University of Richmond
First Year Seminar

FYS 100: A Generation of Cynics
Spring 2018
Course Times: Monday (M) & Wednesday (W) 12:00 – 1:15pm
Regular Course Location: 205 Ryland Hall

Course Instructors

Sojourna J. Cunningham
Email (preferred): scunning@richmond.edu
Office: Boatwright Library 185
Phone: (804) 289-8977
Office Hours: Wed 3-6 & by appointment
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Samantha Guss
Email (preferred): sguss@richmond.edu
Office: Boatwright Library 182
Phone: (804) 289-8851
Office Hours: Thurs 3-6 & by appointment
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Overview of Course

The purpose of this course is to explore the creation, consumption, and dissemination of information. The Internet has globalized and democratized access to information. Critical literacy has not kept up with that access, contributing to a generation that can be either too cynical or too accepting. Using a mix of scholarly and popular sources, students will explore their own information seeking behaviors, think about biases, and ultimately begin to place themselves as both consumers and creators of information.

FYS Objectives and Aims of First-Year Seminar

This course, as a First-Year Seminar (FYS), was created to enhance and sharpen your college level reading, writing, and analytical skills through the lens of information work. In class we will be wrestling with questions such as: How does the process of seeking information create networks? What are the implications of corporate control of information? How do we create, judge, and evaluate the "value" of information? Can information ever be unbiased?

Learning Objectives and Course Goals

All First-Year Seminars share the same five common goals:

- Expand and deepen students' understanding of the world and of themselves
- Enhance their ability to read and think critically
- Enhance their ability to communicate effectively, in writing, speech, and other appropriate forms
- Develop the fundamentals of information literacy and library research
- Provide the opportunity for students to work closely with a faculty mentor

Blackboard

All course-related information will be available on Blackboard. That includes readings, copies of the syllabus, assignments, rubrics, and grades. If you have not already, please familiarize yourself with the Blackboard website and contact us immediately if you have any difficulties. We may also use Blackboard to post announcements and other communication.

Course Readings and Access

Required Text

- danah boyd. 2014. *It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

This text is available for purchase in the campus bookstore. It is also freely available at danah.org, but if you prefer to read on paper, it will be more efficient and eco-friendly to simply buy a copy of the printed book (rather than printing it out yourself).

A physical copy of the text is also available at Boatwright Library as a Course Reserve. It can be checked out for two hours at a time by asking at the front desk.

Additional readings will be required throughout the semester and are listed in the course schedule on the day when we will discuss them (that is, you should have read them PRIOR TO class on that day). All readings will be available through Blackboard. **It is recommended that you print out copies of these readings and bring them with you to class.** We will be providing reading guides for all of the assigned readings. Quizzes will be based upon the reading guides and will be open-note.

Course Work Expectations and Submitting Assignments

Your final grade will be based upon your performance on written assignments, class participation, discussion leadership, and your oral presentation. This is a seminar-based class. This means you **must** do the readings and participate during class discussions. Participation will be measured will be through pop quizzes and in-class discussion engagement.

We will provide a rubric for all written assignments that clarify our expectations on your writing. All of your written assignments are scaffolded, meaning that they are created to build upon each other. To receive a passing grade for this course, you must hand in all written assignments and complete the required oral presentation. Failure to do will result in an F for the course.

We recognize that reading, researching, and writing are processes. To that end, we have built in time in class to revise, rewrite, and think. Our ultimate goal is to help you become a better reader, writer, and thinker who is prepared for–and excited about–future college-level work. We want you to produce products in this class that you are genuinely interested in and passionate about.

As social scientists, we are aware of the role unconscious bias can play in evaluation and so will attempt to remove as much of that bias as possible. **To do so, we ask that you submit all of your writing assignments with your UR ID and word count in the upper left corner INSTEAD OF your name.** We ask that you submit all of your written assignments through Blackboard (with the exception of your rough draft, which requires that you bring a paper copy with you to class, and peer review forms, which you will complete on paper). **All papers should be in 12-point font and in MS Word format.** Please do not email assignments to us. When we finish grading your assignments, we will match them up to your name in Blackboard and return the graded assignment back to you via Blackboard.

