



COURSE SYLLABUS

INSC 590 – Nonfiction for Children & Young Adults
School of Information Sciences – Spring 2021

Updated on 01/13/21

Course Sections: 001 (CRN 33448) and 002 (CRN 33449)
Credit Hours: 3 Graduate Hours
Zoom Info: Tuesdays, 6:30-9:10 (EST);
<https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/97743053603> (password: dewylearn)

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Course Description

Critical survey of nonfiction/informational texts for children and young adults, with an emphasis on evaluation, selection, and utilization for school and public libraries.

Literature (the “resources” in the title) is at the heart of what we do as youth librarians. We base programming, provide services, and create living collections using it, but often the emphasis or attention is on fiction. Nonfiction is the other part of the collection, and is just as vital and important for both recreational and curriculum needs. Taking this class will give you an overview of informational materials, and you will be exposed to important authors, formats, trends, and titles that will serve you the rest of your careers. On a more practical note, every youth services librarian job requires this knowledge so you are making yourself employable by taking it.

This course is characterized by a collaborative learning atmosphere which requires you to use critical thinking skills and to have a commitment and involvement in your projects and discussions both in- and outside of class. I will do everything I can to make the course a rewarding learning experience that is meaningful to you as information professionals. However, to get the most out of this course you will need to be actively involved in our readings, discussions, and assignments.

INSC 590NF (Course) Learning Outcomes:

When you complete this course, you will be able to:

- Discuss the evolution of children’s informational/nonfiction resources and how they are social and cultural products;
- Articulate characteristics of good expository and narrative nonfiction writing and discuss how it may be used (in whatever form it takes) to satisfy information needs related to school or recreational interests;
- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a particular work;
- Articulate the challenges and opportunities of building nonfiction/informational collections in a school or public library;
- Articulate trends in youth nonfiction;
- Utilize informational texts for recreational programming, or to address learning outcomes outlined in learning standards;
- Utilize professional resources in order to stay abreast of new publications, trends, and media related to informational texts.

SIS Program Outcomes and Assignments for the Student Learning Collection (SLC)

Assignment	Associated with these SIS Outcomes
Subject Study	(1) Describe and discuss the processes of creation, organization, distribution, storage, access, retrieval, management, use, and preservation of information.
Nonfiction Analysis	(6) Analyze and apply standards or policies related to the processes of creation, organization, distribution, storage, access, retrieval, management, use or preservation of information.
Virtual Library Shelf/Space	(8) Assess and implement information technologies, systems, sources and services that serve users effectively and efficiently.

Textbook and Required Readings

Required (we will discuss this text our first night of class, so don’t fret if you can’t find it):

- Bamford, Rosemary A. and Kristo, Janice V. 2003. *Making Facts Come Alive: Choosing & Using Quality Nonfiction Literature K-8*, 2nd edition. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc. Hereinafter referred to as “Bamford.”

Recommended:

- Fraser, Elizabeth. 2012. *Reality Rules II: A Guide to Teen Nonfiction Reading Interests*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.
- Isaacs, Kathleen T. 2013. *Picturing the World: Informational Picture Books for Children*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Kristo, Janice V. and Bamford, Rosemary A. 2004. *Nonfiction in Focus: A Comprehensive Framework for Helping Students Become Independent Readers and Writers of Nonfiction, K-6*. New York: Teaching Resources. NOTE: Although this is targeted at K-6, the approaches and strategies would work for older students as well.

Additional Texts

One of the purposes of this course is to expose you to the widest possible range of nonfiction for youth, birth through high school. This is a course with a heavy reading load and there will be quite a bit of outside reading required for successful completion of the course. Individual texts

have not been required because there are usually many different titles that can be called upon to illustrate or support the concepts we discuss in class. **Be prepared to make frequent visits to libraries and/or bookstores of your choice, in order to do the additional reading, keeping in mind the issues related to the pandemic. You may need to allow more time to find or receive materials for use in class, so be proactive with your time management.**

How to be Successful in this Class

Be present, be intellectually curious, contribute regularly, and engage equally with your peers and me. You do more than show up for class. You are present and engaged during and after class; start and contribute to posts on Canvas and bring related materials to the attention of the instructor or your fellow students. Your contributions show original thought and initiative, not simply agreement or endorsement. You interact with your peers as much as you do with me so that we create a learning **community**. *Quality of thought is much more important than quantity.*

Civility

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of [civility and community](#) adopted by the campus.

Learning Environment

Our class space is intended to be a safe, intellectually stimulating, collaborative space for learning, where we respect each other's thoughts and process, and everyone's voice and experiences are important.

