



Class: XIDS 2002

Instructor: Amanda Shoemake

Office Location: Pafford 105 A

Office Hours: MW 3:30-5:00; T 1-2; Also available by appointment

Writing Center Hours: Tuesdays 10-1pm (Appointment via WC ONLY)

Email: amandas@westga.edu. **DO NOT EMAIL ME THROUGH COURSE DEN! Use your student GMAIL account!**

Class Info: Meets Mondays Tuesdays 2:30-4:10 pm in Humanities 134

Email Communication: While I encourage email communication regarding the course and coursework, I do ask you to consider checking resources before asking me questions about policies or scheduling. This syllabus intends to cover those policies, and no exception will be made to the policies within it. Therefore, any email concerning a matter that can easily be resolved via the syllabus will be responded to with one word: “syllabus.” In addition, for my own sense of self-preservation, emails guilty of the following transgressions will be subject to snarky GIF/MEME responses (with love, of course):

1. Any emails that include emojis.
2. Anything using the phrase “should” or “could” as directed at me. For example, “Hey prof. I missed class. Could you email me what I missed?” or “Hey, I think you should give me another chance. I only missed 10 classes!”
 - a. In addition, any email that says, “Did I miss anything important?” will be printed out and set on fire. No really. The answer is yes. You missed class. Class is important. Therefore, you missed important things.
3. Emails regarding grades. **I. Cannot. Discuss. Grades. Via. Email.** These will most likely be deleted.
4. Asking if required books are actually required.
5. Asking for an excused absence—look, I care about you guys, but there is no distinction between excused or unexcused. You have three available absences to use however you please. If something is going on outside of class that has you worried/concerned about your ability to come to class, come chat with me face-to-face. We’ll get coffee and figure it out.
6. Emails asking me to do “prophetic math”, e.g., “What do I need to get on this final essay to make a [-]?”—Also, see #3.
7. Emails containing HW, Daily Grades, or essays as submissions—I only accept submissions via Courseden.

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8. Any email missing a subject or class specifics—I literally interface with 100-150 students every 2 days, and I teach three different courses. Be sure to tell me what class and section so that I can help you efficiently.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes:

- *Written and Oral Communication: Students will adapt written and oral communication to specific rhetorical purposes and audiences.*
- *Students will recognize and begin to implement the skills necessary to become life-long, active learners through the exploration of an academic topic that focuses on a contemporary and/or enduring topic, question, or problem.*
- *Information Literacy: Students will identify, evaluate, and use information, language, or technology appropriate to a specific purpose.*

Course Theme: Fake News: Bias and You

Course Material: Brooke Gladstone's *The Influencing Machine* (ISBN: 978-0-393-34246-8); Flash drive or some other portable electronic storage for independent computer use (all students are responsible for producing and retaining copies of their work); paper and pen/pencil as necessary to take notes in class.

Course Policies/Statements (General); [University-Wide Common Language For Syllabi](#) (more specific language regarding the general policies is listed below)

Assessment of Out-of-Class Writing (specific rubrics for each out-of-class essay will be provided—TBA)

Plagiarism and Excessive Collaboration Policy:

Plagiarism & Academic Honesty: The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The Department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. An equally dishonest practice is fabricating sources or facts; it is another form of misrepresenting the truth. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. (See also, Excessive Collaboration).

The University Policies for handling Academic Dishonesty are found in the following documents:

The Faculty Handbook, sections 207 and 208.0401 (<http://www.westga.edu/~vpaa/handrev/>); Student Undergraduate Catalog, "Academic Honor Code": (<http://www.westga.edu/undergrad/1762.htm>)

Disability Pledge: I pledge to do my best to work with the University to provide all students with equal access to my classes and materials, regardless of special needs, temporary or permanent disability, special needs related to pregnancy, etc. If you have any special learning needs, particularly (but not limited to) needs defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and require specific accommodations, please do not hesitate to make these known to me, either yourself or through Disability Services in 272 Parker Hall at 678-839-6428. Students with documented special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc. This is not only my personal commitment: it is your right, and it is the law. For more information, contact Disability Services. **If a student wishes to file with**

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Disability Services, he/she should provide me with the documentation within the first two weeks of class.

Title IX Reporting: Effective July 1, 2016, all faculty and staff at public universities in Georgia became mandatory reporters for sexual assault. We are required to report any information concerning sexual assault, and we are not allowed to maintain the information in confidence with the student (the only exceptions being the Counseling Center, the clergy, and medical staff). You are encouraged to report any instances of sexual assault.

HB 280 (Campus Carry): UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance for this policy, which can be found [at this site](#). You may also visit the [designated university website](#) for help with USG guidance.

