

JOUR 302 INFOMANIA - INFORMATION MANAGEMENT - Fall 2017

Class meeting: Mon & Wed 9:30-10:45 AM

Stauffer-Flint 204

1. Instructor: Hong T. Vu, Ph.D.
Office: 207D – Stauffer-Flint Hall
Office hours: 11:00 AM– Noon, Mons & Weds
Email: hongvu@ku.edu
Tel: 785-864-2598

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This is a course about finding, evaluating, and concisely presenting information. These three elements will serve as the bedrock of anything you do as a journalist or a strategic communication professional.

Credibility is the organizing principle in this course. Your credibility is essential to your success in this major and in your future career. But you are only as credible as your sources. This is why you will spend the semester evaluating the sources you find. The goal is to instill in you a healthy skepticism about the credibility of the information you come across, so that you only choose the most credible sources for the articles, blog posts, reports, or campaigns you produce.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand the forms and purposes of information.
- Ask questions that help you find and interpret information, and explain it clearly.
- Find information using libraries, research reports, organizations, databases, regulations, public records, experts and non-experts.
- Critically evaluate information sources, research data and your own work for credibility, accuracy, completeness and diversity.
- Develop focused plans for research projects.
- Use a variety of digital and non-digital tools to research and present information.

This class satisfies Goal 1 Outcome 1 of the KU Core: “Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to analyze and evaluate assumptions, claims, evidence, arguments, and forms of expression; select and apply appropriate interpretive tools.”

PREMISE

Think of yourself as a consultant to a news or strategic communications organization (news station, marketing agency, etc.). Your final assignment in this course will be to present your expertise about a topic to this organization, recommending information and sources the organization should pursue when researching your topic, and

identifying information and sources it should avoid. Assignments during the semester are designed to teach you to find information about your topic, evaluate its credibility, and effectively present it. Your first task is to decide the topic on which you will become an expert. You need to pick a topic in the first two weeks of class and stick with it for the remainder of the semester. The topic needs to be one about which you are curious, and one that will hold your attention for almost four months. The first 10 pages of the textbook may help you identify an appropriate topic.

BOOK

Don MacLeod, *How to find out anything: From extreme Google searches to scouring government documents, a guide to uncovering anything about everyone and everything* (New York: Prentice Hall, 2012).

Michael Arthur Caulfield, *Web literacy for student fact-checkers*. Open book. Retrieve from here: <https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com>

BLACKBOARD

All assignments and readings will be listed on Blackboard. We will also use Blackboard for grades, instructional videos and quizzes.

GRADING

Total points available:	~ 850 - 900 points
4 reading posts:	40 points (10 points each)
Expert posts:	250 points (50 points each)
News posts:	60 points: (15 points each)
In-class assignments:	TBC
Class participation & professionalism:	100 points
Survey participation:	20 points (10 points each)
<u>Semester project</u>	
Topic assumption/research idea:	30 points
Structure paper:	50 points
Final Presentation:	50 points
Final paper:	150 points

ATTENDANCE & PROFESSIONALISM

We meet only twice a week and you are strongly encouraged to attend every class and participate in class discussions. I will randomly take attendance a few times during the semester. How many times you are present (excluding excused absences) will determine your attendance/participation grade. Also, I may choose to award participation points for your significant contribution to in-class discussions or faithful attendance. You start with 20 points, each time there is an unexcused absence or unprofessional occurrence, 10 points will be deducted. If you have 3 unexcused absences you will be dropped from the course.

BYOD = BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE DAYS

You will notice on Blackboard that some days are designated “BYOD.” This means that on those days, you will want to bring a laptop or a tablet to class because we will be doing work with digital or online sources. Please let me know if you need to borrow a laptop from the Resource Center for those days.

Whenever you have a digital device with you in class (this includes phones), please use it for class work only. I promise to do the same.

EXPERT POSTS

There are five of these assignments throughout the semester. Due dates for these assignments are listed at the end of this syllabus. In-depth instructions for what to write and how to submit these assignments are on Blackboard.

NEWS POSTS

Several times during the semester you will draw on the news aggregators you set up at the beginning of the semester to summarize news relating to your topic. Your summaries will be brief and insightful, linking readers to the original news stories or other pertinent webpages.

FINAL PRESENTATION

At the end of the semester, you will compile all of the information you collect about your topic into a compelling paper and presentation. For the presentation, you will post it in the Discussion Board and make a short in-class presentation during the final exam timeslot. You have to be here to get credit for the presentation. Please schedule your end-of-semester travel so that it won't conflict with the final presentation.

