English 202 -Composition II
Research, Information Literacy, and Democracy in the Age of Fake News

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2017

Course Info: English 202, Section 807, #22427
Class Meeting Time & Location: Online
Professor: Dr. Matt Vetter
Office Location: HSS 506OO
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, 1-2:30pm; Tuesday, 1-3pm
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Course Description
Composition II – Research, Information Literacy, and Democracy in the Age of Fake News – responds to the fake news phenomenon that emerged in the fall of 2016, at the height of a contentious presidential election and within a rapidly shifting media landscape. According to the Pew Research Center, more than half of U.S. adults now get their news from social media. For millennials and Generation Z, those who had access to Internet technology from a young age, this is hardly surprising. But we are only beginning to realize how such a media landscape, in which social media giants and their sharing algorithms hold sway, will shape our access to and interaction with news and other information. Fake news websites, which intentionally publish misinformation or propaganda for financial or political purposes, are one such effect of this new landscape. Of course, research and information literacy are highly valuable skills in their own right – and the aim of this course is to help you improve your knowledge and practice of research as critical inquiry. We will discuss, learn, and write about what information literacy requires in the age of fake news. Finally, we will reflect on the importance of research knowledge and critical information literacy to a well-functioning democracy. Welcome to English 202! I look forward to reading your work.

IUP Course Catalogue Description
Serves as a bridge between Composition I and students' professional writing. Develops rhetorical skills for informed inquiry. Also develops the following abilities: writing, critical reading, revising, citing and documenting, speaking and listening, and reflecting. (Titled Research Writing before 2012-13.)

Required Course Texts and Materials
Palmquist, Mike. *The Bedford Researcher.* 5th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.
Reliable and consistent computer and internet access.
Additional readings will be available in the form of linked online articles.

Student Learning Outcomes
When you successfully complete English 202, you will be able to:

- access relevant print and electronic resources, artifacts, or human resources; read, evaluate and select resources;
- manage and sustain an inquiry project
- critique your own and others' essay drafts
- compose focused and cohesive syntheses
- ethically use a body of knowledge inside your own written work: paraphrase, quote, summarize, explain/interpret/comment, cite, and document (MLA or APA)
- reflect upon your reading and research processes, writing processes and rhetorical effectiveness
- practice multimodal design using digital tools
- understand the importance social and/or political importance of information literacy

Course Work and Grade Distribution

All major course work revolves around a single research project in which you will investigate a fake news story, its consequences, and the social and political significance of information literacy. Each major assignment, listed below, represents a process step that will work towards this research project.

Assignment 1 (A1): Research Question & Proposal. 600-900 words. 10% - 100 pts.
Identify a fake news story and draft a related research question about its social and/or political impact. Write a proposal about why you want to research this fake news story and what you think you can accomplish through this process.

Assignment 2 (A2): Evaluative Annotated Bibliography. 800-1200 words. 20% - 200 pts.
Collect, document, and write evaluative summaries of at least 8 sources related to your fake news story and research question. Remember to include the fake news story itself as a primary source.

Assignment 3 (A3): Research Project Draft. 2400-2600 words. 10% - 100 pts.
Your Research Project will report on the results of your investigation of a fake news story, paying special attention to its social and political impact. This first draft will be peer reviewed by a classmate and will receive commentary from the professor.

Assignment 4 (A4): Research Project Final. 2400-2600 words. 30% - 300 pts.
Finalized draft of the above, revised after you have received peer review feedback and the professor's commentary.

Assignment 5 (A5): Multimodal Presentation. No formal length requirement. 20% - 200 pts.
Turn your Research Project into a Multimodal Presentation using PowerPoint or some other presentation software (Prezi, Google Slides). Be sure to include images and/or video, and other design elements to engage your audience.

Discussion Board and Weekly Activities. Length requirements vary. 10% - 100 pts.

Course Instruction

Although this online course does not have the benefit of face-to-face classroom discussion, I will be giving virtual asynchronous (not live) instruction on D2L. In addition, our class will engage with each other in online discussion forums. So, the online course instruction will include:

Weekly Announcements – I will be giving regular weekly overviews of what we'll be doing each week, what to expect, and why we're doing what we're doing. I will post these overviews every week on Sunday night or Monday morning. That week's work will then be due on the following Saturday – by the end of the day (12 midnight). Of course, you may complete the work at any point in the week. And I encourage you to not wait until the last minute with discussion board posts, so you can give your peers a chance to comment on your posts.