Special Issues for this Team-Taught Course:
1. Communication: We (instructors) will work hard to communicate clearly and consistently with each other and with you (students), so we ask the same of you. Please communicate with us as much as possible and if you need to email us something urgent, please email both of us.
2. Grading: At the beginning of the semester, we will both review each piece of written work, will both provide comments, and then will work together to give you a grade. Later in the semester, you may receive comments and a grade from only one of us for a given assignment, but both of us will always read all of your writing and we will be careful to balance grading to avoid bias.

Assessments

Written Communication	Points
Information Log	15
Information Log Response Paper	25
Wrong on the Internet Project (WIP):	
WIP Finding Your Original Articles (Step 1)	5
WIP Finding a Scholarly Source (Step 2)	5
WIP Initial Reflection Paper (Step 3)	25
WIP Sample Annotation (Step 4a)	5
WIP Annotated Bibliography (Step 4b)	40
WIP Literature Review (Step 5)	30
WIP Research Paper Rough Draft (Step 6)	40
WIP Peer Review (Step 7)	10
WIP Research Paper Final Draft (Step 8)	60
WIP Final Reflection Paper (Step 10)	20

Participation & Oral Communication

WIP Presentation in PK Format (Step 9)	20
Discussion Leading	25
Quiz Grades	65
Participation	60

Throughout the semester you will have the opportunity to earn up to 450 points towards your final course grade. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped. We will monitor your participation in class discussions and other forms of class participation and at the end of the semester we will provide you with a final score. Mid-semester, we will provide you with an estimate of your participation score and you will be required to complete a self-assessment.

Fractional grades may be rounded up at the discretion of the instructors. This will only occur when you have demonstrated sustained involvement and engagement with the course material. This sustained engagement can be demonstrated by consistent attendance, handing in all assignments on time and regular participation in class discussions.

You will also have several opportunities to earn extra credit points for things such as attending Academic Skills Center workshops, campus lectures, and events. These opportunities will be announced as they occur over the course of the semester and we will give specific instructions about what you must do to earn credit. All extra credit must be completed by April 11, 2018.

Once all assignments have been scored, we will calculate the final course grade.

The grade scale is as follows:

A: 100 – 95   C: 76.9 – 73.0
A-: 94.9 – 91   C-: 72.9 – 70.0
B+:90.9 -87.0   D+: 69.9 – 67.0
B: 86.9 – 83.0   D: 66.9 – 63.0
B-: 82.9 – 80.0   D-: 62.9 – 60.0
C+: 79.9 – 77.0   F: 59.9 – 0

Attendance Policies

We will take attendance in every class. You are allowed to miss up to 2 classes without penalty. After missing more than 2 classes, we will subtract 3 percentage points from your

final grade. If you miss more than two classes, we will be concerned with your ability to keep with the course work and discussions. We do however recognize that life is complicated and you may be sick or have familial obligations. If attendance becomes a problem, communicate with us. Credibility is earned and communicating clearly is one way to earn credibility.

Late Paper Policy
We expect all papers to be submitted on the day that they are due. If they are not submitted on time, you will be penalized 10% of your grade. i.e. if your paper was a B+, it will now be a C+. 10% will be taken for every day a paper is late. If there is an emergency or problem with submitting a paper, please let us know as soon as possible.

Cell Phone and Device Policies

This course is designed to be a collaborative and discussion based class. So we ask that you put away all laptops and cell phones during the class period. Please take notes on paper.

Exceptions to this rule may be made on a case-by-case basis. One of the books is available online and if you need to use the online version of the book, you may open your device.

Support for First Year Seminars

Counseling and Psychological Services: CAPS (http://wellness.richmond.edu/offices/caps/ or (804) 289-8119): Assists currently enrolled, full-time, degree-seeking students in improving their mental health and well-being, and in handling challenges that may impede their growth and development. Services include short-term counseling and psychotherapy, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

Writing Center: The Writing Center (http://writing.richmond.edu or (804) 289-8263) assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work. The Writing Center is located in Boatwright Library on the first floor in the Research Commons area and we have a Writing Consultant assigned to our course, Liza David (elizabeth.david@richmond.edu). Part of your grade will involve making appointments with Liza after the completion of your annotated bibliography *and* after finishing the rough draft of your final paper.

Library: An important aspect of this First Year Seminar is the work you will do to build your information literacy and library research skills. These skills will be developed throughout the semester, but enhanced by our library research session with our FYS librarian, **Natisha Harper (nharper@richmond.edu).**
The library research session will introduce you to Natisha and to the resources available at the UR Libraries, including the library website, catalog and research databases. The session will also discuss ways to cite and evaluate your information.