Disruptive Behavior: [The Student Conduct Code, section 3.00 \(Appendix A in the Student Handbook\)](#) prohibits disruptive behavior on campus, defined as “interfering with normal university sponsored activities, including, but not limited to, studying, teaching, research, university administration, disciplinary or public service activities, or fire, police or emergency services.” Reasonable examples of appropriate classroom behavior prohibit such actions as cell phone use, eating in class, talking while the instructor is talking, coming late or leaving early, sleeping, etc. Specific information on disruptive behavior in the classroom and how such behavior is addressed can be found by visiting the following: http://www.westga.edu/vpsa/index_4721.php (Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management). **Additionally, it is important to remember that some topics discussed in class will be controversial. Thus, I expect respectful responses and reactions. We are all looking for the same thing. This class is a safe space.**

Role of the Writing Center: The role of the Writing Center is to offer consultation in which tutors question, respond to, offer choices, and encourage revision in student essays. Tutors do not evaluate or prescribe solutions to problematic areas to student essays, and tutors are specifically trained to avoid appropriating the student's work. For more information, visit the Writing Center: www.westga.edu/writing

Course Policies (Specific):

Technology Policy: Cell phones are strictly prohibited in my classroom. I do not want to hear a phone, see a phone, smell a phone, or think that you have ever *had* a phone in this class. Violators of this policy will be excused for the day and will receive an absence. I also do not allow laptops in class *except* for in-class workshop days. **DO NOT TEST ME ON THIS POLICY.** You have been warned.

Paper Format: All out-of-class essays should be submitted according to MLA format. Please see *A Writer's Resource* and the UWC website for additional information. I require both hard copies of out-of-class essays AND electronic submissions through Courseden Dropbox (which will be set up prior to the due date). I WILL NOT GRADE ANY SUBMISSION WITHOUT THE PROPER SUBMISSION OF THE ELECTRONIC COPY. **This means saving each assignment as either a .docx, .rtf, or a .pdf file.** If you do not submit BOTH formats, I will not accept your submission.

Penalties for Late Work: Students are responsible for finding out material due date(s) with regard to missed work; if a student is absent on the day out-of-class work is due or if a student is present but does not turn in the work on the assigned due date, ten points will be deducted from the overall grade of the assignment for each day (not class period) the work is late. If a student finds it necessary to miss class on a day work is due, the material should be emailed to me the day work is

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due in order to avoid any penalty. **Note: I do not accept late assignments past three days (not class days)**

Office Consultations: An office consultation, whether it is conducted during scheduled office hours or during a scheduled appointment, is a time for you to meet with me to discuss very **specific** issues, i.e., a specific essay, a specific in-class or out-of-class assignment, a specific grade, a specific concern as it relates to your writing, etc. When you schedule an office consultation, you should come in prepared. Please do not come in, for example, with an assignment and say you just want to "go over it." **(I will also NOT review/proofread entire drafts that are emailed to me. You MUST schedule an appointment during office hours).** This semester, I will have at least 3 hours in the Writing Center. **Any student wishing to meet with me during those 3 hours must make an appointment in The Writing Center with Stephanie at the front desk.** In order for me to be able to give you the help you need, you need to be specific. For example, if you have an essay you are concerned about, write down EXACTLY what concerns you, i.e., thesis statement, paragraph development, comma splices, proper MLA format, etc. This will give us some guidelines during our consultation and help to generate discussion. Be aware that an email asking questions about an essay CANNOT replace an actual meeting with me during office hours. It is very difficult to respond to your questions and your needs by only responding to an email, especially if your questions are general. I welcome any email correspondence you wish to have with me; however, this type of correspondence is best used only when you have a very SPECIFIC question that does not require discussion. **Please Note: The official email communication method will be through campus e-mail (Gmail). **You are also NOT allowed to meet with me about an essay on the day it is due. All office consultations must occur prior to the essay due date.**

Another Note on Plagiarism: In addition to the University Policy, **students should be aware that if a student violates this policy and submits a work (ANY WORK) that is unoriginal/plagiarized, he/she may receive and "0" for the assignment and/or an "F" for the course at my discretion.** During the first few days of class, students will take a True/False Quiz over Plagiarism (answers will be reviewed and corrections allowed). At the end of the quiz, students will sign a contract which states that I have provided them with the University Policy, My Course Policy, and adequate information about plagiarism. Signatures will signify that students understand the penalties if said policies are violated. If a student submits a plagiarized assignment, in addition to receiving an "F" in the course (after the Withdrawal deadline), that student will also be reported to Academic Affairs and the Academic Dishonesty Council. **Academic dishonesty is not a joke. Plagiarism/cheating that goes without consequence devalues the education and degree that all students are pursuing. I want to read what YOU have to say.**

Grade Breakdown

Attendance and Participation: 25%--I take attendance each class period. Any absences/tardies will result in a deduction. After **three** absences (in other words, upon the fourth absence), students will receive an “F” in the course (before the W deadline—please see Attendance policy). Daily Grades will include (but are not limited to) class discussion, group work, presentations, book checks, “exit” papers (2 minute written responses to be completed at the end of each class period), etc. Each student begins each class with 100 points. If the student is unprepared for class or is disruptive, I will deduct points. The severity of the deduction correlates to the severity of the disruption—at MY discretion. Being unprepared or being disruptive can be defined as but is not limited to: any student that has not read or completed required assignments, does not bring material to class, falls asleep, is disrespectful to the instructor or other classmates, is on his/her phone, is late, is constantly speaking over other classmates or interrupting other’s ability to learn, etc.

