

## MILEX Meeting Minutes January 31, 2025

### Attendees:

Sarah Gilchrist	Chris Drolsum	Loretta Spangler	Kevin Aughinbaugh
Gina Calia	Brandy Whitlock	Emily Holland	Melissa D'Agostino
Sian Evans	Jessame Ferguson	Jo Gadsby	Sophia Reverday
Jennie Ray	Mariette Largess	Richelle Charles	Jenny Hatleberg
Tachalla Ferris	Lisa Sweeney	Stephen Ford	

### Presentation

Teaching Current Events in the Information Literary Interview, Sarah Gilchrist

The importance of current events on classroom discussion and scholarship -- Current Events and Scholarship Research Guide: <https://subjectguides.library.american.edu/currentevents>

<https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2017-01/Dialogue%2Bvs%2BDebate%2B-%2BUSIP%2BGlobal%2BCampus.pdf>

Set ground rules for discussion: set the tone to have a respectful dialog - can vary based on how long you're in the class.

Acknowledge discomfort: current events can be hard, giving students a chance talk about their feelings around events

Alternate sources on events can help as sources become harder.

Recognize that we're here for a conversation, not a debate. Remind students of that when a conversation becomes heated. But make sure to acknowledge what is making the debate heated – don't downplay one student or group's opinions. Just guide the conversation back to a respectful point for all.

Be curious, not furious: Current messaging around news is emotional and meant to force emotional reactions where before it may not have been that way/viewers may not have had any emotional investment in the topic/subject.

Evaluate each source in context: use lateral reading to verify claims by reading outside the original source – difficult when in a one-shot. Lateral reading will also help broaden thought without the students feeling attacked or challenged if coached properly.

Some ways to evaluate sources

- SIFT (the four moves): Stop, investigate the source, find better coverage, trace claims, quotes, & media to the original context
- CCOW Method: Credentials, Claims, objectives, worldview
- CRAAP Test: Currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, perspective
- Seek Expertise> move past their existing sources, if using social media expand past the algorithm

The psychology of investment, a student can feel very protective of a social movement or opinion that does not often make headline news. If you're interested in this issue, but it doesn't seem to every have any information being shared so they can become protective of that movement or idea.

Populist ideas are very black and white at the moment, so moving back into a grey area can be hard but is important for a discussion

It is good to have students argue for the other side; it can help them clarify their personal position for themselves. Make sure students know they are not being attacked in this position and use it to get students to consider other points of view.

Are universities under pressure to not discuss certain topics? Around the US there is work to restrict conversation around DEI?

Protection concerns related to speech when on university devices - Freedom of information requests related to a specific person has to be very specific about date time and with whom the conversation took place

Difficulty students have getting outside their bubble, left or right leaning news publications are difficult for some students. The framing of new stories can be difficult at the moment; we need to step away from good versus bad. It takes time to verify information and cross read, but many will not take the time. We're in an era of yellow journalism --US history. Our current media landscape has lost its previous trust. We have to be critical and curious about all our sources, where do sources line up, what's missing, this is where CCOW is helpful.

There used to be SNOPEs (urban legends), but are students aware of a national fact checking groups?

<https://www.bellingcat.com/>

<https://www.stopfake.org/en/main/>

The above groups are focused on more international news.

Student groups at one campus are asking librarians for a workshop on using social media for news. Not focus on the sources but rather what are students trying to get from using social media to get news. Will include information on evaluating sources, but more focused on what are the students hoping to learn/get out of their activity/possible hard to themselves. It could be helpful to look at information creation.

The 24/7 news cycle, it can help to remind students that the actual facts take time. The news media doesn't often know everything and there's a lot they will never know.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/fact-sheet/social-media-and-news-fact-sheet/>

No one thing is entirely complete or accurate or without bias - does not mean that these are not good sources we just need to remember that lateral reading is needed, reading widely is exceptionally important. Read what news sources in other countries are saying about an event, including events in the U. S.

One example is the call for divestment: the media, all media, seemed to treat the student movement as odd, never happened before, but such movements have happened before in the 70s with Apartheid South Africa. You just have to look back into the history of an issue – more than so realize. We need to reframe the goal, the conversation, what are we trying to do in relation to divestment - do we want peace? A safe place for all people in the country? Are we trying to force governmental change or social change? Actual conversations have to happen, deeper learning needs to happen, and it's wonderful to know that our archives can help.

The time-consuming research needed to give the full picture is shown by the divestment example. A dialogue is more productive since a community-based solution can be developed.

'Mesearch' (re-enforcing your existing position) vs research (learning about the topic in-depth)

We can start to see students as citizens:

<https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/views/2025/01/24/why-we-should-see-students-citizens-opinion>

**Business Meeting**

Conference April 25th - Redefining Information Literacy

We're hoping to cover intellectual freedom points and practical tips.

### **MILEX Award Update**

We've had no submissions at this point. What changes should we make? How might we rethink the award?

It would be great if we could get some feedback from faculty or students on how they get this type of announcement and their perspective on what the award is asking students to do. What types of papers are students writing? Does anyone know anyone that might be willing to give that feedback?

Maybe do away with a paper, but rather just provide a proposal to present to us. Open the applicant pool to working librarians?

Do we want to provide a list of topics? No, the idea is to get new and upcoming topics that we may not have much knowledge of.

Accepted changes:

Possible different announcement: 2025 MILEX Award would be given later in the year, we would be opening it up to new working librarians and students in Maryland.

We will extend the deadline to mid-March, 24-25 academic year for paper topics and resend the call, trying to find student listservs. Emphasis that students will be informed via email if selected.

Announce winner at June Meeting, let person know before hand and then the winner can present to us in the July meeting

Loretta thinks at least one of her professors may be able to help with both feedback and sharing the award. Brandy will work on updating the award announcement to reflect a new due date and share it with Loretta.