

**The Structure of Information**

**04:189:152:03**

**Online**

**Fall 2020, Asynchronous**

*Course Delivery:*Online, Asynchronous

*Instructor*: Diana Floegel

*Office:* Student’s platform of choice (Zoom, WebEx, Discord, Skype)

*Office Hours*: Thursday from 3-4pm (Zoom Room) or by appointment

*Zoom Room Link:*   <https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/94259280346>

**Catalog Description**

Through the lens of different media such as newspaper articles, blogs, Wikipedia entries, Twitter posts, and news programs, students examine and judge the quality of information presented, analyze the economic and cultural factors that affect the availability and reliability of electronic information, and compare and contrast with other sources. After this exploration of information searching and evaluation, the class will address how information is organized and attributed.

**Introduction to the Course**

Ours is a world *of* information. It is involved in our most basic bodily needs and perceptual experiences, motivating much of our behavior. Few concepts are more essential to making sense of human engagement with the social and material worlds. Examining “information” and its structures means scrutinizing the means by which it is produced and engaged with, and how the two have become inextricably linked in networked contexts. It will require a careful evaluation of the technical, social, economic and political processes that structure the ways in which information is created and disseminated in digital environments, what types of information are created, who owns and provides the means for its creation, and what are the social consequences of these arrangements. Our concern will be to develop the beginnings of a sharp, rigorous and evolving understanding of the various informational environments we navigate in everyday life. After this exploration of information searching and evaluation, the class will address how information is organized and attributed. Finally, we will learn how to make sense of the deluge of information we are faced with every day and how to become more effective creators, searchers and users of information.

**Pre- and Co-requisites**

None

**Course Delivery Format and Technology**

This course in the Digital Communication, Information, and Media (DCIM) minor is delivered in online**.** It will be delivered asynchronously through the Canvas learning management system by Instructure at [http://canvas.rutgers.edu](http://canvas.rutgers.edu/) . Course materials – readings, instructor’s lectures, media, activities, and assignments – can be accessed through Canvas starting on the first day of the semester. You will need your Rutgers NetIDusername and password to log into the Canvas site.

Students having login or other Canvas technical problems should contact the **Rutgers Online Learning Help Desk** by phone at **877-361-1134** (available 24/7) or by email at [help@Canvas.rutgers.edu](mailto:help@Canvas.rutgers.edu) if you need technical assistance. In addition, SC&I IT Services offers help with a variety of technology-related issues. They are located in the SC&I Building in Room 120 (first floor), tel: 848.932.5555 or email [help@comminfo.rutgers.edu](mailto:help@comminfo.rutgers.edu) .

In order to complete the course, it’s recommended that students have continuous access to a high-speed Internet connection and computer hardwarethat can support a broadband Internet connection. I understand that we are in the throes of a global crisis that affects many of us and our families or support systems in myriad ways, including economically. If you do not have access to a reliable internet connection or computer hardware, and you are comfortable doing so, I encourage you to reach out to me so that we can discuss how we can meet your needs this semester. Additionally, or alternatively, Rutgers continues to offer assistance to students, including the Dean of Students Emergency Fund. You can find information about these programs at <http://studentaffairs.rutgers.edu/support-students/covid19-relief/>.

**Major Texts/Readings**

There is one required text for this course:

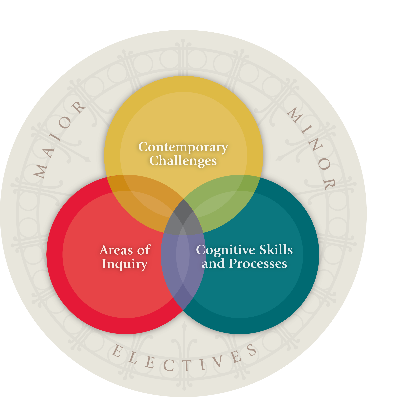
* Jackson, B., & Jamieson, K. H. (2007). *UnSpun: Finding facts in a world of disinformation.* New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks.  ISBN: 9781400065660

The book is available via the RU Bookstore, bn.com, and at other online sites. If you are unable to secure a copy of the book for any reason, please contact me.

**Other Readings, Videos, etc.**

There are a number of other readings as well, including, but not limited to book chapters, articles from newspapers and magazines, blogs, websites etc. All readings other than the primary texts will be available via the course website on Canvas.

A week-by-week listing of the readings, assignments and exercises follows below. You will be advised of any changes to the readings in Canvas and via email.



**RU Core Learning Goals met by this course:**

(Only for students who entered Rutgers University in 2018-2019 or earlier): ITR-z: Students will be able to analyze and critically assess information from traditional and emergent technologies.

**WCd: Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insight.**

**Learning Objectives**

**By the end of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Explain the differences among varying theoretical concepts and philosophical views of information creation, distribution, organization, search behaviors, and impact.
2. Analyze and describe the function of social institutions for creation, distribution, and management of information and their impact on the use of information in society.
3. Evaluate the effect of information, information technologies, information systems and media on cultures and societies.
4. Interpret information and its delivery within an economic framework.
5. Identify and explain key information policy issues and institutions of the past and present.
6. Understand their role in producing information, both actively and passively, and the ethical and economic dimensions of the production, consumption, and third-party use of their information.
7. Compare, contrast, and critique various media coverage of the same event such as in newspapers, television, and on the Internet.
8. Discuss the ethical uses of information through an analysis of decision models.
9. Search effectively in a variety of information environments.

**Methods of Assessment**

Detailed information about each of these assignments will be provided advance of the assignment dates, and will be available in the course documents section.