Discussion Boards – Discussion Boards will be set up on D2L for additional communication, including a "Questions" forum, where you can ask me and your classmates questions (like you might in a physical classroom). Weekly Discussion Forum Posts will be expected. For each post, you should also respond to at least two of your classmates' posts. These assignments are opportunities for you to process and reflect on our readings, and to discuss them with your classmates.

Course Readings – You will be responsible for weekly readings from our course textbook, *The Bedford Researcher,* and from online articles about the course topic. Please read all material carefully and in an engaged manner. I expect you to show comprehension of the readings in your weekly Discussion Board posts.

Course Policies

Commenting on Your Writing: One of the goals of this course is to have a complex discussion about your writing. We will accomplish that goal through commentary about how each of your projects succeeds and what you can work on in the future. I want my feedback on your major projects to feel like a conversation that we are both taking part in, not just a grade or judgement. I'll spend a lot of time thinking about and commenting on your work, and I expect you to engage equally with my comments and to be constantly reflecting on your growth as a writer. I'll use Microsoft Word's comment feature to provide feedback and will provide detailed feedback at the end of your essay. My feedback will always be guided by the criteria I set up for each essay - which will be provided to you when the assignment is first introduced, and which we will discuss throughout the writing process. If errors are numerous/distracting, I may ask you to rewrite the essay for credit. For some of the essays, you will also be responsible for a review of a peer's project. I expect a high level of critical review here, one that earnestly attempts to help improve your partner's writing.

Late Work*:* I will only accept late work if we have talked and come to some agreement. If something is going on that is going to hinder you from finishing a project, please talk to me **before** the project is due. It's really important that work for peer review or workshop is finished on time.

Communication: Check D2L Announcements often for updates about the course. I will post a weekly overview on either Sunday night or Monday morning every week, explaining assignments and readings. But please ask questions! You may email me at mvetter@iup.edu. I will do my best to respond within 12 hours for this course.

Privacy: Work on major projects and your discussion board posts are always public. Don't submit writing you can't let other students see. Drafts of papers must be polished and ready for classmates' feedback on the assigned date to get credit for peer review.

Ethics: I define plagiarism as deliberate cheating, whether by claiming another's ideas or work as your own (fraud) or making up or falsifying information (fabrication) will result in a course grade of F and a report to Community Standards. You are at all times responsible for handling sources ethically by acknowledging the author and source of directly borrowed ideas and language in your writing.

Accessibility: The Office of Advising and Testing, in Pratt Hall, room 216, offers evaluation and support for students with disabilities. Please let me know as soon as possible if you need an accommodation in order to work successfully in this class. This classroom strives for full accessibility, and it is not necessary for you to have an official accommodation letter from Disability Services in order to request changes to the classroom that will better serve your needs as a student, although you are encouraged to explore the possible supports they can offer if you are a student with a disability. Both able bodied students and students with disabilities are encouraged to suggest any improvements to the learning environment.

Atmosphere: Everyone in our class, including the instructor, must remain civil and courteous at all times. We will often have opportunity to share our opinions and beliefs, but no racist, sexist, heterosexist, or any other negative communication harmful to an individual or group will be tolerated

Writing Center: Trained peer and graduate tutors in the IUP Writing Center can help you at any stage in the writing process, from developing a topic to drafting and revising. They can help you to document sources, understand your professor's feedback, and more. The Writing Center has three locations: For walk-in tutoring (no appointments), visit Room 218 in Eicher Hall, or visit the Satellite Writing Center in the Library, first floor. You can also make an appointment for an online tutoring session (at least 24 hours in advance). The Writing Center's website contains a link for making appointments for online sessions, or call 724-357-3029.

IUP Sexual Violence Policy: Indiana University of Pennsylvania is committed to maintaining a learning and work environment that is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence. Acts of sexual harassment or sexual violence, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, seriously undermine the atmosphere of trust and respect that is essential to a university community. Moreover, sexual harassment and sexual violence are legally prohibited and will not be tolerated. To report a complaint of sexual harassment or sexual violence, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, against a student and discuss options, contact a Campus Security Authority coordinator; the Office of Student Conduct, 307 Pratt Hall, at 724-357-1264; or the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator. If the student does not want to proceed with a student conduct complaint or police report, the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator will still investigate to determine what occurred and take appropriate steps to resolve the situation, mindful of the University's obligation to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students.