My approach to teaching is based on Malcolm Knowles' view of adults as learners, and John Dewey's ideas about active (versus passive) learning. You are self-directed, purposeful learners, who learn best when you build on your own personal experiences. You like to be involved in the construction of your learning experience. Our mutual active participation will create a collaborative learning community, where we co-create value. Even though you may have little to no professional interactions with nonfiction texts for youth, you still bring knowledge and experiences that can enrich our class when shared appropriately.

You are a selfless learner, willing to put yourself forward to ask questions, propose answers, and provide feedback as needed. It is usually the case, for example, that if one person has a question or needs clarification, many others also wonder. Be bold and brave, ask when others are silent.

There are several different kinds of learning activities in this class, such as lectures (live and pre-recorded), group work, presentations, guest lecturers, interviews, etc. Class sessions are 2 hours and 40 minutes long, broken up by a 15-minute break. Graduate students can realistically expect to spend three hours outside of class for each credit hour.

Information Literacy/Technological Resources

This online synchronous (real time) class requires you to be comfortable with different technologies, including Online@UT (Canvas and Zoom), the Internet and world wide web, word processing, presentation and spreadsheet software. There are campus resources to support your use of technology (see list below), but ultimately it is your responsibility to make sure you have the necessary technical equipment and knowledge needed. For example, one of the most often overlooked technical requirements is your Internet connection speed. Try to have the fastest Internet connection available in your area.

For additional information or support:

- [Technology at SIS](#)
 - For online support during class, scroll down the page until you see the section entitled, “Real Time, Live Class Meetings Using ZOOM”
- UT Office of Information Technology ([OIT](#))
 - There’s a link to the OIT HelpDesk on the upper left side of the page.
 - [LinkedIn Learning](#) is a great source of online training support, with tutorials and video on everything from Google Drive to Canvas. You’ll need your UTK netid and password to sign in.

Each semester OIT offers “Test Flights” where you can join an informal Zoom session to test your equipment and connections prior to class. These sessions are announced via email, appear on your Canvas dashboard, and also on the [LiveOnline@UT](#) site. Strongly recommended!

I am required to communicate with you through your UTK email address. If you prefer to use another address, consult the [OIT Helpdesk](#) to obtain directions for forwarding your UTK mail to your preferred address if you don’t wish to check both accounts.

Course Requirements, Assessment and Evaluation Methods

Assessment and Evaluation

All assignments receive a point value, and a perfect score on all assignments adds up to 100 points (although this may change before we start class). The University mandates a particular [grading scale](#) for graduate students, and the scale below is what I use to convert our point values to letter grades. For individual assignments, divide the points you earned by the total points possible for the assignment and then multiply that number by 100 and round it to the nearest whole number. For example, if you earned 13 points for a 15-point assignment, your letter grade would be $13/15 = .87 \times 100 = 87$, or a B+.

You are welcome to discuss your evaluations with me. **You must wait 24 hours after receiving the grade to contact me**, and present documentation for why you believe you have earned a different grade. I reserve the right to make the final decision.

Penalty for Late Work

Except by **prior agreement**, 1 point per business day may be deducted for written or oral work not submitted by class time the day due. “**Prior agreement**” means at least 24 hours prior to the original time scheduled for the presentation or assignment.

Converting Points to a Letter Grade

A	93 – 100	(4 quality points per semester hour) superior graduate student performance.
A-	90 – 92.75	(3.7 quality points per semester credit hour) intermediate performance.
B+	88 – 89.75	(3.5 quality points per semester hour) better than satisfactory performance.
B	83 – 87.75	(3 quality points per semester hour) satisfactory performance.
B-	80 – 82.75	(2.7 quality points per semester credit hour) intermediate grade performance.
C+	78 – 79.75	(2.5 quality points per semester hour) less than satisfactory performance.
C	70 – 77.75	(2 quality points per semester hour) well below the graduate student standard.
D	60 – 69.75	(1 quality point per semester hour) clearly unsatisfactory/doesn't satisfy requirements.
F	0-59.75	(no quality points) extremely unsatisfactory/doesn't satisfy degree requirements.

Note on “Incompletes”

University of Tennessee policy states that an "Incomplete" is granted only under "the most unusual of circumstances" at the discretion of the instructor. An “F” is submitted for students who simply disappear. More information is available [here](#).

Documentation and General Assignment Parameters

- ✓ Double spaced, 1” margins, 12-point type
- ✓ Insert page number, bottom right
- ✓ Title *pages* are optional, BUT always give your paper a title
- ✓ Accepted document formats – unless specified in the assignment are .doc and .docx.
Convert your documents from other formats if needed.
- ✓ Cite everything!
- ✓ Put your name on everything!



The Chicago Manual
of Style Online

The quality of your writing and organization impacts your grade. Edit yourself or have someone review your assignments to make them as excellent as you can.