**Assessment of student achievement in this class will be calculated as follows:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment:** | **Learning Objectives Met:** | **Percentage of Final Grade:** |
| **Information Analysis Project (RU Core)**   * Information Analysis – Reference List of sources (5%) * Information Analysis Paper (25% of total) | RU Core Assignment (ITR): LO7, LO8  RU Core Assignment (WCd): LO2, LO3, LO7, LO9 | 30% |
| **Online Participation**   * Online Discussions & Readings (40% of total) | LO1-9 | 40% |
| **Infographic Final Project**   * Proposal (10% of total) * Digital Infographic (20% of total) | LO5, LO6, LO9 | 30% |
|  | TOTAL | 100% |

**Grading Scale**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **%** | **Description** |
| A | 90-100 | Excellent work: Student exhibits superior quality in mastery of content and method of the course which surpasses that which is required, demonstrates ability to make connections among various aspects of the course, is thoroughly prepared, demonstrates originality and accuracy, and consistently displays initiative and outstanding quality in fulfilling course requirements |
| B+ | 87-89.99 | Good to very good work: Student exhibits better-than- average understanding of the content and method of course, demonstrates ability to make connections among many aspects of the course, is generally well prepared and displays above-average levels of originality, accuracy, initiative and quality in fulfilling course requirements |
| B | 80-86.99 |
| C+ | 77-79.99 | Passing work: Student exhibits sufficient understanding of content and method of the course, recognizes connections among some aspects of the course, fulfills all requirements of the course but displays levels of originality, accuracy, initiative and quality in fulfilling course requirements that could be improved upon in large measure |
| C | 70-76.99 |
| D | 60-69.99 | Just passable work: Student exhibits limited understanding of the content and method of the course or some major portion thereof and of connections among aspects of the course, is not generally well prepared, displays limited initiative, originality and accuracy, and work fulfills only the bare minimum course requirements |
| F | Under 60 | Failing work: Student exhibits an insufficient understanding of course content and methods to pass the course, lacks sufficient preparation, originality, accuracy, and initiative, and work does not fulfill course requirements |

**Writing Style**

Please use formal language and American Psychological Association (APA) style for written assignments. APA examples can be found at many websites, such as: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Please pay attention to grammar and spelling and proofread your work carefully. You will not lose points for your APA style, but grammar and readability will factor into your grades. **Please use page numbers and include your name, course assignment and course name and section on all submitted papers.**

**Assignments**

**Participation** (**40%** of the final grade; *meets all learning objectives*)

**Online Discussions**   
Students will participate in online discussions. You will be divided into two groups—A and B. Each group will have its own threaded Canvas online discussion. You will participate in a discussion **every other week**, as the syllabus dictates. The first week of class is an exception, as Groups A and B will both participate in the “introductory” discussion thread. You will make 3 postings during each discussion: 1 *initial* posting, due by **Wednesday**, 11p.m. ET + 2 replies to other students’ postings, due by **Friday**, 11p.m. ET.

Discussions will ask you to perform a variety of exercises—these may be reading responses, though exercises, debates, etc. Your posts can include takeaways or lessons learned from the readings, criticisms for the readings, or related examples that can advance our discussions, useful questions that push our thoughts further, and replies to other classmates’ posts. Your discussion should not be a simple agreement to the readings or others’ opinions, but should be based on sound arguments, drawing on evidence from readings and personal experiences. Online discussion assignments will be graded based on the Discussion Rubric (see Appendix). Please review additional Online Discussion guidelines in the “Course Policies” section. **See Appendix 1 for a rubric.**

**Information Analysis Project (30% of the overall grade)**

There are two assignments in the Information Analysis Project:

Reference List of Sources – 5% of the project

Information Analysis Paper – 95% of the project

The Information Analysis Paper is to be 5-7 pages (not including references, etc.), 12 pt. Times New Roman font, double-spaced. Use APA style for citations and formatting.

This paper will evaluate the coverage of a major news topic in terms of its quality of information, especially its information content and information sources and will need to relate that evaluation to concepts from the course readings (at least the required readings, if not also the recommended ones), the class lectures and the discussions.

Completing the Assignment:

1. Pick a topic (**not** entertainment, arts or sports-related) that has been covered extensively on the home page of a major news outlet, such as *The New York Times* or *The Wall Street Journal* in the last two years or so. While the front page of these publications can serve as a guide, please be sure to pick a topic that is being covered extensively and in-depth across a wide variety of media platforms. You can find some suggestions on the list below.

2. Then collect articles and clips of coverage on the same topic from each of the following (*at least one* news item from **EACH** of the following):

* The New York Times or  The Wall Street Journal
* ABC News, NBC News, or CBS News
* PBS or NPR
* MSNBC or CNN
* Fox News
* USA Today or The Huffington Post
* Vox or Mother Jones
* Satirical “news” show (e.g. The Daily Show, The Nightly Show, The Onion, Jon Oliver, etc.) plus
* Discussion / conversation of this issue on Facebook, Twitter or another similar social media platform.

3. Analyze the news items and write a concise 5-7 page report that addresses the following questions.

* What are their sources of information?
* What information is being highlighted? What information is not being highlighted?
* What facet of the story is being held up as most salient?
* What are the facts of the matter as they are presented by the news items?
* Other than the basic facts of the matter, what else is being written about/shown?
* What “narrative” is being built up across media? (is there a single narrative or multiple competing narratives?) Is any of the above going against the narrative?
* How much of the coverage is apparent fact? And how much is opinion? How are these being presented?
* Is the same factual information being presented differently in the different news stories you are evaluating?
* How much of an effort is being made to get at “the heart of the matter”/ “actual reality”?
* What is the depth of coverage on this topic? What gaps, if any, exist in the coverage of this topic?
* **Establish links between your analysis and material that you have encountered in this class (as described above).**

**Remember to cite your sources!**

* Always support your analysis with specific examples from the sources you collect (include specific timecode for long clips to help the reader).

