

Center for News Literacy



STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

Welcome!

On behalf of the Center for News Literacy, digital producer Michael Spikes, and Stony Brook University, I want to welcome you to the 2013 News Literacy Curriculum Workshop.

The goals of the workshop are three-fold:

- To prepare you to teach News Literacy
- To share what we've learned by teaching this course to 7,500 undergraduates
- To help you build a support network of like-minded colleagues

The task before us has never been more important: As the Digital Age unleashes a daily torrent of tweets, blogs, spin, infotainment, "sponsored journalism", hype and unfiltered electronic graffiti, how do we prepare students to find the reliable information they will need as citizens?

As usual, teachers will be in the first wave attacking a problem that has only recently been articulated at the highest levels.

Speaking at the University of Michigan graduation in May 2010, U.S. President Barack Obama reiterated a central point of News Literacy: the habit of seeking only information that affirms what you think "*...will only reinforce and even deepen the political divides in our country,*" he said. "

But if we choose to actively seek out information that challenges our assumptions and beliefs, perhaps we can begin to understand where the people who disagree with us are coming from. This of course requires that we all agree on a certain set of facts to debate from and that is why we need a vibrant and thriving news business that is separate from opinion makers and talking heads."

News Literacy teachers have been at work on this problem for several years now, adapting the Stony Brook Model to local circumstances and training students to be savvy news consumers. In the last week, we heard from teachers who sat in your spot in each of the last three years' Summer Institutes.

Two high schools on Long Island are now offering the course for college credit. In Bozeman, Montana News Literacy shows a lot of promise as the framework for a remedial junior high reading class, and in Southern Queensland, Australia, the first online course based on the Stony Brook Model is underway.

Several of your classmates this summer are college professors who will teach News Literacy for the first time in the next year. We anticipate up to a dozen new undergraduate courses will be launching by spring.

By emphasizing collaborative projects this year, and live presentation of the materials you build, we hope you'll become the backbone of a vibrant nationwide network of News Literacy teachers, dedicated to serving students at this time when the truth is in trouble.

We hope your stay is enjoyable and productive.

Sincerely,

Dean Miller, Director
Center for News Literacy