Even though your instructors are also librarians and are available any time to help you with library research, we think it's important that you have the option to meet with a librarian who is not your instructor and can model the role that librarians will play throughout your career at UR. Feel free to email Natisha any time for help or consultation about your research.

Getting help from our Writing Consultant and Librarian are authorized and encouraged!

Academic Integrity

Integrity is at the heart of scholarship and, you will likely find, many aspects of your life. We will discuss the specifics of what integrity means in an academic environment, but in short, you are expected to understand and uphold the UR Honor Code at all times, err on the side of caution, and ask questions if you are unsure.

Week 1

1. January 17
   - Syllabus Review, Classroom Expectations

Week 2

2. January 22
   - boyd, preface, Introduction & Chapter 1

3. January 24
   - **WIP ORIGINAL ARTICLES (STEP 1) due by 11:45am**
   - Wildemuth "Developing a research question"
   - Complete "What is a Research Question?" ASU Quiz
   - Treem & Leonardi, "What is expertise? Who is an expert? Some definitive answers"
   - http://www.danah.org (explore informally)

Week 3

4. January 29
   - **INFORMATION LOG due by 11:45am**
   - Hjortshoj, "Rules and Errors"
   - King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

5. January 31
   - boyd, Ch. 2 and 3

Week 4

6. February 5
- Irvin, "What is Academic-Writing?"
- Borgman, Ch. 8 "Disciplines, Documents and Data"

7. February 7
- **INFORMATION LOG RESPONSE PAPER due by 11:45am**
- *LIBRARIAN INSTRUCTION SESSION*

Week 5

8. February 12 - **Discussion Leader Group 1**

- **WIP SCHOLARLY SOURCE CITATION (STEP 2) due by 11:45am**
- boyd, Ch. 4 and 5

9. February 14
- Bergstrom & West, "How do you know a paper is legit?"
- Levitin, "Identifying Expertise"

Week 6

10. February 19
- **WIP INITIAL REFLECTION PAPER (STEP 3) due by 11:45am**
- boyd, Ch. 6

11. February 21
- **WIP SAMPLE ANNOTATION (STEP 4a) due by 11:45am**
- Bizup, "An Alternative Vocabulary that Emphasizes Use" from BEAM: A rhetorical vocabulary for teaching research based writing. **pp 75-77 ONLY**
- Swales, "Create a Research Space"
- Booth, Colomb, & Williams, "Assembling Reasons and Evidence"

Week 7

12. February 26 – **Discussion Leader Group 2**
- boyd, Ch. 7 & 8

13. February 28
- White, "Authoring the self: Scholarly identity in Performative Times"
- Grollman, "Objectivity doesn't exist (and that's a good thing)"
- Sumerau, "What is me-search?"
- boyd, "what's in a name": http://www.danah.org/name.html

- Berry, "Why objectivity still matters"

Week 8

14. March 5
- **WIP ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (STEP 4b) due by 11:45 am**
- Dvorsky, "The 12 cognitive biases that prevent you from being rational"
- The Oatmeal, "You're Not Going to Believe What I'm About to Tell You"
- *PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY VISIT*

15. March 7
- Levitin, "How do we know?"
- Bloyd-Peshkin & Sivek, "Magazines find there's little time to fact-check online"
- Benton, "The forces that drove this election's media failure are likely to get worse"

SPRING BREAK MARCH 12- 16

Week 9

16. March 19
- Groeger, "When the designer shows up the design"
- Best, "Thinking about Social Statistics"
- Levitin, "How numbers are collected"

17. March 21 – **Discussion Leader Group 3**
- Winner, "Do Artifacts Have Politics?"
- Jeffries, "Google's featured snippets are worse than fake news"
- Wright, "The secret history of hypertext"

WIP LITERATURE REVIEW (STEP 5) due by 9am on Friday March 23

Week 10

18. March 26 – **Discussion Leader Group 4**
- Davies, "How Statistics lost their power"
- boyd & Crawford, "Six provocations for big data"
- Kluger, "Why Scientists Should Celebrate Failed Experiments"
- Podcast: "Adam Ruins Everything Episode 38: Professor Brian Nosek On Science's Reproducibility Crisis and Opportunity" (first 20 minutes)

