levels, and finally, participants will engage in a discussion about their findings, and the complexities of fact/opinion statements.	1.5 hr	4 hrs
Quiz: How do we know what we know? – In this lesson, participants will analyze the difference between knowledge and belief in order to best understand how we develop knowledge and belief systems. Participants will then confirm their understanding through a short quiz.	1 hr	4 hrs
Discussion: Knowledge and Power – In this lesson, participants will use their understanding of knowledge and belief to analyze various goals of news and media sources. Participants will share their finding in a discussion post.	1 hr	4 hrs
<u>Week 3 - Putting it to Work</u>		
Discussion: Evaluating Media Bias – In this lesson, participants will analyze biases in various media sources by evaluating what point of view is, and how it influences the ways in which news is reported. Participants will share insight into how biased and POV-influenced media can be truthful, insightful, and factual, <i>and</i> how it can be manipulative and false. Participants will also unpack the difference between opinion pieces and media bias.	1 hr	3 hrs
Quiz: Finding Reliable Media Sources - Participants will learn and then utilize various metrics and systems meant to help us determine the reliability of media sources. Participants will confirm their understanding in a short quiz.	1 hr	2 hrs
Discussion: Fighting Fake News in the Classroom – In this lesson, participants will analyze, research, and share about best practices in leveraging factual and credible sources of information in the classroom. Participants will share their findings in a discussion post.	2 hrs	4 hrs
<u>Week 4 – Media’s Goals</u>		
Discussion: What is Media Trying to Sell? – Much like teaching our students to write persuasive pieces, this lesson will ask participants to identify the product or idea that different media is trying to sell. Participants will choose their own media to evaluate and share their findings in a discussion post.	2 hrs	3 hrs
Discussion: What Methods does Media Use to Sell to Consumers? – In this lesson, participants will focus on how to help their students understand media sales strategies that can include taking advantage of pre-existing insecurities. Participants will explore ways to teach this concept at various grade levels in a discussion post.	2 hrs	3 hrs
Discussion: Understanding Media Algorithms and Your Digital Footprint – In a lesson to benefit educators and their students alike, participants will dive into understanding how the internet tracks our data, and then uses that data to market different products and news sources to us.	2 hrs	4 hrs
<u>Week 5 – In The Classroom</u>		
Discussion: Media Literacy and Critical Thinking Skills – in this lesson participants will explore lessons they can implement in learning spaces to help students utilize critical thinking and their media literacy skills.	1.5 hrs	2 hrs
Discussion: Interdisciplinary Lessons – In this lesson, participants will forge their own path by choosing grade levels and subject matters to incorporate media literacy lessons into. Participants will create an outline of a lesson plan to share in a discussion post.	1.5 hrs	2 hrs
Discussion: Identifying Themes, Key Points, and Messaging – Participants will use their choice of media (TV show, movie, book, etc.) to identify key themes and messages that the content creators were trying to convey. Participants will discuss how they could incorporate media literacy skill-building exercises into lessons about media they’re already teaching.	2 hrs	3 hrs
<u>Week 6 – Learning by Doing</u>		

Discussion: Branding and Logos – In this lesson, participants will explore the psychological impacts of brand recognition, and create a lesson plan around logos and branding for students at their chosen grade level.	2 hrs	2 hrs
Discussion: Differentiating Media – In the final lesson of the course, participants will analyze differences between media sources in order to discuss particular benefits of each, and how consumers can utilize a wide array of media to gain well-rounded understandings of the world around us.	2 hrs	2hrs
Final Assignment - Participants will design and implementation plan that they will take back to their classrooms.	3 hrs	6 hrs
Total Class Time	30 Hours	60 Hours

Coursework: Participants can earn up to 86 points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
14 Discussion Posts (5 Points Each)	70
3 Quizzes (5 Points Each)	15
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	50
Participation (2 Points per Discussion)	28
Total	163

Grading Scale – Graduate Credit

100-90% (163 – 146 points)	A
89-80% (145 – 130 points)	B
79-70% (129– 114 points)	C
69-60% (113 – 97 points)	D
59%-Below (<97 points)	F

Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit

100-80% (163-130 points)	P
79%-Below (<130 points)	NP

Student Requirements Students are required to:

- Participate in **ALL** discussion forums and quizzes
- Complete a final implementation plan

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please see the instructor to discuss your accommodation needs.

Statement of Plagiarism: Academic dishonesty results in failure of this course. Give credit where credit is due. Use the MLA or Chicago Publication Manuals found at Purdue OWL to cite references when needed. Not crediting ideas or words of others is unacceptable scholarship as is submitting work that was done for a previous course or that is not your own origin in design or completion. Submit original assignments. Do not submit work for this course that you have done for other courses.

Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities

14 Discussions (70 points possible) Discussion Forums are asynchronous ways to engage in class discussions. They require you to submit an answer to a question and respond to the posts of other peers. Because they are an integral part of sharing strategies, analyzing research, and sharing ideas, discussion forums in this course comprise a significant percentage of your final grade. It's highly recommended that you read and respond to more than the required two peer postings because greater participation will facilitate a greater depth of understanding. Additionally, it's important to make posts in a timely manner to benefit from peer responses.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Makes connections to the other content and real-life that are supported by reference(s) and example(s)	2
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	1
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	1
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	1
Total Points Possible		5

Final Assignment (50 points possible)

The final assignment is a critical part of this course. Participants must complete a two-page final assignment. The paper is meant to be a reflection as well as a chance to state what you will use going forward. The rubric below will be used to grade the final assignment, but additional details will be provided within the course.

Grading Rubric for Implementation Plan		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Highlights any new knowledge gained as a result of course.	10
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	10
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	6
	Discusses Overall Implications	4
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	4
Mechanics	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized, No or few grammar and spelling errors	4
Implementation	Clearly states ideas to use in the future	4

	States resources to be used	4
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	4
Total Points Possible		50