Suggestions:

* Collect and analyze all of your sources before you begin writing.
* Use a citation manager such as Zotero or RefWorks to collect your sources (this will make creating your citations and list of references much easier).
* Use a spreadsheet to organize information from your sources.
* Feel free to include any charts you might use in your analysis as an appendix.

**DEADLINES:**

1. List of Your Reference List of Sources Due as APA-formatted List Due:  **Due Friday, 10/9 at 11p.m. ET on Canvas**
2. Papers Due:  **Due** **Friday, 10/30 at 11p.m. ET on Canvas**

Evaluation Parameters:

The grading will be on a total of 100 points **(See Appendix 2 for a rubric)**

**Final Project: Information Infographic (30%)**

The final project for this class will involve creating an infographic that presents a visually captivating, easy to understand, and data-driven story based on your Information Analysis Paper topic. The project has three components:

Completing the Assignment:

1. **Infographic Proposal** (1-2 pages) **Due** **Friday, 11/13 at 11p.m. ET on Canvas**
2. **Infographic Due Friday, 12/4 at 11p.m. ET on Canvas**

**1. The Infographic Proposal is to include the following key information:**

* Re-state your Information Analysis Topic and include a brief introduction explaining its: 1) focus (ONE main idea or question that will be answered and will be the focus of the infographic), 2) purpose of your infographic (informing, increasing awareness, educating, or convincing the target audience to take action), 3) a social issue or industry/sector that is related or most affected by this topic.
  + *If you would like to change your topic, please speak to your instructor*

* Identify the target audience(s) for the infographic (see other side of this sheet)
* Identify 3 new statistical data and information sources to be used in the proposal and the infographic not used in your Information Analysis Paper (see other side of this sheet)
* Length: 1-2 pages, max.

**2. Create Infographic:**

* Each student will create an infographic based on the Information Analysis Paper topic in which he/she visually organizes, presents, and explains data that has been gathered by a formal research organization in a way that will be clear and meaningful to a selected target audience. It should be informative and tell a story from beginning to end. Its message should relate to a theme (or themes) of the course and should incorporate course concepts and vocabulary. Its design, in terms of text, images/illustrations, use of theme, background, color, fonts, icons, shapes, borders, etc. should attract the target audience as it supports the message.
* Students will use [Piktochart](http://piktochart.com/), a free web-based tool for creating infographics, to create the project. (NOTE: This must be an original infographic created specifically for this class focused on a topic of interest related to the course The Structure of Information; students may not re-use or adapt one that they may be creating for another class)
* Post a link to infographic webpage (or downloading and attaching a .jpg image of the infographic) on the Infographic discussion board.
* Students should retain the link to the infographic for posting on the professional website that DCIM students will be creating in their Capstone course. This website will be greatly enriched by the inclusion of top-quality projects created in their DCIM courses and will showcase students’ digital understandings and skills to future employers. So keep in mind that the project will have a lengthier “lifespan” than most college papers or projects and will have real, visible, practical future usefulness. Students should keep links to all their DCIM projects on a google doc or some other digital space where they can easily retrieve them when they take the DCIM Capstone course.

***Possible Topics***

* 1. Privacy
     1. Online tracking and profiling
     2. Government Surveillance
     3. Stalking and harassment
  2. Information Economics
     1. Changing Marketplace for Goods and Services
     2. Prestige Economy
  3. Intellectual Property Rights
     1. Copyright, Patents, Trademarks
     2. Enforcement
     3. Creative Commons
  4. Net Neutrality
  5. Data Leaks
  6. Encryption
  7. Hacking and cyber attacks
  8. Cyber bullying
  9. Access to Information (e.g., Digital Divide)
  10. Artificial Intelligence/Robots
  11. Drones
  12. Data and the Body
  13. Nanotechnologies
  14. Internet of Things
  15. Driverless Cars
  16. Augmented Reality (e.g. Google Glass)
  17. Virtual Reality (e.g. Google Cardboard, Oculus Rift)
  18. Other (propose it to your instructor)

**Sources for Background Information**

1. Markula Center for Applied Ethics, <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/articles/articles.cfm?fam=TECH>
2. Scientific American, <http://www.scientificamerican.com/>
3. MIT Technology Reviews, <http://www.technologyreview.com/>
4. The Guardian, Technology section: <http://www.theguardian.com/us/technology>
5. Tech Republic, <http://www.techrepublic.com/>
6. Reilly Center, <http://reillytop10.com/>
7. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-computer/>
8. Ars Technica, Law & Disorder section: <http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/>
9. Business Insider, Tech section: <http://www.businessinsider.com/sai>
10. Cnet, Security section: <http://www.cnet.com/topics/security/>
11. Computer World: <http://www.computerworld.com/>
12. Explaining the Future: <http://www.explainingthefuture.com/technologies.html>
13. Huffington Post, Tech section: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tech/>
14. Mashable, Tech section: <http://mashable.com/tech/?utm_cid=mash-prod-nav-ch>
15. New York Times, Tech section: <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/technology/index.html>
16. Wall Street Journal, Tech section: <http://www.wsj.com/news/technology>
17. Wired, Security section: <http://www.wired.com/category/security/>