19. March 28
- Drake, "Documenting Dissent in the Contemporary College Archive: Finding our Function within the Liberal Arts"
- *RACE AND RACISM PROJECT ARCHIVIST VISIT*

Week 11

20. April 2
- **WIP ROUGH DRAFT (STEP 6) due on BlackBoard by 11:45am AND bring a copy with you to class**

21. April 4
- **WIP PEER REVIEW (STEP 7) due in class**
- *PEER REVIEW CLASS SESSION*

Week 12

22. April 9 – **Discussion Leader Group 5**
- boyd, "Did Media Literacy Backfire?"
- Mooney, "The Science of why we don't believe science"
- Caulfield, "Yes, digital literacy. But which one?"

23. April 11
- *IN CLASS PAPER REVIEW APPOINTMENTS*
- *PRESENTATION SIGN UPS*

Week 13

24. April 16
- Jackson & Jamieson, "Was Clarence Darrow a Creationist? How to be sure."

25. April 18
- **WIP FINAL PAPER (STEP 8) due by 11:45am**
- Skim *ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*

Week 14

26. April 23
- *CLASS PRESENTATIONS (WIP Step 9)*

27. April 25
- *CLASS PRESENTATIONS (WIP Step 9)*

Finals Period

We will NOT meet during our scheduled finals time, but your Self Reflection Paper is due at the beginning of Finals Week (submit via Blackboard).
- **WIP FINAL REFLECTION PAPER (STEP 10) due April 30th by 9:00am**

Course Bibliography: An APA-style list of all our course readings.

Bergstrom, C. & West, J. (2017). How do you know a paper is legit? Retrieved from
http://callingbullshit.org/tools/tools_legit.html

Benton, J. (2016). The forces that drove this election's media failure are likely to get worse. *NiemanLab.* Retrieved from http://www.niemanlab.org/2016/11/the-forces-that-drove-this-elections-media-failure-are-likely-to-get-worse/

Berry, S. J. (2005). Why objectivity still matters. *NeimanReports.* Retrieved from
http://niemanreports.org/articles/why-objectivity-still-matters/

Best, J. (2012). Thinking about social statistics. In *Damned lies and statistics: Untangling numbers from the media, politicians, and activists* (pp. 160-172)*.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Bizup, J. (2008). BEAM: A rhetorical vocabulary for teaching research-based writing. *Rhetoric Review, 27*(1), 72–86. doi: 10.1080/07350190701738858
(Also available from: http://writing.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Bizup-BEAM.pdf)

Bloyd-Peshkin, S. & Sivek, S. C. (2017). Magazines find there's little time to fact-check online. *Columbia Journalism Review.* Retrieved from https://www.cjr.org/b-roll/magazine-fact-checking-online.php

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2009). Assembling reasons and evidence. In *The craft of research* (3rd ed.) (pp. 130-138). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Retrieved from http://site.ebrary.com/lib/richmond/reader.action?docID=10288700&ppg=127

Borgman, C. L. (2007). Disciplines, documents, and data. In *Scholarship in the digital age: Information, infrastructure, and the internet* (pp. 179-226). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

boyd, d. (2017). Did media literacy backfire? *apophenia.* Retrieved from
http://www.zephoria.org/thoughts/archives/2017/01/09/did-media-literacy-backfire.html

boyd, d. (2014). *It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens.* New Haven: Yale University Press.
(Available from https://www.danah.org/books/ItsComplicated.pdf)

boyd, d. and Crawford, K. (2011). Six provocations for big data. Proceedings from *A Decade in Internet Time: Symposium on the Dynamics of the Internet and Society*, September 2011. doi: 10.2139/ssrn.1926431

Caulfield, M. (2016). Yes, digital literacy. But which one? Retrieved from https://hapgood.us/2016/12/19/yes-digital-literacy-but-which-one/

Cottom, T. M. (2017). What #LowerEd is and is not. Retrieved from https://tressiemc.com/essays-2/what-lowered-is-and-is-not/

Davies, W. (2017, January 19). How statistics lost their power – and why we should fear what comes next. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/jan/19/crisis-of-statistics-big-data-democracy

Dvorsky, G. (2013). The 12 cognitive biases that prevent you from being rational. *Gizmodo.* Retrieved from http://io9.gizmodo.com/5974468/the-most-common-cognitive-biases-that-prevent-you-from-being-rational

Franco, A., Malhotra, N., & Simonovits, G. (2014). Publication bias in the social sciences: Unlocking the file drawer. *Science, 345*(6203), p. 1502. doi:10.1126/science.1255484

Groeger, L. (2017). When the designer shows up in the design. *ProPublica.* Retrieved from https://www.propublica.org/article/when-the-designer-shows-up-in-the-design

Grollman, E. (2014). Objectivity doesn't exist (and that's a good thing). *Conditionally Accepted.* Retrieved from https://conditionallyaccepted.com/2014/04/10/objectivity/

Hjortshoj, K. (2009). Rules and errors. In *The transition to college writing* (2nd ed.) (pp. 79-106). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Inman, M. (n.d.). You're not going to believe what I'm about to tell you. *The Oatmeal.* Retrieved from http://theoatmeal.com/comics/believe

Irvin, L. L. (2010). What is 'academic' writing?" In C. Lowe and P. Zemliansky (Eds.), *Writing spaces: Readings on writing, Vol. 1.* Anderson, S.C.: Parlor Press. Retrieved from http://writingspaces.org/essays

Jackson, B. & Jamieson, K. H. (2007). Was Clarence Darrow a creationist? How to be sure. In *unSpun: Finding facts in a world of disinformation* (pp. 153-178). New York: Random House.

Jeffries, A. (2017). Google's featured snippets are worse than fake news. *The Outline.* Retrieved from https://theoutline.com/post/1192/google-s-featured-snippets-are-worse-than-fake-news

King Jr., M. L. (1963). *Letter from a Birmingham jail.* Retrieved from https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

Kluger, J. (2014). Why scientists should celebrate failed experiments. *Time.* Retrieved from
http://time.com/3206754/publication-bias-null-results/

Levitin, D. (2016). *A field guide to lies: Critical thinking in the information age.* New York: Dutton.

Mooney, C. (2011). The Science of why we don't believe science. *Mother Jones*. Retrieved from
http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2011/03/denial-science-chris-mooney

Morris, S. (Producer). (2017, November 1). *Adam ruins everything episode 38: Professor Brian
Nosek on science's reproducibility crisis and opportunity* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from
http://www.maximumfun.org/adam-ruins-everything/adam-ruins-everything-episode-38-
professor-brian-nosek-sciences-reproducibilit

Noble, S. (2014). *Social influences on technology: Safiya Noble at TEDxUIUC.* Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXuJ8yQf6dI

Peterson, A. H. (2017). Charlize Theron is not here to make friends. *Buzzfeed News*. Retrieved from
https://www.buzzfeed.com/annehelenpetersen/charlize-theron-is-not-here-to-make-
friends?utm_term=.iyd43oRbg#.tqa0myd2A

Peterson, A. H. (2017). not here to make friends. *Tinyletter.com: Anne Helen Peterson* [newsletter].
Retrieved from http://tinyletter.com/annehelenpetersen/letters/not-here-to-make-friends

Sumerau, J. (2015). What is me-search? *Write Where it Hurts.* Retrieved from
https://www.writewhereithurts.net/what-is-me-search/

Swales, J. (2015). 'Create a research space' (CARS) model of research introductions. In E. Wardle &
D. Downs (Eds.), *Writing about writing: A college reader*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
Retrieved from https://researchwrit.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/article_swales_cars-
model.pdf

Treem, J. W. & Leonardi, P. M. (2016). What is expertise? Who is an expert? Some definitive
answers. In J.W. Treem & P.M. Leonardi (Eds.), *Expertise, communication, and organizing.*
Oxford: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from
http://newman.richmond.edu:2048/login?url=http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/97801
98739227.001.0001

White, J. (2010). Authoring the self: Scholarly identity in performative times. *Creative Approaches
to Research, 3*(1), 1-2.

Wildemuth, B. (2009). Developing a research question. In *Applications of social research methods
to questions in information and library science* (pp. 11-15)*. Westport, CT: Libraries
Unlimited.

Winner, L. (1980). Do artifacts have politics? *Daedalus, 109*(1), pp. 121-136.

Wright, A. (2014). The secret history of hypertext. *The Atlantic.* Retrieved from
https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/in-search-of-the-proto-memex/371385/

Yau, N. (2017). How to spot visualization lies. *Flowing Data.* Retrieved from
https://flowingdata.com/2017/02/09/how-to-spot-visualization-lies/