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Zero Textbook Cost Syllabus for LIB 3065 (Research Methods and Resources for Writers)

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LIB 3065 Research Methods and Resources for Writers

Fall 2018

Online

Prof. Chris Tuthill

Email:

Phone:

Office Hours: By appointment

This course explores the theoretical and practical impact of information research on writing. Students develop proficiency in evaluating, identifying, and using relevant print and web sources to locate business, government, biographic, political, social and statistical information necessary for in-depth journalistic reportage and other forms of research and writing.

Learning Goals

- Students will learn the impact of research on writing. By studying theories of research and writing, students will learn how to link credible evidence and sources with solid writing.
- By studying theories of information production and retrieval, students will gain an understanding of information literacy. They will be able to identify different types of information, writing, and reporting.
- Students will develop skills in writing research papers and other forms of writing that is bolstered by credible sources. They will learn search methods and sources that will help them produce writing supported by solid evidence.

Assignments

Homework assignments, readings, course videos and power points will be posted at least a week ahead of the due date on the course website. You must access blackboard and the course site to get access to the readings, to view the powerpoint presentations, to participate in the discussion boards, and to turn in homework. I suggest that you log in several times a week to make your work manageable.

All course readings will be in the ‘**readings**’ section of blackboard, or on reserve in the library.

Power point lectures and other notes will be in the ‘**course documents**’ section of blackboard. There is a separate folder for each week.

Homework and other assignments will be posted in the ‘**assignments**’ section of blackboard.

Discussion Board

Each week, there will be one or more discussion forums that you will need to contribute to. To get credit for the week, you will need to comment by 11:59 on Sunday. I encourage students to go there early, and to respond to each other’s questions in a respectful way.



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You must participate every week in the discussion boards, which are worth 15% of your grade. **If you do not login, turn in assignments, and contribute during the first weeks of the course, you may be dropped from the course roster.** Please see the introductory powerpoint for the course to see what is expected on the discussion boards.

If you post questions for me, I will usually answer them within 24 hours. If you email me, I will usually respond within 24 hours. **I am not online at night, and only sporadically on the weekend, so I may take a little longer to respond if you send me a question on a Saturday or Sunday.**

Announcements

As we go through the course, I will make weekly announcement to remind the class of assignments and readings that are due. They will be posted in the **announcements** section of blackboard, and I will also send each one to your Baruchmail account, so you should check in there a few times a week as well.

Term Paper

Your final paper in this course will be on a research topic of your choice, approved by me. The final project should be a well written and argued paper of approximately 8-10 pages. It will be due the last week of class. We will be working toward this paper all semester, and it is never too early to start thinking of a topic! I strongly encourage you to meet with me to discuss it. Further description of the paper will follow as we get closer to the due date.

There will also be a shorter research assignment, the annotated bibliography, due as your midterm.

Evaluation

Your grade will be based on the following formula:

Participation in weekly online discussions: 15%
Homework Assignments: 35%
Annotated Bibliography: 20%
Final paper: 30%

A 93.0–100.0
A- 90.0–92.9
B+ 87.1–89.9
B 83.0–87.0
B- 80.0–82.9

C+	77.1–79.9
C	73.0–77.0
C-	70.0–72.9
D+	67.1–69.9
D	60.0–67.0
F	below 60.0

Course Texts (excerpts available on ereserve, and copies available on reserve)

Booth, Wayne. *The Craft of Research*. 2016 4th edition.
 Kovach and Rosensteel. *Blur: How to Know What's True in the Age of Information Overload*.
 New York: Bloomsbury, 2010.
 Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. New York: Penguin, 2006.

Recommended Reading, and Reference Books

Zinsser, William K. *On Writing Well*. New York: Harper, 2006. (30th Anniversary edition)

King, Stephen. *On Writing*. New York: Scribner, 2000.

Strunk and White. *The Elements of Style*. There are many editions of this available, including a free online version at <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 8th Edition (available at reference desk)

Expectations

We will be reading and writing a lot in this course. To do well, you must do the readings, participate in the online discussions and message boards each week, and to turn in assignments on time. Homework assignments will be worth anywhere from 3-7 points. **Late assignments will lose a point for every day they are late. So, if the assignment is worth 3 points and it is turned in 3 days late, you will not get credit.**

I will get homework assignments back to you within one week. I will try to get paper drafts and mid-term back within a week as well, but because these assignments are longer and I want to give you the best feedback possible, it may take a little longer than a week for me to return them.

