

FAKE NEWS ASSIGNMENT

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COURSE:

MANAGING GLOBALIZATION

(MGPO 469)

SUMMARY

This assignment addresses the concept of “fake news,” a term that refers to bias in the media and the purposeful misleading of media consumers. Using one actual news article, students write a biased news story from a specific stakeholder perspective that illustrates the bias in their story. The focus on bias teaches students to interrogate their sources.

GOALS

- Foster students’ media literacy and address the issue of “fake news”
- Encourage students to work with different formats of professional writing for distinct audiences
- Allow students to research relevant current events

“Teaching students how to write a biased or a fake news story inoculates them to bias and fakery. If you teach someone how to do a magic trick, it doesn’t mean that they will go around tricking people, but it does mean that, in the future, they will not be tricked again.”

- Elena Obukhova

STEPS

- 1 The instructor provides [detailed assignment instructions](#).
- 2 Students attend an in-class workshop where a librarian addresses the topics of fake news and media literacy. Students also have the opportunity to ask the instructor questions about the assignment.
- 3 Students receive 6-7 articles to get them started on their research.
- 4 Students pair up and agree on a “backstory” for their articles. Partners have the same backstory but write their assignments individually.
- 5 Students write a 150-word biased news story.
- 6 Students then write an exposé (maximum 700 words) that identifies the bias in the story, contextualizes why this person/outlet might have this bias, and provides evidence of bias from the news story, such as word choice and use of facts.

ASSESSMENT

The assignment is worth 15% of the final grade, assessed based on [a rubric](#) that includes criteria such as the quality of the biased news story and the exposé, and the overall professionalism of the written work.

READY TO TRY IT OUT?

HERE'S SOME ADVICE ...

- Provide specific instructions and be ready to answer students' questions.
- Make the criteria for assessment clear for students by providing a detailed rubric.
- If you're doing the assignment for the first time, ask a librarian to work with you.

BENEFITS

- Students learn how to become discerning media consumers.
- Students practice writing from different points of view.
- The novelty and creativity of this assignment increases student motivation to learn.

CHALLENGES

- Finding current, relevant, and appropriate articles can be time-consuming.
- Students may feel uncomfortable with the unique assignment format. It is helpful to provide students with opportunities to ask questions prior to starting the assignment, as well as during the time they're working on it.



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