Title IX: In order to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the Department of Human Services (1-800-932-0313) and University Police (724-357-2141). Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at: http://www.iup.edu/socialequity/policies/title-ix/

Important Academic Deadlines

Jan. 30 Drop period ends at the end of the day.
Jan 30.   Add period ends at the end of the day
March 28   Midterm grades available
April 7   Course withdrawal deadline
April 14 Total university withdrawal deadline

Course Schedule

Week & Module	Topics and Activities	Assignments due (by the end of the week: Saturday midnight)
Week 1 Module 1	Introductions; Course Review; Getting Started by Considering the Writing Situation	**Read:** Syllabus; Major Assignments Handout; Chapter 1 (3-28) in *Bedford Researcher* **Write:** Introduction Post and Week 1 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 2 Module 2	Exploring and Focusing; Fake News Stories	**Read:** Chapter 2 (29-44) in *Bedford Researcher*; two online articles: "Read All About It: The Biggest Fakes News Stories of 2016" and "Here are 50 of the Biggest Fake News Hits on Facebook in 2016"; and a google doc list, "False, Misleading, Clickbait-y, and/or Satirical 'News' Sources" **Write:** Week 2 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 3 Module 2	Developing Your Research Question & Proposal; How Fake News Goes Viral	**Read:** Chapter 3 (45-64) in *Bedford Researcher*; and one online article, "How Fake News Goes Viral: A Case Study" **Due:** Assignment 1 (A1): Research Question & Proposal
Week 4 Module 3	Working with Sources; Reading Critically and Actively; Evaluating Sources	**Read:** Chapter 4 (67-85) and Chapter 5 (86-98) in *Bedford Researcher*; and one online article, "Fake or Real? How to Self-Check the News and Get the Facts" **Due:** Week 4 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 5 Module 3	Working with Sources; Managing Information; Plagiarism; Begin Work on Bibliographies	**Read:** Chapter 6, Chapter 7, and Chapter 8 (99-140) in *Bedford Researcher* **Due:** Week 5 Post in Discussions Forum; Begin collecting sources for your bibliography;
Week 6 Module 3	Collecting Information; Digital and Print Resources; Continue Working on Bibliographies	**Read:** Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 (143-180) in *Bedford Researcher;* and one online article, "Google, Democracy, and the Truth about Internet Search" **Due:** Week 6 Post in Discussions Forum; Continue Working on Bibliographies

Week 7 Module 3	Documenting Sources; APA and MLA Styles; Continue Working on Bibliographies	**Read:** Chapter 19 (333-337) and either Chapter 20 (338-367) or Chapter 21 (368-397) in *Bedford Researcher* **Due:** Assignment 2 (A2): Evaluative Annotated Bibliography
Week 8	SPRING BREAK -	SPRING BREAK - No Classwork
Week 9 Module 4	Developing Your Thesis Statement; Thesis Workshop; Begin Drafting Your Research Project	**Read:** Chapter 12 (201-211) in *Bedford Researcher;* and one online article, "To Rescue Democracy, Go Outside" **Due:** Week 9 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 10 Module 4	Developing and Organizing Your Argument; Continue Drafting Research Project	**Read:** Chapter 13 and Chapter 14 (212-256) in *Bedford Researcher* **Due:** Week 10 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 11 Module 4	Using Sources Effectively; Continue Drafting Research Project	**Read:** Chapter 15 (257-275) in *Bedford Researcher* **Due:** Week 11 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 12 Module 4	Designing Documents; Peer Review	**Read:** Chapter 16 (276-289) in *Bedford Researcher* **Due:** Assignment 3 (A3): Research Project Draft; Peer Review of a Classmate's Draft
Week 13 Module 5	Revising & Editing; Revise Research Project with Peer Feedback	**Read:** Chapter 17 (302-313) **Due:** Week 13 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 14 Module 6	Social Media; Ideology and Politics; Revise Research Project with Professor Feedback	**Read:** Online article, "Blue Feed, Red Feed" **Due:** Week 14 Post in Discussions Forum; Assignment 4 (A4): Research Project Final
Week 15 Module 6	Presenting Your Work; Working with Multimedia; Work on Assignment 5	**Read:** Chapter 18 (314-329) in *Bedford Researcher* **Due:** Week 15 Post in Discussions Forum
Week 16 Module 6 Finals	Presenting Your Work Working with Multimedia; Finish Assignment 5	**Due:** Assignment 5 (A5): Multimodal Presentation