**Possible Audiences**

1. Marital status (single, married, divorced, widowed)
2. Age (teens/youth, young adult, mature adult, seniors)
3. Gender (men, women, transgender)
4. Minorities
5. Persons with disabilities, illnesses, impairments
6. LGBTQ community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning)
7. Parents and families
8. Children
9. Educators or other service-oriented professions
10. Non-native speakers
11. Veterans
12. People living in geographic areas (urban, suburban, rural; northeast, mid-west, south, west coast)
13. Income/economic status (poor, middle class, affluent)
14. Education achieved (high school, college, advanced degrees)
15. Professionals
16. Other target audience/group
17. Government officials/Politicians

**Possible Data Sources**

1. Eagleton Polls: http://eagleton.libraries.rutgers.edu/search\_subject.php
2. Pew Research: <http://www.pewinternet.org/topics/>
3. Pew Research - Internet Project - Publications: <http://www.pewinternet.org/category/publications/reports/>
4. World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/topic/infrastructure>
5. World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/topic/science-and-technology>
6. Huffington Post, Technology Stats: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/news/technology-stats//>

Internet World Stats: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/>

A General Note About All Deadlines

We are in the midst of a global crisis and it is my priority that you all take care of yourselves as much as possible. You will not lose points for turning in late assignments in this class. If you know in advance that you will not meet a deadline, please send me an email. You do not have to provide a reason. If you miss a deadline without notifying me, and you are able to do so, please send me an email and we will work out a new due date.

**Course Schedule**

Due to the course’s online format, each week starts on a Monday and ends on a Friday, with exceptions (e.g., the first week of class, a recognized holiday week) noted in the syllabus. Discussions are always due on Wednesday (initial posts) and Friday (two comments) at 11p.m. ET. The syllabus notes which weeks are for Group A and which are for Group B. Due dates for other major assignments are also noted below and in assignment descriptions.

The assignments as described below are tentative, and subject to change. Any changes will be posted in the Canvas course shell in the appropriate week and emailed to students.

