

Course ID: ALA 264-222

Course Title: ID Topics in ALA

Topic Title: Discerning Truth

Course Description:

In the flood of information in today's digital age, how do you know what is true or not? How do you become a leader and best in sharing the truth with others? In this innovative class, you will learn about the nature of truth, evidence, facts and information from top faculty and outside experts across a range of disciplines, from law to computer science. Each week, we'll cover a different topic with a top expert in the field, such as analyzing "Cheapfakes" or how elections can be prone to misinformation. This class will use online tools in novel ways to interact with class speakers and fellow students, using Reddit, Slack, and others to enable new forms of interaction.

Cliff Lampe, Professor, School of Information

Office: Zoom, probably

Email: cacl@umich.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Two credit lecture

In this format, students will meet online to hear a talk from a UM faculty member or outside guest. The livestream of the talk, supported by synchronous discussion tools on Canvas and Sli.do. The talks will also be recorded and available on multiple video platforms. In addition to the 1.5 hour lecture, students will be expected to engage in one half hour of online engagement, in online discussion forums, online discussion forum, or other channel.

Course Discussion

We will have our discussions on Reddit. (https://www.reddit.com/r/Discerning_Truth/). You should create a fresh account if you are worried about people seeing your other Reddit activity. We may also occasionally host a conversation on Canvas.

Class Readings

Readings will be supplied by our speakers week by week. We will also read items in the news as they occur.

Course Grading

Engagement Score - 400 points total

Every three weeks, we will assess your "Engagement Score" which is the summation of your attendance in talks, questions asked via Slido, Reddit posting and more. Students will list their engagement for the period, and then that will be assessed by the graders.

Meme Production - 50 points total

Each student in class will be asked to create a meme to help highlight information quality. There will be four opportunities to submit memes, of which we will grade 2.

Deck Production - 50 points total

Each student will create a slide deck that would be a 15 minute presentation highlighting some aspects of information quality.

Total Points	Letter Grade	Numeric Grade		Total Points	Letter Grade	Numeric Grade
460 or more	A	4.0		385	C+	2.3
450	A-	3.7		370	C	2.0
435	B+	3.3		355	C-	1.7
415	B	3.0		Under 355	NRC	
400	B-	2.7				

COVID Syllabus Statement – 8/12/20

The following is a statement provided by the university, and required for all courses.

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the State of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](#) and the [University’s Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](#). Your ability to participate in this course in-person as well as your grade may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity](#). If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis (if available) or to disenroll from the class. I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Students Rights and Responsibilities](#), which includes a [COVID-related Statement Addendum](#).

Collaboration and Original Work

- **Collaboration**

UMSI strongly encourages collaboration while working on some assignments, such as homework problems and interpreting reading assignments as a general practice. Active learning is effective. Collaboration with other students in the course will be especially valuable in summarizing the reading materials and picking out the key concepts. You must, however, write your assignment submissions on your own, in your own words, before turning it in. Read the instructions carefully and request clarification about collaboration when in doubt.

- **Plagiarism**

All written submissions must be your own, original work. Original work for narrative questions is not mere paraphrasing of someone else's work: you must not share written answers with each other at all. At most, you should be working from notes you took.

You may incorporate selected excerpts, statements or phrases from publications by other authors, but they must be clearly marked as quotations and must be attributed. If you build on the ideas of prior authors, you must cite their work. You may obtain copy editing assistance, and you may discuss your ideas with others, but all substantive writing and ideas must be your own, or be explicitly attributed to another. See the [LSA student handbook](#) for the definition of plagiarism, resources to help you avoid it, and the consequences for intentional or unintentional plagiarism.

In this course, an assignment containing plagiarized material will receive zero points. This applies whether the plagiarism is intentional or inadvertent. If you are unsure about whether a passage in your writing constitutes plagiarism, you are encouraged to seek help from the teaching team or from the [Sweetland Writing Center](#). Be sure to plan sufficiently ahead in your writing so that you can receive and incorporate feedback if you are uncertain about the boundaries of plagiarism.

- **Cheating**

Cheating is a violation of the norms, values and ethics of education and will not be tolerated in any form. All episodes of cheating uncovered will receive a zero on the assignment in question and a report will be made to the appropriate Academic Affairs authority.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) (<https://ssd.umich.edu/>) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000) Accommodations via a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students, while acknowledging that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students' academic performance. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and <https://caps.umich.edu/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (732) 764-8320 and <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs> or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources. For a more comprehensive listing of the broad range of mental health services available on campus, please visit: <http://umich.edu/~mhealth/>.