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Fall 9-1-2017

GBLD 194.05: News Literacy - Truth vs. Truthiness

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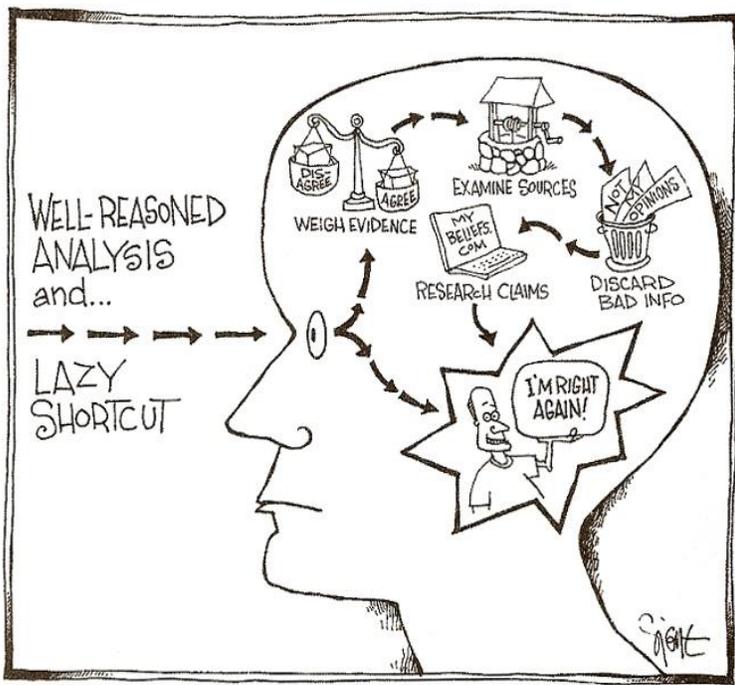
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News Literacy: Truth vs. Truthiness GBLD 194.05 Syllabus – FA 2016

(Subject to change)

Instructor: Ray Fanning, Associate Professor, School of Journalism

Office: Don Anderson Hall 405

Office hours: 9:00-11:00 a.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, or by appointment.

E-mail: ray.fanning@umontana.edu.

Class Meets:

Mon. and Wed. from 9:30- 10:50 a.m., Davidson Honors College 120

Readings:

Textbook: "Mightier Than the Sword," Rodger Streitmatter, 4th edition

Articles posted to Moodle

Websites:

- [The Committee to Protect Journalists](#)
- [Pew Center for Research](#)
- [Poynter](#)

Scope:

This course is designed to teach students how to become more discriminating news consumers at a time when the digital revolution is spawning an unprecedented flood of information and disinformation each day. It will help you recognize the differences between news and propaganda, news and opinion, bias and fairness, assertion and verification and evidence and inference in news articles and broadcast reports. Students will learn to apply critical-thinking skills to these goals so they can act on reliable information. Students will also learn how the journalistic process works, how professional journalists make decisions and how journalism has helped shape the course of history.

Learning Outcomes:

Successful GBLD 194.5 students will:

- Analyze the key elements of a news account, including weight of evidence, credibility of sources and context to judge its reliability.
- Distinguish between news and opinion and analyze the logic/rhetoric employed in opinion journalism.
- Identify and distinguish between news media bias and audience bias.
- Blend personal scholarship and course materials to write forcefully about news media standards and practices, as well as First Amendment issues and issues of fairness and bias.
- Connect current news accounts to global concepts of community and citizenship, and understand how journalism has helped shape public policy.
- Assess the impact of digital information technologies and place them in their historical context.

Grading:

You will have various assignments. Some may be selections of readings to help you prepare for an upcoming class or to supplement material from a lecture. Others may involve writing or evaluating a news report.

All written assignments must be typed and double-spaced. Remember to include your name and discussion section number at the top of the first page and to staple all pages together.

You will be graded in part on how well you articulate an understanding of the course material and how you express your own ideas.