All readings other than *UnSpun* will be available on the course website, or via links to websites.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week and Dates** | | **Unit Topic** | **Activities & Assignments Due** |
| Week 1  **9/1/20-9/4/20** | | Introduction to Course | **Required Readings:**  **Online Discussion** #1. Introduce Yourself due by WEDNESDAY @ 11p.m. ET; 2+ replies by FRIDAY @ 11p.m. ET. |
| Week 2  **9/7-9/11** | | Studying Digital Information, Media, and Culture | **Required Readings:**   * Davis and Shaw, (pp. 1-15), Ch. 1 & excerpt from Ch. 2 * Sherry Turkle, 2011, “The Tethered Self” * Leonardi, Digital materiality? How do artifacts without matter, matter? * Capurro & Hjorland, The Concept of Information, ONLY READ Sections: Introduction, **pages 343-345**; Information as an Interdisciplinary Concept, **pages 356-360**; The Concept of Information in the Humanities and Social Sciences, pages **367-377**. * [Reading against the grain with Barthes, Chomsky, Hall, McLuhan, Said](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Finteractive.aljazeera.com%2Faje%2F2017%2Fthe-listening-post-media-theorised%2Findex.html&data=02%7C01%7Cdw344%40comminfo.rutgers.edu%7Cfc9beab4a6d14d113baf08d6f0141052%7Cb92d2b234d35447093ff69aca6632ffe%7C1%7C0%7C636960366319269080&sdata=xrGzebUeGENx0sCgLoPbUjnRLpaZnsDSIyOlhAqNCR4%3D&reserved=0) (watch 4 short videos)   **Listen to/watch the Lecture**:  Studying Digital Information, Media, and Culture  **Online Discussion: GROUP A**  Analyzing the socio-materiality or structure of a social media app (Remember: 1st post by Wednesday at 11p.m. ET, and 2 comments by Friday at 11p.m. ET)  **Recommended Readings:**   * James Gleick, Ch. 1 “Drums That Talk,” in *The Information* (pp. 13-27). * Andrew Blum (2012), Prologue, in *Tubes: A journey to the center of the Internet* (pp. 1-10). |
| Week 3  **9/14-9/18** | | Creating and Sharing Information | **Required Readings for this week:**   * “When to Cite Sources” <https://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/pages/cite/> * Leadbeater (Chapter 1): “You Are What You Share” * Hara, N., & Doney, J. (2015). Social construction of knowledge in Wikipedia. First Sunday, 20(6). <http://ojphi.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5869/4572> * Zook, M., Graham, M., Shelton, T., & Gorman, S. (2010). Volunteered geographic information and crowdsourcing disaster relief: a case study of the Haitian earthquake. World Medical & Health Policy, 2(2), 7-33. * Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel (2010) Ch. 1, *Blur: How to know what’s true in the age of information overload*.   **Listen to/watch the Lecture:**  Creating and sharing information  **Online Discussion: GROUP B**  Creating and sharing information (Remember: 1st post by Wednesday at 11p.m. ET, and 2 comments by Friday at 11p.m. ET) |
| Week 4  **9/21-9/25** | Organizing Information and Information Institutions | | **Required Readings for this week:**   * Jorge Luis Borges, “Library of Babel” <http://maskofreason.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/the-library-of-babel-by-jorge-luis-borges.pdf> * Jan Zastrow, Personal Information Management 101: <http://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/mar14/Zastrow--PIM-101--Personal-Information-Management.shtml> * Bowker and Star (1999), “Introduction” in Sorting Things Out <http://www.ics.uci.edu/~gbowker/classification/> * Robert Darnton (2008) “The research library in the digital age” Harvard University Library White Papers, <http://hul.harvard.edu/publications/Darnton_ResearchLibraryDigitalAge.pdf>   **Listen to/watch the Lecture:**  Organizing information  **Online Discussion: GROUP A**  How do you classify things?  **ON YOUR RADAR: Information Analysis Assignment Reference List is due in 2 weeks (week 6)** |
| Week 5  **9/28-10/2** | Searching for Information | | **Required Readings for this week (continued on next page):**   * Davis and Shaw (2011), Chapter 3: Information needs, seeking, and use. In *Introduction to Information Science and Technology* (pp. 27-42) * Hock (2008) Elements of Advanced Search. *Online*. * Introna, Lucas D., and Helen Nissenbaum. 2000. “Shaping the Web: Why the Politics of Search Engines Matters.” The Information Society 16(3): 169-185. http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/papers/ShapingTheWeb.pdf * E. Van Couvering (2008) The history of the search engine: Navigational media and the traffic commodity.   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Searching for information  **Online Discussion: GROUP B**  Searching for information– real world connection  **ON YOU RADAR: Information Analysis Assignment Reference List is due next week** |
| Week 6  **10/5-10/9** | Evaluating Information | | **Required Readings for this week:**   * Kitzinger: Framing and Frame Analysis * Tewell: Toward a Resistant Reading of Information: Google, Resistant Spectatorship, and Critical Information Literacy * Read 2 of the following 3 chapters from UnSpun * UnSpun (Chapter 2): “A Bridesmaid’s Bad Breath: Warning Signs of Trickery;” AND/OR * UnSpun (Chapter 3): "Tall Coffees and Assault Weapons" AND/OR * UnSpun (Chapter 8): “Was Clarence Darrow a Creationist: How to Be Sure”   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Evaluating Information  **Online Discussion: GROUP A**  Evaluating Information: Analyze a news story for its framing  **DUE: Reference List for Information Analysis Paper** submit to Canvas Assignments by Friday, 10/9 at 11p.m. ET  **ON YOUR RADAR: Work on Information Analysis Paper** |
| Week 7  **10/12-10/16** | Misinformation and Fake News | | **Required Readings for this week:**   * Lee, T. B. *Facebook’s Fake News Problem Explained* <http://www.vox.com/new-money/2016/11/16/13637310/facebook-fake-news-explained> * Karlova, N. A., & Fisher, K. E. (2013). “Plz RT”: A social diffusion model of misinformation and disinformation for understanding human information behaviour. Inform Res, 18(1), 1-17. * Read 2 sources from your Information Analysis Paper Reference List   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Misinformation and Fake News  **Online Discussion: GROUP B**  Misinformation & Fake News  **ON YOUR RADAR: Work on Information Analysis Paper** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 8  **10/19-10/23** | Information Ethics and Privacy | **Required Readings for this week:**   * Davis and Shaw, Chapter 13, [excerpt] (pp. 213-221) * James Grimmelmann, “The Privacy Virus” <http://james.grimmelmann.net/files/articles/privacy-virus.pdf> * [Barbaro, M. (2019, June 4). The daily: How a secret US cyberweapon backfired. *The New York Times*](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2019%2F06%2F04%2Fpodcasts%2Fthe-daily%2Fnsa-hacking-tool-baltimore.html%3Faction%3Dclick%26module%3Daudio-series-bar%26region%3Dheader%26pgtype%3DArticle&data=02%7C01%7Cdw344%40comminfo.rutgers.edu%7Cfc9beab4a6d14d113baf08d6f0141052%7Cb92d2b234d35447093ff69aca6632ffe%7C1%7C0%7C636960366319289065&sdata=Cu2Tq9wKBK4ev8P9ABNG5yb%2FXaDuKL3dEnN5c8qoS7I%3D&reserved=0). (Podcast) * Ryan Tate, “Why Google Just Bought a Company that Snoops on Your Chats” Wired, <http://www.wired.com/2014/08/google-is-excited-about-monitoring-chats/34> * “Worried Internet Users Flock to Encryption App After Donald Trump Election” <http://variety.com/2016/digital/news/trump-election-encrypted-messaging-signal-app-download-1201916353/> * “Police Requests Amazon Echo Data To Help Solve A Murder: Alexa, Who Did It?”: <http://www.techtimes.com/articles/190382/20161227/police-requests-amazon-echo-data-to-help-solve-a-murder-alexa-who-did-it.htm>   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Information Ethics and Privacy  **Online Discussion: GROUP A**  Information Ethics and Privacy – speculative exercise  **ON YOUR RADAR: Information Analysis Paper due next week** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 9  **10/26-10/30** | Interpreting Visual Information | **Required Readings for this week:**   * Tufte, Visual Explanations [excerpt #1] * Charles Seife, Ch. 6 “All Hat, No Cattle,” in *Virtual Unreality* (pp. 99-113) * Gillian Rose (2012), Ch. 1, “Researching with Visual Materials” in *Visual methodologies, 3rd Edition.* * Jason Lankow, Josh Ritchie and Ross Crooks (2012) *Infographics: The Power of Visual Storytelling* Chapters 1, 8, 9   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Interpreting Visual Information  **NO ONLINE DISCUSSION—MAJOR PAPER IS DUE**  **DUE: Information Analysis Paper;** submit to Canvas Assignments by Friday, 10/30 at 11p.m. ET |
| Week 10  **11/2-11/6** | Information Policy | **Required Reading for this week:**   * Haimson et al. (2019). Tumblr was a trans technology: The meaning, importance, history, and future of trans technologies. *Feminist Media Studies* * Yuan, L. (2015, Dec. 16). Will China’s censorship spread? *Wall Street Journal*. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/will-chinas-censorship-spread-1450292176> * Facebook’s new service ignites net neutrality battle in India. (2015, Dec. 31). *Los Angeles Times.* <http://www.sfgate.com/business/article/Facebook-s-new-service-ignites-net-neutrality-6731033.php>   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Information Policy  **Online Discussion: GROUP B**  Information policy – reading responses  **ON YOUR RADAR: Infographic Proposal due next week** |
| Week 11  **11/9-11/13** | Social Control and Censorship | **Required Reading for this week:**   * De Nardis (2012), “Hidden Levers of Internet Control” * Mayer-Schönberger (2009) “Of power and time – Consequences of the demise of forgetting” in Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age * Robert Muggah and Nathan B. Thompson (2016, Jan. 12) Brazil’s Digital Backlash. New York Times * Richard A. Oppel, Jr. “Activists Wield Search Data…” New York Times, 2014 November 11.   **Media: Listen to Darkode Podcast** (see Canvas course)  **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Social control and censorship  **NO ONLINE DISCUSSION—Infographic Proposal is due**  **DUE: Infographic Project Proposal** with topic information sources/data & target audience**;** submit to Canvas Assignments by Friday, 11/13 @ 11p.m. ET |
| Week 12  **11/16-11/20** | Economics of Information Part I | **Required Reading for this week:**   * Lester & Koehler (2007), FoIS Ch.9 Economics of Information * Boyle (2008). The Public Domain (excerpts) * Naomi Klein and Shoshana Zuboff on the Rise of Surveillance Capitalism. (2019, March 1). (Video, watch from 20m20s) * Naughton, J. (2019, January 20). “The goal is to automate us”: Welcome to the age of surveillance capitalism. *The Observer*.   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Economics of Information Part 1  **Online Discussion: GROUP A AND GROUP B**  Economics of information – real world application  **ON YOUR RADAR: Infographic Due 12/4** |
| **NO** | **CLASS** | **DURING THANKSGIVING WEEK** |
| Week 13  **11/30-12/4** | Economics of Information Part II | **Required Readings for this week:**   * Anderson (2012) “The Long Tail”. The Social Media Reader * Ross, In Search of the Lost Paycheck * Andrejevic, Social Network Exploitation * [Babaro, M. (2019, May 10). A founder of facebook says it’s time to break it up. *The New York Times*](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2019%2F05%2F10%2Fpodcasts%2Fthe-daily%2Ffacebook-zuckerberg-hughes.html&data=02%7C01%7Cdw344%40comminfo.rutgers.edu%7Cfc9beab4a6d14d113baf08d6f0141052%7Cb92d2b234d35447093ff69aca6632ffe%7C1%7C0%7C636960366319289065&sdata=JDQr9ufWmCdtXIoRcJ9nfCDOOIkNomABwAOWPTEDUX0%3D&reserved=0)*.*   **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Economics of Information Part II  **NO ONLINE DISCUSSION: INFOGRAPHIC IS DUE**  **DUE: Infographic Project** submit toCanvas Assignments (URL link or submit .jpg or png file) due by Friday, 12/4, at 11p.m. ET |
| Week 14  **12/7-12/11** | Looking Ahead: Threats and Promises of a Digital Future | **ONLINE:**  **Required Readings for this week:**   * [Andreessen, “Why Software Is Eating the World.”](https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/27522/files/5300310/download?wrap=1) * Patel, J. “Software Is Still Eating the World.” [https://techcrunch.com/2016/06/07/software-is-eating-the-world-5-years-later/ (Links to an external site.)](https://techcrunch.com/2016/06/07/software-is-eating-the-world-5-years-later/) * Larry Rosen and Keith Hampton, Is technology making people less sociable? Wall Street Journal, May 10, 2015[http://www.wsj.com/articles/is-technology-making-people-less-sociable-1431093491 (Links to an external site.)](http://www.wsj.com/articles/is-technology-making-people-less-sociable-1431093491)   Top of Form  Bottom of Form  **Listen to/watch lecture:**  Looking ahead  **Online Discussion: GROUP A AND GROUP B**  Final course reflections and farewells |