University Policies

Class Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class each week and be fully prepared to *actively* participate. Please try to notify me in advance if you need to miss class. If you do miss class, listen to the archived lecture/discussion and let me know if you have questions.

Class Cancellation

Should it be necessary to cancel a class meeting, every effort will be taken to do so in advance. Look for e-mail announcements via Canvas. More information about the School's [cancellation policy](#) is available online. If UT cancels classes, then our class is automatically cancelled. Information about the University of Tennessee weather-related closing policy is available [here](#).

Students with Disabilities that May Impede Learning

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Student Disability Services in Dunford Hall, at 865-974-6087, or by video relay at, 865-622-6566, to coordinate reasonable academic accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Students should be familiar and maintain their Academic Integrity, described in the online [Hilltopics Student Handbook](#): “Study, preparation and presentation should involve at all times the student’s own work, unless it has been clearly specified that work is to be a team effort. Academic honesty requires that the student present his or her own work in all academic projects, including tests, papers, homework, and class presentation. When incorporating the work of other scholars and writers into a project, the student must accurately cite the source of that work.”

Students should abide by the University of Tennessee Honor Statement: “As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in any of its several forms is intolerable, and attention to matters of documentation in all written work is expected and required. Inadvertence, alleged lack of understanding, or avowed ignorance of the various types of plagiarism are not acceptable excuses. Specific examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
- Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor’s approval;
- Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Students who may be unsure of the nature of plagiarism should consult a guide for writing research reports. Hodges has prepared a [short libguide](#) on the subject. Infractions of academic integrity are penalized according to the severity of the infraction.

CCI Diversity Statement

The College of Communication and Information recognizes that a college diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities. All members of the College benefit from diversity and the quality of learning, research, scholarship and creative activities is enhanced by a climate of inclusion, understanding and appreciation of differences and the full range of human experience. As a result, the College is committed to diversity and equal opportunity and it recognizes that it must represent the diversity inherent in American society. The College is acutely aware that diversity and fairness are foundations that unite the College’s faculty, staff, students, and the

larger communication and information community. More about the CCI/SIS commitment to diversity is [here](#).

Instructor Status as a Title IX Mandatory Reporter

University of Tennessee faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Please be aware that if you choose to confide in a faculty member regarding an issue of sexual misconduct, dating violence, or stalking, we are obligated to inform the University's Title IX Coordinator, who can assist you in connecting with all possible resources both on- and off-campus. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, the Student Counseling Center (865-974-2196) and the Student Health Center (865-974-3135) are both confidential resources. For additional resources and information, visit titleix.utk.edu.

Hodges Library Help for Information Science Students



Information Science [LibGuide](#) (library guide)
Our Information Sciences librarian is [Peter Fernandez](#).

The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter and/or amend this syllabus, as necessary. We will normally discuss any changes in class ahead of time, and students will always be notified in writing and/or by email of any such revisions, alternations and/or amendments.

Weekly Schedule, INSC 590NF, Spring 2021

January 26 – Course Introduction, Overview and Syllabus Review

Takeaways: What you need to know to navigate the course and assignments

Read for today

- Ferriter, Bill. 2014. "[Is Stocking Library Shelves with Nonfiction Content a Waste of Money?](#)," blog post from "The Tempered Radical," March 13, 2014.
- Kelsey, Marie. "Compel Students to Read with Compelling Nonfiction," in *Knowledge Quest* 39(4), March/April 2011: 34-39.

Do for today's class

- Canvas Post: Introduction (before class, please!)
- Take the NYPL "[Which Dewey Number are You?](#)" quiz

February 2 – Nonfiction or Informational; Types and Structures

Takeaways: Definitions, structures, and forms of nonfiction

Read for today

- Ch 1, Bamford
- Halsey, Kathy. 2020. "[Nonfiction vs. Information Fiction: A Former School Librarian's View](#)," posted on Grog Blog on February 19, 2020.
- Stewart, Melissa. 2018. "[Five Kinds of STEM-themed Nonfiction Books for Kids](#)," retrieved from PLOS SciComm on 01/10/21.

Watch for today

- "[The Structures of Informational Texts](#)," from Khan Academy (6:11 minutes), retrieved 01/10/21.

Bring to today's class

- 2-3 quality nonfiction picturebooks – different subjects – to class for discussion

Do for today's class

- Choose your subject for the "subject study" assignment so we don't have duplicates – post top 3 choices to the "Subject Study" forum and I'll post the final list.
- Choose your Dewey category for the infographics assignment and follow the instructions contained in the post that is already there.