These assignments will represent 45 percent of your final grade. Individual assignments will be graded according to the following standards:

• Excellent	Surpasses the requirements, well written, shows insights	90-100
• Good	Meets requirements, written clearly and logically	80-89
• Satisfactory	Meets requirements, is understandable	70-79
• Poor	Does not meet requirements, confusing and sloppy	60-70
• Nothing submitted	No credit	0

You won't earn more points by writing a longer assignment. Comply with the directions for word length, write succinctly, and stay relevant.

Grading Breakdown:

- Class Assignments 45%
- Midterm 20%
- Final Exam 20%
- Participation/Attendance 15%

Assignments will not be accepted more than a week after the deadline.

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance and active participation are essential to succeeding in this course. You should consistently demonstrate that you have knowledge of the news; that you have completed the homework and assigned readings; and that you are willing to engage in discussion and debate with your classmates. Participation in class discussions is essential.

Moodle:

Your grades will be available on Moodle along with some readings and assignments. You will upload most homework to Moodle.

Academic Honesty:

I expect honesty in presenting your own work for this course. Academic misconduct at The University of Montana is subject to an academic penalty ranging from failing the assignment to expulsion from the university. Students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Plagiarism:

As defined by “The University of Montana Student Conduct Code” plagiarism is: “Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own.” This is strictly prohibited in this class and any case of plagiarism in this course will be subject to the penalties outlined in the student code of conduct.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

This course is accessible to and usable by otherwise qualified students with disabilities. If you have any accessibility problems, please let me know. Disability Services for Students will assist the instructor and student in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the [Disability Services](#) website.

Week	Date	Class	Assignments	Readings
1	8/29	Why news literacy matters From Gutenberg to Zuckerberg		
	8/31			Mightier than the Sword- 1 Sowing the Seeds of Revolution
2	9/5	<u>Labor Day- No Class</u>		
	9/7	The Power of Information		Mightier than the Sword- 2 Turning America Against the Sins of Slavery
3	9/12	The U.S News Media: Too much freedom, or not enough?		
	9/14		News Blackout assignment due Snowden debate	Read the articles on one side of the Snowden debate

Week	Date	Class	Assignments	Readings
			talking points due	
4	9/19	But is it True? Part 1		
	9/21			Rolling Stone "Rape on Campus" article- posted on Moodle
5	9/26			
	9/28	But is it True? Part 2 Verification		Mightier than the Sword- 3 Slowing the Momentum for Women's Rights
6	10/3	What Makes News Different?		
	10/5	Know your Neighborhood	YouTube assignment due	Mightier than the Sword- 5 Pushing America Toward an International War
7	10/10			
	10/12	Fairness and Balance		Mightier than the Sword- 6 Achieving Reform by Muckraking
8	10/17			
	10/19	Bias	Project Implicit assignment due	Mightier than the Sword- 10 Standing Tall Against Joseph McCarthy
9	10/24	Who Decides What's Newsworthy?		
	10/26	You are the editor		Mightier than the Sword- 11 Pushing Civil Rights onto the National Agenda
10	10/31	The Medium is the Message Part 1		
	11/2	Midterm Review		Mightier than the Sword- 12 Bringing the Vietnam War in the American Living Room
11	11/7	The Medium is the Message Part 2		

Week	Date	Class	Assignments	Readings
	11/9	Midterm exam		
12	11/14	Evaluating Sources		
	11/16			Mightier than the Sword-13 Exposing Criminal Activity in Richard Nixon's White House
13	11/21	Deconstructing the News		
	11/23	<u>Thanksgiving Break- No Class</u>		
14	11/28	Deconstructing New Media		
	11/30		Walter Reed assignment due	Mightier than the Sword-14 Failing the American Public with 9/11 coverage
15	12/5	What's Next?		
	12/7			Mightier than the Sword-16 Supporting Gay and Lesbian Rights
16	12/12	Course Review		
17	12/19	Final- Monday, December 19, 8:00-10:00 a.m. <u>Do not make travel plans to leave before the final. The test will not be available early.</u>		