**Course Policies – Important! Please Read Carefully:**

1. Importance of This Syllabus: By your continued enrollment in this class, it is understood that you are agreeing to all of the policies and procedures set forth in this syllabus. Failure to obtain or read this syllabus does not exempt the student from its policies and procedures. Please let me know immediately if you have any questions or concerns about anything contained within the syllabus. If you cannot abide by these policies and procedures, I expect you to drop the class.
2. Check your Rutgers email, the Canvas course site, and any social media platforms we use for the online portion of the class at least every other day during an academic semester. Messages will be sent to you from professors, administrators, SC&I and Rutgers frequently during the semester. You are responsible for seeing and responding to them as necessary.
3. All readings must be completed on time as indicated on the syllabus. Online Discussions may be given at any time to reinforce this. Frequent reviewing of readings and notes is strongly advised.
4. If you expect to not participate in our online course for a period of time, especially several weeks, please use the University absence reporting website – <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> -- to indicate the dates and reason for your absence, which may include

* Illness requiring medical attention;
* Curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the School;
* Personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid (for example, death or serious illness of relative or family member);
* Inclement weather causing dangerous travel conditions (note that the university formally advises via the Rutgers Web site if classes are canceled due to weather, but you must make your own decision if you are a commuter, with your safety in mind).
* Recognized religious holidays.

Regarding absences for religious observance: “It is University policy (University Regulation on Attendance, Book 2, 2.47B, formerly 60.14f) to excuse without penalty students who are absent from class because of religious observance, and to allow the make-up of work missed because of such absence. Examinations and special required out-of-class activities shall ordinarily not be scheduled on those days when religiously observant students refrain from participating in secular activities. Absences for reasons of religious obligation shall not be counted for purposes of reporting. Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule.”