FINAL PAPER

The final assignment is a complete research paper on the topic you select at the beginning of the semester. Notice that many of the posts and activities are designed to help you do some of the work for this final project. Detailed instruction will be posted on blackboard.

PARTICIPATION

You are expected to actively participate in class discussion. The 100 points awarded to your participation need to be earned. I will evaluate you on how much you participate in class discussions. Simply attending class will not earn you points.

MAKE-UP WORK, LATE WORK, EXTRA CREDIT, GRADE CONCERNS

Late work will not be accepted but early work is welcome. **If there is an extra credit opportunity, it will be announced and available to every student in the class.**

Although grades are not negotiable, I will give every consideration to any concerns you have about an assignment grade, as long as the concern is identified promptly. If you have questions about or dispute a particular grade, this needs to be taken care of

within a week of receiving that grade. The only grades that will be discussed at the end of the semester are for assignments you complete at the end of the semester.

Pluses and minuses denote variations in quality within a letter grade, and generally:

- The grade of A will be reported for achievement of outstanding quality.
- The grade of B will be reported for achievement of high quality.
- The grade of C will be reported for achievement of acceptable quality.
- The grade of D will be reported for achievement that is minimally passing, at less than acceptable quality.
- The grade of F will be reported for achievement that is poor and not passing.

Letter Grade	Percentage Points
A+	100 – 97
A	96.99 – 93
A-	92.99 – 90
B+	89.99 – 87
B	86.99 – 83
B-	82.99 – 80
C+	79.99 – 77
C	76.99 – 73
C-	72.99 – 70
D+	69.99 – 67
D	66.99 – 63
D-	62.99 – 60
F	Below 60

COMMUNICATION

I encourage you to communicate with me about the course face-to-face during office hours, or through e-mail. If you choose the later, I will do my best to respond to email messages within 24-36 hours Monday – Friday. Please be mindful of email etiquette. Compose a brief yet informative subject line. Use a greeting, such as “Hello, Dr. Vu,” at the beginning of your message. Write the body of your message using full sentences, proper capitalization and punctuation. Explain your question or concern as completely as possible. Sign your message using your full (first and last) name.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

In this class, and in all journalism classes, honesty and integrity are critical. Any work you do must be original and reflect your own ideas, thoughts, and research. In a work setting, if you choose to violate professional standards, you will be fired. In this class,

if you choose to violate the standards for academic integrity, you will fail the course, and you may be expelled from the School of Journalism.

Here is the School's official policy statement:

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence.

In this course, the penalty for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification is a failing grade for the semester. Additional penalties can include expulsion from the School of Journalism. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of this course.

The KU University Senate defines plagiarism as “knowingly presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.” The University defines fabrication and falsification as “unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.”

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The KU office of Disability Resources coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. The office is located in 22 Strong Hall; the phone number is 864-2620 (V/TTY).

Information about services can be found at <http://disability.ku.edu>. Please also contact me privately with regard to your needs in this course.

CONCEALED CARRY

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns **are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with state and federal laws and KU weapons policy**. Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier’s custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

KEY DATES

This is a list of the major assignments and when they are due. Complete information about each assignment is posted on Blackboard. Additional assignments not listed here (e.g., Discussion Board posts, News Posts) are listed on Blackboard.

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus. Any changes will be announced in class and/or on our Blackboard site and become official.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Aug. 21

Get to know one another, discuss course

Week 2: Aug. 28

The information society.

Week 3: Sep. 4 (Labor day no class on Monday)

Research strategies.

Week 4: Sep. 11

Google search strategies

Week 5: Sep. 18

Searching and aggregating, becoming an advanced Googler. Public data.

Week 6: Sep. 25

Nonprofit organizations

Week 7: Oct. 2

Nonprofit organizations (continued)

Week 8: Oct. 9

Public data

Week 9: Oct. 16 (Fall break – no class Monday)

Social media

Week 10: Oct. 23

Scholarly and survey research

Week 11: Oct. 30

Scholarly and survey research (continued)

Week 12: Nov. 6

For-profit organizations.

Week 13: Nov. 13

For-continued. Images searching

Week 14: Nov. 20 (Thanksgiving – no class on Wednesday)

Interviewing

Week 15: Nov. 27

Interviewing (continued)

Week 16: Dec. 4

Ethics.

Week 17: Dec. 11

Presentation (Final exam week)