Weekly Responses: 20%--There will be readings almost every week. Students will complete 200-word responses to these readings BEFORE class and submit those responses to Courseden. Responses should summarize the main argument and address main points. These can be somewhat informal/conversational.

Midterm Presentation and Response Essay: 15%--Each student will give a 5-10-minute presentation during midterm that will respond to a specific prompt regarding media influence and rhetoric (prompt TBA). This project will focus on critical thinking and responses to media representation and rhetorical situations. The presentation will be in class and must include 1) a visual, 2) analysis/interpretation of the chosen text, and 3) a short (1-2 page) reflection essay summarizing their project and research process.

Final Multimedia Project: 25%--Students will work individually and create an educational PSA instructing audiences of the dangers of Fake News and Media Illiteracy. Students may choose to create a podcast, short video, webpage, web-comic, etc. The overall grade will be based on the following criteria: 1) A written proposal outlining the topic and format of the project, 2) the project (posted or linked to your class blog site), and 3) a 1-2 page reflection essay.

FYS Lab: The XIDS 2002 Lab is required for every student taking an XIDS 2002 course. The XIDS 2002 Lab is worth 15% of your XIDS 2002 course grade, so please complete what is required of you below. Under the CONTENT tab in Courseden, there are four different activities outlined (Major/Career Exploration, Writing Support, Study Skill Development, and Library Exploration). You must complete THREE of the four to receive full course credit for this assignment.

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If you have any questions about the XIDS 2002 Lab, please email fyp@westga.edu.

EXTREMELY TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic/Reading Assignment
Week One	
Week Two	<p>Tuesday, August 20: Intro (to each other and the course)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --How to Student 101 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --email/Professors/academia --Resources on campus --Barriers to success --Critical thinking mindset **HW—email to me by Friday (8/23) demonstrating proper email etiquette <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --introduce yourself --Why UWG? --Why this course? --Concerns? Questions? <p>Open drop ends today at 11:59pm.</p>
Week Three	<p>Tuesday, August 27: Have read Ross's "Introduction to Everyday Bias" and turn in response to Courseden BEFORE class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Bias→Fake news: how do we get there? --Rhetoric—How language controls us
Week Four	<p>Tuesday, September 3: Have Read McIntyre's "The Roots of Cognitive Bias" and turn in response Courseden BEFORE class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Reading the News: Bias Chart --Audience
Week Five **Midterm Presentations Begin	<p>Tuesday, September 10: Have Read McIntyre's "Decline of Traditional Media" and turn in response Courseden BEFORE class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Lecture: (Brief) history of News Media --"Fairness" and Reporting
Week Six **Midterm Presentations Continue	<p>Tuesday, September 17: Who Owns the News?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Sinclair Broadcasting—video in class and discussion --Local News and Reporting
Week Seven **Midterm Presentations Continue	<p>Tuesday, September 24: Have read McIntyre's "Rise of Social Media and The Problem of Fake News" and turn in response Courseden BEFORE class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Anatomy of a Fake News Story: QAnon, 8Chan, Whatsapp, Algorithms --Conspiracy Theories (video)
Week Eight	<p>Tuesday, October 1:</p>

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	NO CLASS MEET: INSTEAD FYS LAB—Meet at 3:00-3:30 in Library next to Starbucks
Week Nine **Midterm Presentations Continue	Tuesday, October 8: Have read McIntyre’s “What is Post-Truth?” and turn in response Courseden BEFORE class --Post-truth and Politics (2016 and beyond) Last day to withdraw with a grade of W is tomorrow, Wednesday, October 9.
Week Ten **Midterm Presentations Continue	Tuesday, October 15: “Biased”—Is there such thing as “Liberal” or “Conservative” Media? --Slanted vs. Fake News
Week Eleven **Midterm Presentations Continue (if necessary)	Tuesday, October 22: Cambridge Analytica— <i>The Great Hack</i> Documentary in Class
Week Twelve	Tuesday, October 29: Cambridge Analytica— <i>The Great Hack</i> Documentary Continued in Class; Discussion
Week Thirteen	Tuesday, November 5: Response to <i>The Great Hack</i> in Courseden BEFORE class --Catch up day
Week Fourteen	Tuesday, November 12: Looking To 2020—implications for the upcoming elections
Week Fifteen	Tuesday, November 19: Fighting Back: media literacy and social responsibility
Week Sixteen	Tuesday, November 26: Thanksgiving Break—No Class!
Week Seventeen	Tuesday, December 3: Course Evaluations this week.
Finals Week	Final Projects Due this week