If you must miss classes for longer than one week, you should contact Dean Ewell in the SC&I Student Services office, Room 214 at SC&I, or another dean of students at Rutgers to help verify your circumstances.

1. All assignments must be typed unless I indicate otherwise or we make other arrangements. Keep an additional back-up copy or email it to yourself for your own protection in case something gets lost or accidentally deleted.
2. For help with academic advisement within SC&I or with regard to the Digital Communication, Information and Media minor, contact the SC&I Student Services Office in Room 214 of the SC&I Building or call 848-932-7500, ext. 2. To learn more about the DCIM minor, see <http://bit.ly/1r0YuxH>; with any questions, email [dcim@comminfo.rutgers.edu](mailto:dcim@comminfo.rutgers.edu).
3. Academic integrity is to be maintained at all times. Academic integrity means, among other things:

* Develop and write all of your own assignments.
* Show in detail where the materials you use in your papers come from. Create citations whether you are paraphrasing authors or quoting them directly. Be sure always to show source and page number within the assignment and include a bibliography in the back.
* Do not look over at the exams of others or use electronic equipment such as cell phones or MP3 players during exams.
* Do not fabricate information or citations in your work.
* Do not facilitate academic dishonesty for another student by allowing your own work to be submitted by others.
* Do not submit work that you have previously submitted for another class- yes, it IS considered plagiarism if you plagiarize yourself!

If you violate this code, you risk a failing grade in the course and even possible suspension from the university

Rutgers’ academic integrity policy is at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. Multimedia presentations about academic integrity may be found at <http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/intro.html> and <http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_understand_plagiarism_1/0,6622,427064-,00.html>

If you are unsure about any issue related to plagiarism or scholastic dishonesty, please discuss it with me.

1. Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. Students with documented disabilities who need accommodations in this class must do so through the Rutgers Disabilities Services Office. See <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/> for details. You can also speak with a SC&I adviser about your disability by visiting the Office of Student Services in the SC&I Building, Room 214 or calling them at 848-932-7500 (dial 2 as your menu choice).
2. Appeals on the grade on any individual assignment item should be submitted in writing via email within two weeks of the return of the assignment. Appeals received after this time will not be accepted. For additional information, please see: “Grade Appeals: An Overview for Students” and policy at:  
   <http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/images/facultystaffresources/gradeappeals-adviceforstudents-2.pdf>
3. Information on Student Wellness Services:

**Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services** (CAPS) (848) 932-7884   
17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, <http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/>

* CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students’ efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

**Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance** (VPVA) (848) 932-1181   
3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 <http://vpva.rutgers.edu>

* The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

**Disability Services** (848) 445-6800 <https://ods.rutgers.edu>

Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854

* The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.

**Scarlet Listeners** (732) 247-5555 <http://www.scarletlisteners.com>

* Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

**“Just In Case” Web** App <http://codu.co/cee05e>

* Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Rutgers University Libraries offer numerous resources to assist students. Librarians can help guide you through research and reference tools. A series of LibGuides prepared by librarians in our research areas are available to get you started:

Introduction to Rutgers University Libraries (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/intro>)

Communication Studies (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/cat.php?cid=25866>)

Journalism and Media Studies (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/cat.php?cid=34201>)

Library and Information Science (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/cat.php?cid=25870>)

The following guides may also be helpful for you:

Congressional Research (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/congress>)

Government Information (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/cat.php?cid=25881>)

Law (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/cat.php?cid=25854>)

Political Science (<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/cat.php?cid=25871>)

**Tutoring**

For information about tutoring services, check [http://lrc.rutgers.edu](http://lrc.rutgers.edu/)

**Writing Help**

Rutgers has a Writing Program where students can obtain help with writing skills and assignments: <http://plangere.rutgers.edu/index.html>

**Undergraduate Research and Publishing**

There are additional resources for undergraduate research at the Aresty Research Center here: <http://aresty.rutgers.edu/index.html>

There are a few opportunities for getting your work published right here at Rutgers. See following links:

Rutgers undergraduate research journal: <http://www.eden.rutgers.edu/~rurj/>

Dialogues@RU: <http://dialogues.rutgers.edu/>

**Course Policies for Online Discussions in Canvas**

Selected weeks/units of study in this course contain Online Discussions in Canvas.

Selected weeks/units of study in this course contain Online Discussions in Canvas. You will be assigned to a discussion board, Group A or B. The syllabus tells you when each group has a discussion. Initial posts are due by 11p.m. ET on Wednesdays, and at least two comments are due by 11p.m. ET on Fridays.

Sometime after the discussion is over, read through ALL the posts to get a sense of the discussion as a whole.

Important: On the Discussion, make sure the subject line of your post is interesting and descriptive. It should make people want to read your post! It should NOT say something like “Week One question.” It should say something interesting, like: “Why I love my job” or “Tech companies are evil”!

***Things to keep in mind:***

* See the **Discussion Rubric** (in the Appendix) for how the discussions will be graded. Make sure your initial post is not too similar from another that is up there (this is an incentive to get your initial post up nice and early!) Make sure your response posts are substantive and do not simply agree or disagree with the initial post. Support or refute a point (and please do so in a constructive and never personal manner!) using concrete examples and sometimes even reputable web links to support your argument.
* Extend the argument in a different direction. Expand the scope of the topic. Make the conversation interesting!
* Take a stand - don’t give up halfway on your argument! Be sure to convince everyone about your point of view to its fullest;
* Try to see to it that all posts get responded to. “Spread” the posting around.
* Read what you have written before clicking the “post” button. Make sure it makes sense and that there are no glaring errors of spelling or grammar.
* Don’t work ahead on discussions! Stay with the one being worked on.
* Do the week’s reading *before you post* to the discussion. Online discussions are much more interesting when people are informed, and this is what I will be looking for when grading them. I want them to be informative, thoughtful, interesting!
* I will read all the postings, but I will note respond to all of them. It’s not because I don’t think they are all valuable! It’s because I do not want to dominate the conversation. If you ever have questions about how you are doing with discussion posts, or about discussion posts in general, please email me or stop in for office hours.