Major Course Work

All major course work revolves around a single research project in which you will investigate a fake news story, its consequences, and the social and political significance of information literacy. Each major assignment, listed below, represents a process step that will work towards this research project. With the exception of Weekly Discussion Board Posts and Assignment 5, all major assignments should be

submitted in .doc or .docx formats. Assignment 5 should be submitted in .pdf or .ppt format. All work should follow style guidelines for either MLA or APA.

Weekly Discussion Board Posts

Length requirements vary. 10% - 100 pts.

Overview:
10 posts throughout the semester. These short writing assignments are meant to be reflective and informal. They're a chance for you to work through/process the reading assignments and to have an engaged discussion with your classmates. For each post, I will provide a detailed prompt that typically reference one or more of our weekly readings. Make sure you have completed the reading(s) before attempting to work on the discussion board post. Each post is worth 10 points for a total of 100 points. You are also responsible for responding to 2 of your classmates posts. Your response should show genuine engagement with your classmates' ideas.

Grading Criteria:
Meets the minimum length requirement.
Demonstrates comprehension and engagement with weekly readings.
Responds in an engaged manner to at least 2 other posts.

Assignment 1 (A1): Research Question & Proposal

600-900 words. 10% - 100 pts.

Overview: Using strategies and tips from our book, *Bedford Researcher* (45-64), write a formal research question and proposal for the major research project we will be working on this semester. Your topic for this research project should be related to our course theme, fake news, and should identify a specific fake news story to investigate. One of your goals (you may develop others) for this project is to identify the social and political impacts of fake news, and to reflect on the importance of critical information literacy for a well-functioning democracy. In other words, why is it important for citizens of a democratic society to be able to assess the reliability and/or bias of different media? You don't have to answer all of these questions in your proposal, of course. Instead, you need to do some planning about the scope and specific topic of your project.

Required Elements:
Introduction: Describe your topic and initial interest or motivation to work with that topic. Research Question(s): Be specific about the fake news story you want to investigate and how raises broader questions about information literacy and the social/political impact of fake news.
Research Goals: What do you hope to accomplish. Include some of our shared goals (described above) as well as goals specific to your individual topic.
Disciplinary Context: What's your discipline (major); will that influence your project?
Search plan: What types of secondary sources are available for this project? What is your plan for finding relevant secondary sources?
Challenges: What problems or challenges do you anticipate in this project?

Grading Criteria:
Meets the minimum length requirement
Includes thoughtful and substantive coverage of required elements
Works within larger course topic and questions

Well-written, proofread prose
Organized in a logical fashion with transitions and other organizational devices

Assignment 2 (A2): Evaluative Annotated Bibliography
800-1200 words. 20% - 200 pts.

Overview:
Using strategies and tips from our book *Bedford Researcher* (pp. 122-124 especially, but also chapters on finding, evaluating and documenting sources), prepare an evaluative annotated bibliography that gathers relevant sources for your research project. For this assignment, you will collect, document, and write evaluative summaries of at least 8 sources related to your fake news story and research question. Organize the entries in alphabetical order, according to the author's last name or other identifying information. Each annotation (evaluative summary) should be around between a quarter to a third of a page in length, for a total length of 800-1200 words.

Required Elements:
Citation: Include complete source citation, using proper formatting (in either MLA or APA style)
Summary: Summarize the source, noting significant findings and key information.
Evaluation: Evaluate the source, including how it is relevant and background information on the author and publisher.
Quotes: Identify passages containing useful information, ideas, and arguments.
Reflection: Reflect on how the source could be used in your research project.

Criteria:
Meets minimum length requirement
Selects appropriate and relevant sources for the ongoing research project
Addresses and includes all of the required elements (listed above)
Well-written, proofread prose

Assignment 3 (A3): Research Project Draft
2400-2600 words. 10% - 100 pts.