Extras, if you have the time

- Isaacs, Kathleen T. (2013). "What are Informational Picture Books," in *Picturing the World: Informational Picture Books for Children*. Chicago: ALA.
- Kristo, Janice V. and Bamford, Rosemary A. (2004). "What's All the Fuss About Nonfiction?" in *Nonfiction in Focus: A Comprehensive Framework for Helping Students Become Independent Readers and Writers of Nonfiction, K-6*. New York: Teaching Resources.

February 9 – Evaluation, Awards, and Sources

Takeaways: Evaluating nonfiction, awards specific to NF, and where to find reviews

Read for today

- Bamford Ch 2, 3, 4 and 5

Watch for today

- ["How to Analyze Nonfiction Texts,"](#) Kyleene Beers for Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, retrieved on 01/10/21

Bring for today

- 2-3 quality concept books for class discussion

February 16 – 000s through 200s

Questions: What do I need to know (000s)? Who am I (100s) What do I believe in? (200s)

Read for today

- Zarnowski, Myra. 2001. "Intermingling Fact and Fiction," in Zarnowski, Myra, Kerper, Richard M., and Jensen, Julie M, eds. *The Best in Children's Nonfiction: Reading, Writing, and Teaching Orbis Pictus Award Books*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Bring for today

- Two quality examples (NOT picturebooks) from each Dewey class (total 6 books)

Due today before class

- Subject Study

February 23 – 300s

Question: How do we live together?

Read for today

- 📖 Bamford Ch 7

Bring for today

- Two quality examples (NOT picturebooks)

March 2 – 400s and 800s

Questions: How can I communicate with others (400s)? What are the stories of our lives (800s)?

Bring for Today

- Two quality examples (NOT picturebooks)

DUE today

- Nonfiction Analysis

March 9 – 500s

Question: How can I explain the world around me?

Read for today

- Ch 8 – Bamford

March 16 – NO Class, our own little mini-break

March 23 – 600s

Question: How can we make the world useful to us?

Read for today

- Ch 9 – Bamford

Bring for Today

- Two quality examples (NOT picturebooks) each from 500s and 600s

DUE today

- Series Selection for a Makerspace

March 30 – 700s

Question: What do we enjoy creating or doing for fun?

Read for today (continues onto next page)

- Ch 10 – Bamford
- Filipenko, Margot. 2004. “Constructing Knowledge About and With Informational Texts: Implications for Teacher-Librarians Working with Young Children,” in *School Libraries Worldwide* 10(1,2), January/July 2004: 21-36.

Bring for Today

- Two quality examples (NOT picturebooks)

April 6 – 900s

Question: What was the world like in the past?

Read for today

- Freedman, Russell. 2006. “May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture: The Past Isn’t Past: How History Speaks and What it Says to the Next Generation,” in *Children & Libraries* Summer/Fall 2006: 21-28.
- Smith, Karen P. 2001. “Acknowledging, Citing, Going Beyond: Issues of Documentation in Nonfiction Literature,” in Zarnowski, Myra, Kerper, Richard M., Jensen, Julie M., eds., *The Best in Children’s Nonfiction: Reading, Writing, and Teaching Orbis Pictus Award Books*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Bring for Today

- Two quality examples (NOT picturebooks)

DUE today

- Virtual Library Space/Shelf (using Bitmoji, Padlet or other app)

April 13 – Collections and Nonfiction; Book Battles

Takeaway: Considerations related to developing and maintaining a youth NF collection

Read for today

- Hopkinson, Deborah. 2008. *Abe Lincoln Crosses a Creek: A Tall Thin Tale*.

Bring for Today

- Two quality examples (NOT picturebooks)

April 20 – Book Discussions – Student Choice; Book Battles

Takeaways: Community learning through discussion

Read for today

- Scheuer, Mary Ann and Alyson Beecher. 2017. “[Beyond Reading Levels: Choosing Nonfiction for Developing Readers](#),” in *School Library Journal* (online), August 28, 2017.

DUE today

- Discussion questions for use in class

April 27 – Book Battles, and Course Wrap-up

Takeaways: Community learning through peer presentations

DUE today

- Text Sets and (maybe) Text Set Presentations, depending on time

Assignment	Points	Post, File, or Other
Subject Study	20	Upload to Assignments; post on Canvas
Nonfiction Analysis	20	Upload to Assignments; post on Canvas
Series for Makerspace	20	Post on Canvas
Virtual Library Shelf/Space	20	Upload to Assignments; post on Canvas; present in class on last day
Text Set	20	
Book Battles	-	In-class group work
Professional Conduct	-	All semester

Weekly Dewey questions were sourced from Tony Buzzeo, “The Great Dewey Hunt: A Mrs. Skorupski Story. Library Lessons, Upstart Books, 2009.

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