**Appendix 1:** **Discussion Boards (40%) Rubric**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Incomplete** | **Complete** |
| **Effective Participation in Discussions:**  Original thought, depth, and relevance. Includes analysis with evidence and examples. Connections are made to readings and/or other course materials as required. Construction of new insights. Well organized, appropriate style, and grammar. All required posts by deadline. Contributes feedback, follow-up questions, and reflective comments. |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **APPENDIX 2 – INFORMATION ANALYSIS PAPER (30%): RU CORE GOAL RUBRIC** | | | |
| *Student* *is* *able* *to*… **Communicate** **effectively** **in** **modes** **appropriate** **to** **a** **discipline** **or** **area** **of** **inquiry;** **evaluate** **and** **critically** **assess** **sources** **and** **use** **the** **conventions** **of** **attribution** **and** **citation** **correctly*\**;** **and** **analyze** **and** **synthesize** **information** **and** **ideas from** **multiple** **sources** **to** **generate** **new insights.** | | | |
| OUTSTANDING | GOOD | SATISFACTORY | UNSATISFACTORY |
| Addresses topic at an **advanced,** **professional** **level**; communication is well**-argued,** **effectively** **presented,** **and** **appropriate** **to** **the** **intended** **audience**.  **Accurately** **and** **effectively** **employs** **relevant** **discipline-specific** **format** **and** **terminology,** and is **free** **of** word-choice, grammar, spelling or organizational **errors.**  Cites a **comprehensive** **range** of relevant sources, and **accurately** **applies** **appropriate** **conventions** for attribution and citation.\*  Provides **sophisticated** **evaluation** **and** **critical** **assessment** of evidence, arguments, and counter-arguments drawn from multiple sources. Artfully uses this analysis in advancing thesis or placing hypothesis testing in appropriate context.  **Insightfully explores larger implications and connections**; demonstrates original thinking; explicates limits of findings. | Addresses topic **soundly** **and** **effectively**; communication is well-argued and **appropriate** **to** **the** **intended** **audience**.  **Employs** **relevant** **discipline-specific** **format** **and** **terminology,** **largely free** **from** word-choice, grammar, spelling or organizational **errors**.  Cites clearly **relevant** **sources**. **Applies** **appropriate** **conventions** for attribution and citation.\*  Provides **strong** **evaluation** **and** **critical** **assessment** of evidence, arguments, and counter-arguments drawn from multiple sources. Successfully uses this analysis in advancing thesis or placing hypothesis testing in context.  **Explores** **larger** **implications** **and** **connections**; demonstrates critical thinking; identifies limits of findings. | Addresses topic and **satisfactorily** adheres to the format prescribed by the course.  Communication presents a **coherent** **narrative,** **exposition,** **or** **argument,** **and** **an** **awareness** **of** **the** **intended audience.**  **Satisfactorily** **cites** **sources using** **appropriate** **conventions** for attribution and citation.\*  Provides **satisfactory evaluation** **and** **assessment** **of** **evidence**, arguments, and counter-arguments drawn from multiple sources. Satisfactorily incorporates this material.  **Notes** implications, connections, and limits of findings. | **Does** **not** address topic, or does so in a way that is uninformative, inaccurate, and/or misleading.  Communication is confusing and contains numerous **errors**.  **Fails** **to** cite sources and apply appropriate conventions for citation and attribution.\*  **Fails** **to** provide evaluation and assessment of evidence, arguments, and counter-arguments drawn from sources.  **Little** **or** **no** **attention** **to** **implications,** **connections,** **or** **limits** **of** **findings.** |

### Appendix 3: Grading Rubric for Infographic Proposal

This assignment is part of the overall project grade and will be graded based on the rubric below. In addition, the instructor and/or graders will review students' proposals and provide feedback that will guide students as they undertake creating their Infographic using Piktochart.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Developing** | **Accomplished** | **Exemplary** |
| **Infographic Topic and Focus/Purpose**  Infographic proposal is specific and thorough in describing the scope of the project and includes all required parts: technology topic, including introduction, target audience(s), and at least 3-5 relevant/reliable statistical data and information sources that are properly formatted according to APA style. |  |  |  |  |

**Appendix 4: Grading Rubric for Infographic Project (30%)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Developing** | **Accomplished** | **Exemplary** | **Total** |
| **Infographic Topic and Focus/Purpose**  Infographic topic is specific in nature about an emerging technology innovation with a clear focus that answers one question for the purpose of informing, increasing awareness, educating, or convincing the target audience to take action. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Target Audience(s)**  Target audience, representing one or more groups of people, is clearly evident, as well as how they will use the infographic. Target audience is logical and appropriate in relation to the emerging technology innovations topic and the information conveyed. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Message/Story**  Infographic communicates an accurate, thought-provoking message about an emerging technology that includes a beginning, middle and end. Effective and creative blending of text and images to communicate a data-driven story. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Statistical Data and Information with Sources**  Infographic includes significant information and statistical data beyond 3-5 highly reputable and relevant sources related to the emerging technology topic and target audience in a real-world context. Sources for all text, images, and statistics are cited in the infographic. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |