Introduction by Stephen Colbert and now an entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, what has been called “truthiness” is defined as “the quality of appearing to be true while not actually or necessarily being so” and the act of “accepting or presenting something which is not true as the truth.” Certainly, the perils and possibilities of truthiness seem pressing today. But mass-circulated and popular media has long been a purveyor of facts intermingled with fictions. In this course, we will undertake an historical survey of U.S. periodicals—serial publications like newspapers, magazines, and cartoons—through an emphasis on their “truthiness.” As a class that meets entirely online, we have a unique opportunity to learn about serialized publication in one of its main contemporary mediums: so many current periodicals are published serially on the Internet!

Our online exploration of Western literature and serial publication will pose the following questions:

- What are the relations between documentation, circulation, and perception?
- How are the edges of fact blurred by verbal and visual representation?
- Why does fact shade so quickly into fiction when representations of an “Other” are at stake?
- What are the relations between institutionalized conditions (such as structural racism) and social fictions (such as race) in the US?
- We will also seek answers to questions related to journalistic and print histories: What did historical newspapers print? Why? How did editors use reprinting, recirculation, and remediating to advance diverse agendas? How do the possibilities and limitations of the internet affect serial publications (like newspapers)?

**Summer Sessions last only five (5) weeks; that means we have to cover a lot of material in a short amount of time. This course will move fast—like as fast as the 24 hour news cycle—and you are expected to keep up with readings and assignments in this course as in any other. Please see me if you are concerned about your ability to succeed in this fast-paced learning environment.**

**Required Technologies**

- Basic emailing, web browsing, and word processing skills
- A computer with reliable Internet access and a reliable office software suite. Here, you can access a free download of Office365 through your TAMUCC student ID: [Instructions for Office365](https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.html)

**Course Objectives**

In examining the production of “truthiness” as it circulated and circulates still in US culture, students can develop as interpreters and producers of texts, and thus prepare themselves to act ethically in the world based upon those interpretations.

At the end of the course, students should be able to:
• develop interpretive/analytical positions about texts that account for cultural & historical contexts and literary content.
• describe and assess information as presented in periodical & newspaper formats.
• articulate and respond to the positions of other writers, thinkers, artists, and cultural producers with clarity and purpose.
• use online formats to convey information effectively.
• compose clear sentences, paragraphs, and interpretive arguments in Standardized American English across a range of genres.

Additionally, students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate awareness of and abilities in four Core Objectives as defined by the Higher Education Coordinating Board of the State of Texas. These are:
• Critical Thinking Skills (CT) - creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
• Communication Skills (COM) - effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
• Social Responsibility (SR) - intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
• Personal Responsibility (PR) - ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

For more information, see http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=427FDE26-AF5D-F1A1-E6FDB62091E2A507

Assignments
Descriptions of each assignment, as well as evaluation criteria, will be provided throughout the course.
Hoax Story. 20%
Midterm Exam. 20%
Discussion Posts. 30%
Information Literacy Project. 30%

Hoax Story. In this assignment, you will have the chance to experiment with content, style & tone, and genre to convey a story or report that seems true but is not. As an expository essay, like what you might find in the newspaper, this writing should explain, describe, convey the meaning of, introduce, interpret, or set forth. This is not a piece of fiction with characters and a plot line—think of it as a non-fictional article/report that explains something, argues something based in “evidence,” or describes something.

Midterm Exams. The midterm will include short essay questions about the course materials.

Discussion Posts. One of the ways we will develop online community is by using discussion boards to facilitate class discussion. Each week, you will post a minimum of two posts: posting schedule will be determined by your assigned discussion group. See the assignment sheet for more detail about Discussion Forum structure and assessment.

Information Literacy Assignment. The final assignment in this course will be an Information Literacy Project. For this project, you will select a general theme/concept to guide your engagement with news content, collaboratively develop a sample flow chart for assessing sources, and refine your flow chart individually as you apply it to several news sources. Your final document in ENGL2316 will be a revised flow chart, analysis of at least 3 news articles, and brief summary of best practices to support information literacy.
Specific Course Policies.

Class Participation.
Each week, you will contribute to a discussion board to demonstrate your engagement with the course content and your grasp of the course material. In addition to regular discussion posting, you will frequently collaborate with your classmates in draft workshops and to develop important parts of your Information Literacy Assignment.

Studying Western literature in a serious way means getting to enjoy the pleasures of beautiful writing and the insights of sophisticated minds. It also means confronting violent histories, especially histories of race, sex, and labor. Our readings include accounts of physical abuses, rapes, and other harms, as well as the use of racist and sexist epithets. We might use a discussion forum to reflect upon how hard it can be to read this work, but all assigned readings are required. Also important is your willingness to engage thoughtfully, generously, and sympathetically with your peers in this learning community. Please email Professor Salter to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your own participation in this course.

Communication.
Work Expectations. All members of our learning community are expected to regularly check university email accounts and Blackboard messages. As a student in an online course, you should be working online more regularly than you would attend class, since you will also complete all your assignments online. I would suggest checking in with ENGL2333, through Blackboard, three times per week. It is advised that you check university email daily while a student at university.

The National Survey of Student Engagement suggests that successful university students spend as many as three (3) hours per week, outside of class, for every one (1) credit of a college course. Since ENGL2316.W is a 3-credit university course, that means the NSSE would recommend approximately 11 hours a week for reading, writing, and participation in an online class. http://nsse.indiana.edu/

Emailing. Students can expect a response to email queries on the same day during the business week (Monday-Friday) for emails sent before 7PM. If I have not responded to an email within 24 hours, please feel free to follow up. It is your responsibility to keep up with course emails sent through Blackboard or Islander Email. As a university student in an online course, you should check your university email every day.

Major Work Policies.

Submission Timing. I expect assignments to be completed on time, as evidenced by the date stamp given to them by the Blackboard dropboxes. In general, submission will be allowed until 11.59PM on the due date. If you have conflicts, or something unexpected arises, do not hesitate to contact your instructor, and we’ll arrive at a solution together.

You must submit all major assignments to pass the course. Incompletes will not be given except under extenuating circumstances that are discussed with your instructor prior to assignment of final grades. Make sure you give yourself adequate time to succeed!

Submission Formatting Guidelines. You should title files with your last name and an identifying word (EX “Salter.Proposal”). All document files should be submitted in Microsoft Word or pdf format. Written work should be submitted with your name, date, a title, and page numbers. Please use no larger than 12pt font and 1” margins.

Students have free access to Office 365; visit it.tamucc.edu/Office365/Office365.html
Online Considerations

Scheduling. ENGL 2316.W is a regular college course and not a correspondence course. It isn't designed for you to complete assignments entirely at your own pace. Part of my reasoning is about your learning as a student: you'll learn as much from each other than you will from me, and I try to run an interactive course. Part of my reasoning is about my job as your instructor: I have scheduled coursework in such a way that I have time to read and respond to your work individually. Additionally, both the major curatorial assignment and the exam are cumulative—they reflect the reading, interacting, and synthesizing we do together as the semester progresses.

- You may post weekly discussions early; some activities will require you to revisit and reply to others’ work. Do not forget to return at the right time and complete these portions of weekly discussions.
- You may begin the major project early, but do so understanding that I’ve ordered our course content and structured our weekly activities to move you through the process of your major project in stages. If you get too far ahead on those, you may end up heading in the wrong direction because you haven’t yet completed a key discussion activity or had a chance to benefit from peer review or feedback.

Communication and Online Learning: Interacting with each other is just as valuable as interacting with me. In general:

- Work extra hard to get to know other classmates. Reach out through email or Blackboard posts to support each other. If you have good info/tips on what is working for you, on resources, or other ideas, please share with the group so we can help each other learn.
- Remember that sarcasm and irony can be hard to interpret in an online context; consider the digital permanence of your communication in this course and in many online situations.
- Use the “Troubleshooting” forum in Blackboard to ask technical or process questions. The class will become its own community of practice, and you will be amazed at how good of a resource your colleagues can be.
- Don’t use discussion forums to ask or talk about grades. Grade discussions are private and should occur with your instructor only.

General Educational Policies.

Classroom / Professional Behavior Online. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide a high-quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Please bear in mind that respectful behavior in an online learning community has certain specific elements. Your tone, facial expression, and other interpersonal social cues are not available in online communication, so err on the side of clarity, concision, and kindness in your online communications.

