

**RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE**

**INFO 101 Information Seeking in Today's World**

**I. Basic Course Information**

A. Course Number and Title: INFO 101 Information Seeking in Today's World

B. New or Modified Course: New

C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Spring      Year: 2019

**D. Effective Term: Spring 2020**

E. Sponsoring Department: Library

F. Semester Credit Hours: 1

G. Weekly Contact Hours: 2      Lecture: 2  
Laboratory: 0  
Out of class student work per week: 4

H. Prerequisites/Corequisites: None

I. Laboratory Fees: None

J. Name and Telephone Number or E-Mail Address of Department Chair and Divisional Dean at time of approval: Megan Dempsey, [megan.dempsey@raritanval.edu](mailto:megan.dempsey@raritanval.edu); Dean Sarah Imbriglio, [sarah.imbriglio@raritanval.edu](mailto:sarah.imbriglio@raritanval.edu)

**II. Catalog Description**

This course is designed to prepare students for information seeking at the college level. Students will examine the information landscape and the role of technology in delivering information in a variety of formats. By learning effective search techniques, appropriate attribution of sources, and the ethical use of information, students will become savvy consumers and producers of information in both academic and social situations. Students will be encouraged to think about the creation and context of information and how the use of certain technologies to present or distribute different types of information affects its value, credibility, and usefulness. At the end of the course, students will be equipped to discover, evaluate and use information sources for a variety of purposes and across disciplines.

### III. Statement of Course Need

- A. College students in the digital age need to be equipped to encounter, question, and evaluate the vast amounts of information that confront them on a daily basis, and to seek out information sources that provide alternative viewpoints in order to think critically about facts, opinion, news, research, persuasion and other types of information. This course supplements the basics of information literacy that students receive in English Composition I and II by furthering their understanding of the information creation process and how context influences the creation, presentation, and interpretation of information. By learning effective search and information retrieval strategies for the open web, popular internet search engines, social media, and multi-disciplinary library databases, students will examine the vast information landscape and their responsibility as consumers and producers of a wide variety of information sources. The course also provides students with a deeper understanding of concepts that are often only covered on the surface in discipline-specific courses by taking a broad look at the nature of information exchange and scholarly communication. For example, while a social science course may teach students how to use APA citation format in a research paper, this course will explain more generally how citation formats function as a scholarly communication tool in different disciplines, thus deepening students' understanding of how and why information is shared in different settings and why attention to the conventions of a discipline matters. Particular attention will be paid to the ethical use of both technology and information in the broader context of academic and scholarly integrity.
- B. This course is not discipline-specific and so will be valuable to students across a wide range of programs. It complements programs that require Computer Literacy, Media Literacy and Technology, or Technological Literacy across the Social Sciences by focusing less on technology and more substantially on the information literacy threshold concepts identified in [\*ACRL's Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education\*](#). The course is also appropriate in programs for which technological competency is embedded in required major courses but a foundation of information literacy would be valuable elsewhere in the curriculum.
- C. Please describe the transferability of this course.
  - 1. This course generally transfers as a free elective.

### IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. Free Elective
- B. This course serves as a General Education course in Technological Competency (pending)
- C. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, [www.njtransfer.org](http://www.njtransfer.org); b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

## V. Outline of Course Content

- A. Information creation and context
  - 1. The lifecycle of information and its effect on source creation
    - a. Format versus type of information
    - b. Delivery speed of different formats and information types
    - c. Effect of delivery on how information is interpreted
    - d. Social impact of information in different contexts and at different times in the information lifecycle
  - 2. Contextual nature of authority
    - a. Scholarly and “acknowledged” authority
    - b. Authority derived from societal or cultural position, special experience
    - c. Marginalized voices and authority
    - d. Recognizing appropriate authority for an information need
- B. Discovering and evaluating information
  - 1. Information discovery and retrieval systems
    - a. Internet search engines
    - b. Library databases
    - c. Social media
    - d. Proprietary versus open access information systems
  - 2. Strategic exploration
    - a. Recognizing limitations to searching
    - b. Seeking alternative viewpoints
    - c. Following sources
  - 3. Evaluating sources of information
    - a. Recognizing bias and misinformation
    - b. Appropriateness of source for information need
    - c. Situating information within the larger conversation
- C. Value of information
  - 1. Information as part of a scholarly conversation
    - a. Formal and informal methods of sharing information
    - b. Conventions of information sharing within disciplines
    - c. Synthesizing information sources to create new knowledge
    - d. Understanding opportunities to contribute to scholarly conversation at an appropriate level
  - 2. Ethical use of information
    - a. Introduction to intellectual property, copyright, open access
    - b. Purpose of attribution to sources
    - c. Appropriate methods of attribution in different situations (journalistic-style writing; academic writing; oral presentations; online posts)

## **VI. General Education and Course Learning Outcomes**

### **A. General Education Learning Outcomes:**

**At the completion of the course, students will be able to:**

1. Use technology to discover, organize and present information for different purposes. (GE-4, IL)
2. Explain the social and/or scholarly value of an information source. (GE- IL, \*)
3. Apply knowledge of source creation and context to evaluate the authority of a source and its appropriateness for an information need. (GE- IL, \*)
4. Draw relationships between sources and own ideas verbally or in writing through paraphrasing, quoting and using appropriate attribution. (GE-1, IL)

### **B. Course Learning Outcomes:**

[Same as above]

### **C. Assessment Instruments**

1. research project (required)
2. search/reflection journal (required)
3. online discussion forums
4. oral presentation

## **VII. Grade Determinants**

- A. journals
- B. research project
- C. oral presentation

This course may include the following modes of teaching:

- A. lecture/discussion
- B. small-group work
- C. computer-assisted instruction
- D. student oral presentations
- E. student collaboration
- F. independent research

## **VIII. Texts and Materials**

- A. Open educational resources available through Canvas and library website

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

### **IX. Resources**

What specific or unusual resources (such as library, computer, or laboratory resources) does the College presently have that will be necessary for the course? What additional resources will be needed? List the resources.

- A. library databases
- B. computer lab classroom (Library Classroom L-107)

### **X. Honors Options [if relevant]**

There is no Honors option for this course.