

Library 4, Information Competency (1 unit)
Course Syllabus
West Valley College

Maryanne Mills, MLS

Office hours: Tuesdays, 11:00AM – 11:30AM, Library, Rm. 16, or by appointment.

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Welcome

- Every day we witness the exponential growth of information in all its formats. New web sites, books, journals and multimedia resources are constantly being added to the “library of life”. As a student gathering research for a term paper, how do you navigate through all of this information and be able to identify what you need for your project? This course will provide you with opportunities to develop and strengthen your research skills and learn the core concepts of information retrieval. You will learn the essential techniques to finding, evaluating, analyzing and presenting information—key skills for a successful college career.

Course Objectives

The course is designed to enable the West Valley College student to:

- Describe a variety of information sources and tools used to access these sources.
- Develop an understanding of and appreciation for the research process.
- Develop and modify a search strategy for finding information using access tools.
- Evaluate information for its authority, relevancy and quality in relation to a given research topic.
- Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the Internet as a research tool
- Apply knowledge of the MLA (Modern Language Association) style by compiling an annotated bibliography.
- Recognize the ethical and legal issues of information use.

Professional Skills

The course is designed to facilitate the acquisition of following skills. This knowledge is highly valued in the workplace and in four year colleges:

- Knowing where to look for information.
- Using effective skills for finding the information without wasting time.
- Evaluating the information for its relevancy and accuracy to your project.

Student Responsibilities

Each student is expected to contribute to a positive learning environment. As such, student contributions include but are not limited to:

- Respecting the opinion of others.
- Being prepared to actively participate.
- Knowing when assignments are due.
- Taking responsibility for your learning and progress in the course.
- Requesting assistance from the instructor when needed.
- Reading and following the Reading and Assignment Schedule.
- Reading and understanding the Student Conduct Policy in the West Valley Catalog.

Course Policies:

1. It is the student’s responsibility to know when assignments are due.

2. **Attendance:** This is a six-week class with a large amount of information to cover. Students are expected to attend every class and to arrive on time. Those arriving more than five minutes late may be counted as absent. At the instructor's discretion, a student may be dropped if they miss the first two classes.
3. **Assignment Due Dates:** Assignments are due either at the beginning of each class or electronically through Angel. **Late assignments will not be accepted for credit.**
4. **All assignments must be typed unless otherwise noted.**
5. **Cell phone/pager use:** As a courtesy to the instructor and to fellow students, please turn all cell phones and pagers off prior to class. Students caught using cell phones (including text messaging) or pagers will be asked to leave the classroom and may be counted as absent for that class.
6. **PC Use:** Please refrain from surfing the Internet or checking your email during class time. Not only may you miss something important that is said in class, but it is a distraction to fellow students and to the instructor.
7. **Food/Beverage Policy:** Food or drink of any kind is not allowed in the classroom

Disability and Educational Support

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact DESP in the Learning Services Bldg. At (408) 741-2010 (voice) or (408) 741-2658(TTY) for assistance.

Unlawful Discrimination/Sexual Harassment

If you have a complaint or someone has shared information with you as a student or employee that is unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment, contact the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources at West Valley-Mission Community College District, Human Resources Department, (408-741-2060). If the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources is not available, contact the President of the college in which you attend or are employed. For West Valley College, contact the office of Dr. Philip Hartley at 408-741-2097.

Student Attendance Policy (from the WVC Catalog)

Students are expected to attend all sessions of class. Instructors may drop students from the class if they fail to attend the first class meeting, or when accumulated unexcused hours of absence exceed ten percent of the total number of hours the class meets during the semester. Moreover, an instructor may drop from the class any student who fails to attend at least one class session during the first week of instruction.

Prerequisite: None

Required texts:

- Badke, William. Research Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog. 2nd ed. NY: iUniverse, Inc., 2004. ISBN: 0-595-31371-X
- Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed. NY: MLA, 2003.
- You will also have additional reading materials that will be available through Angel.

Grading

In order to get credit for this class, students must receive a grade of C or better, or receive a "credit" grade.

The course grade will be determined by the student's performance on the following:

1. Assignments:	15%
2. Midterm	15%
3. Final Project:	33%
4. Final Exam:	27%
5. Discussion/Chat participation:	10%.
	100%

<u>Grade Percentage</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100	A Excellent
80-89	B Good
70-79	C Satisfactory
60-69	D Less than Satisfactory
< 60	F Failing

Important Dates

This is a 6-week class, so add/drop dates are different than a regular full semester class. It is the student's responsibility to add/drop the class.

Last Day to Drop the Class without a "W" and with a refund: 10% of class length

Last Day to Drop a Class with a "W" is: 75% of class length

Final Project: Students are required to compose an annotated bibliography on a topic of their choice. **This project is worth 33% and must be completed with a grade of C or better in order to get credit for the course.** I have scheduled office hours where I will be available for consultation on this project. Further information will be distributed during the second week of class.

Final Exam: The final exam will be cumulative and will cover material presented in lecture, assigned readings, the midterm and homework assignments. **It is worth 27% toward your final grade.**