Disabilities Accommodations. 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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.
**Basic Needs Statement.** Insufficient basic needs—food, a safe living space—can affect your performance in classes and make your university experience more challenging. If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food, or you lack a safe and stable place to live, you might consider several resources on campus.

- Contact the Division of Student Engagement and Success for support. Specifically, the office of Student Assistance provides consultations, resource management, and institutional support for “extenuating circumstances.” Their website is here: http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentAssistance.html. The Student Assistance Coordinator is Kristeen Gonzalez. UC318, M-F 8AM-5PM. 361-825-2612
- If you do not have access to or cannot afford sufficient food, be aware that “Izzy’s Food Pantry” provides on-campus access to food. Find more information here: http://seas.tamucc.edu/FoodPantry/
- If you feel comfortable doing so, please talk with me and/or your other professors. We may be able to assist.

**Academic Misconduct.** TAMU-CC identifies “Academic Misconduct” as “engaging in an act that violates the standards of the academic integrity policy as described in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.” University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in failure of the assignment in question, possible failure of the course, and possible disciplinary action at the university level.

**Plagiarism.** Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, the act of using someone else’s words and ideas without attribution. The TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct defines Plagiarism as “Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge. Examples:

- Using another’s work from print, web or other sources without acknowledging the source.
- Quoting from a source without citation.
- Using facts, figures, graphs, charts or information without acknowledgement of the source.
- Using a past assignment the student has completed as a portion of a new assignments, without providing citation.

Please note that without instructor permission, this is also considered a multiple submission violation.

We will discuss MLA citation style and the appropriate use of academic sources and conventions in several of our course units. If you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or see me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

Please do not hesitate to ask me any questions about academic misconduct and academic integrity at any time. See the TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct for more detail. http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html

**Academic Advising.** The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a
Dropping a Class. Although I hope we will learn together for the full duration of this semester, sometimes a student must drop a course. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and your instructor (me) before you decide to drop this course. You must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. This fall, the last day to drop a course with a automatic grade of “W” is July 27, 2020.

Grade Appeals. As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Statement of Academic Continuity. In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane or global pandemic, classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi. In such a circumstance, this course would continue through Blackboard and/or email. The syllabus and class activities might be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, digital faculties (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) would be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Proposed Schedule. Please note that the specifics of this Syllabus (2316.SMR2020) are subject to change, and you will be responsible for abiding by any such changes. Your instructor will notify you of any changes via Bb email.

Week 1: July 6-10. Introductory material and Science Writing Unit
Tues 7/7: Intro readings/ Video Clip
Friday 7/8: Discussion Forum Final Thoughts

Week 2: July 13-17. Science Writing Unit II
Mon 7/13: “Scientific Racism.” Douglass, Benneker, UNESCO.
Tues 7/14: War of the Worlds. HG Wells, Orson Wells.
Tuesday, July 14: Hoax Article Draft Due
Wed 7/15: Martians and Popular Magazines
Friday 7/17: Peer Review of Hoax Article/ DF Final Thoughts
Sunday, July 19: Final Draft of Hoax Article Due

Week 3: July 20 – 24. Lifestyle Unit
Tues 7/21. From Nathaniel West, Miss Lonelyhearts
Wed 7/22. Lifestyle Cartoons: R. Crumb; Alison Bechdel; Bill Watterson
Friday 7/24. Midterm Examination Open
Sunday, July 26: Midterm Examination Due

Week 4: July 27-31. Humor Unit
Mon 7/27. 20thC political cartoons. Katzenjammer Kids and others
Tues 7/28. 19thC Satire: Vanity Fair
Wed 7/29. Information Literacy Project: Themes and Concepts Proposal
Fri 7/31. DF Final Thoughts
Sunday, August 2: Information Literacy Flow Chart Due

Week 5: Aug. 3 – Aug. 7. Humor Unit/Conclusion
Mon 8/3. Humor in installments. Dickens's Pickwick Papers
Tues 8/4. Online Humor/Emoji Dick
Wed 8/5. DF Final Thoughts
Friday, August 7: Final Information Literacy Project Due