Although this course is fully online, I encourage you to meet with me as needed throughout the course—especially if you are having trouble or want help with your final paper topic. My office is in the library. You can make an appointment any time with me.

Please review the following [email etiquette guide](#) and keep these tips in mind when using email:

<http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/professors-guide/2010/09/30/18-etiquette-tips-for-e-mailing-your-professor>

A Note on Plagiarism:

I fully support Baruch College's policy on Academic Honesty, which states, in part:

"Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Cheating, forgery, plagiarism and collusion in dishonest acts undermine the college's educational mission and the students' personal and intellectual growth. Baruch students are expected to bear individual responsibility for their work, to learn the rules and definitions that underlie the practice of academic integrity, and to uphold its ideals. Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable excuse for disobeying them. Any student who attempts to compromise or devalue the academic process will be sanctioned. "

Academic sanctions in this class will range from an F on the assignment to an F in this course. A report of suspected academic dishonesty will be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students. Additional information and definitions can be found at:

http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writing as your own, such as:

- Copying another person's actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes (a functional limit is four or more words taken from the work of another)
- Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging them
- Using information that is not considered common knowledge without acknowledging the source
- Failure to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignment

My policy is to give a failing grade to any assignment that has been plagiarized or an exam in which you have cheated. In addition, I am required by College policy to submit a report of suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. This report becomes part of your permanent file.

We will use the website turnitin.com for the final research paper—instructions for this will follow.

Class Schedule and Readings

Week 1: 8/27

Introduction to the course

Readings: Marshall Poe, "The Hive"

Video: The Machine is Us/ing Us

Assignment #1 Due 2/4

Week 2: 9/4

Libraries and the Web

Readings: Carr, "Is Google Making Us Stupid,"

Did Media Literacy Backfire, by Dana Boyd

"Future of Books" from CQ Researcher

Week 3: 9/12

Writing for College and Work

Zinsser excerpts

Assignment #2 Due 9/17

Week 4: 9/17

Identifying Information Sources

Readings: Kovach & Rosenstiel, *Blur*, Ch. 1-3

[Three Mile Island Retro Report, from the New York Times](#)

Assignment #3 Due 9/24

Week 6: 9/24

News Sources and the Social Media Age

Readings: Kovach & Rosenstiel, *Blur*, Ch. 4-6

Week 7: 10/1

Evaluation of News Sources

John Stewart and Ted Koppel Videos

CQ Researcher Article, "Trust in Media"

Assignment #4 Due 10/9

Week 8: 10/9

Writing a Research Paper

The Craft of Research, Chapters 1-3
Assignment #5 Due 10/15

Week 9: 10/15
Finding and Using Relevant Sources
The Craft of Research Chapters 4-7

Writing a research proposal and annotated bibliography
Library Databases: Lexis Nexis, Factiva, MLA, Communication and Mass Media, et al.

Annotated Bibliography Due 10/22

Week 10: 10/22

The Craft of Research Chapters 8-10

Week 11: 10/29
Your Outline and Putting Your Research Together
The Craft of Research, Chapters 12-13

Paper Draft due 11/12

Week 12: 11/5

Creative Nonfiction and Fiction Writing
Reading: King, Spiegelman, Thompson excerpts
Video: [Farewell - ETAOIN SHRDLU from Open Culture](#)

Week 13: 11/12

Mass media and writing
Reading: Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, Part I
Jeet Heer, New Republic, The Post Literate American Presidency
Andrew Postman, The Guardian, My Dad Predicted Trump in 1985

Assignment #6 Due 11/26

Week 14: 11/26

Mass Media and writing, cont'd.
Reading: Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, Part II

Week 15: 12/3

Working on final papers

Reading: Conclusion of Postman

Video: Neil Postman on Cyberspace

Video: Abraham Lincoln's 1860 Cooper Union address

Final Paper Due 12/14