Overview: Your Research Project will report on the results of your investigation of a fake news story, paying special attention to its social and political impact. This first draft will be peer reviewed by a classmate and will receive commentary from the professor. I will not completely prescribe form for this assignment, but I will be looking for certain elements.

Required Elements:
Introduction: Introduce the topic, its central concerns, and any pertinent background information
Source Work: Work thoroughly and deeply with at least 8 sources to fully investigate your topic
Synthesis: Synthesize those sources (find patterns of difference and similarity)
Argument: Make a clear and concise argument (with a clear thesis) at some point in the essay
Conclusion: Provide a conclusion that allows you to discuss some of the implications of your argument
Focus: Stay focused our common course topics – fake news, information, literacy, and democracy

Source Requirement:
This essay requires that you bring in secondary research to support and contextualize your argument, and that, to some extent, you are able to synthesize those sources (find patterns of difference and similarity among their approaches to the topic). **This essay requires at least 8**

sources cited in your essay. The sources should be used in a way that is meaningful and connected to your overall argument. You should also be able to demonstrate excellent quoting, summarizing, and analyzing skills as you work with these sources.

Criteria:
Demonstrates an investigative approach and emphasizes thorough research and deep engagement with complex questions related to your topic
Includes thorough work with at least 8 secondary sources, including some synthesis of perspectives and ideas from those sources
Demonstrates proficiency with working with sources (quoting, signal phrases, in-text citations) and using sources to support discussion and argument
Utilizes topic sentences, transitions, forecasting, and signposting to guide the reader and organize content
Includes a clear and concise argument that summarizes the main point the writer is attempting to make and makes clear the connection between that argument and the writer's work with sources
A conclusion helps make clear the implications of the writer's argument.
Meets formal requirements: 2400-2600 words, 8 secondary sources, includes a title and Works Cited or References page
Well-written, proofread prose

Assignment 4 (A4): Research Project Final
2400-2600 words. 30% - 300 pts.

Overview:
Finalized draft of the Research Project, revised after you have received peer review feedback and the professor's commentary.

Required Elements: Same as Assignment 3 (A3)

Criteria
Shows substantial revision and development when compares to the previous draft
Demonstrates an investigative approach and emphasizes thorough research and deep engagement with complex questions related to your topic
Includes thorough work with at least 8 secondary sources, including some synthesis of perspectives and ideas from those sources
Demonstrates proficiency with working with sources (quoting, signal phrases, in-text citations) and using sources to support discussion and argument
Organized utilizes topic sentences, transitions, forecasting, and signposting to guide the reader
Includes a clear and concise argument that summarizes the main point the writer is attempting to make and makes clear the connection between that argument and the writer's work with sources
A conclusion helps make clear the implications of the writer's argument.
Meets formal requirements: 2400-2600 words, 8 secondary sources, includes a title and Works Cited or References page
Well-written, proofread prose

Assignment 5 (A5): Multimodal Presentation.

No formal length requirement. 20% - 200 pts.

Overview:
Turn your Research Project into a Multimodal Presentation using PowerPoint or some other presentation software (Prezi, Google Slides). Be sure to include images and/or video, and other design elements to engage your audience. There is no formal length requirement, but the presentation should provide substantial and thorough coverage of the main findings and argument of your research project. I would normally expect at least 6-10 slides, depending on your approach. You should draw from the book's discussion of multimedia presentation (Chapter 18) for this project. Finally, you should adapt and change how you present the information to account for this new multimedia format.

Required Elements:
Title slide: Includes your name and the title of the project
Forecasting or Summary: Forecast the major sections of your presentation
Purpose: Clearly articulated purpose or argument for the presentation
Media: Relevant and engaging use of media (image, video, etc.) to engage the reader
Template and/or slide design: Creative and thoughtful design features

Criteria:
Includes significant adaptation and translation of your research project to fit the genre and rhetorical situation of the multimedia presentation
Demonstrates thorough attention to issues of visual design (both in terms of slide layout and multimedia integration
Shows clarity of purpose (argument) for the presentation
Includes all required elements
Matches expectations for substantial work (6-10 slides, appropriate media inclusion)
Submitted in a .ppt or .pdf format