

**Assignment:**  
**Information Competency**  
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**Course:** UNIV 100  
**Title:** Freshman Seminar (3 units)

“Without data, you’re just another person with an opinion.”  
---W. Edwards Deming (1900-1993)

**Goal:**

The primary goal of this assignment is to ensure that you have the requisite skills to acquire and manage information in your professional environment. Information competency is one part of strong management decision-making, communication, and overall professional development. The secondary goal of this assignment is to practice the skills needed to work in teams. The tertiary goal of this assignment is to practice your skills with a presentation tool such as Powerpoint.

**Instructions:**

In general, your task is to design, develop, and present a team-based presentation on two themes related to the Hadden book reading (e.g., autism, Asberger’s syndrome, learning difficulties, college-readiness tests, dysfunctional families, travel/exploring, etc.). The instructor will put you into teams relatively early in the semester. Each person in each team must contribute to the project, and each person must speak during the presentation. The Powerpoint must be printed and delivered to the instructor on the day of the class presentation. The Powerpoint must be emailed to the instructor no later than 1 hour before the beginning of class on that day.

Please read the following document before attempting to answer the questions.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/standards.pdf>

**Deliverable:**

The due date is listed on the course outline. Before that due date, there should be enough time in or out of class to go over any questions you may have.

**Length:**

The Powerpoint can be of any length necessary. My guess is that each presentation will be between 10 and 15 slides. The presentation must be no less than 8 minutes and no more than 10 minutes.

**Scoring:**

There will be 100 points allocated. Half of the points will be for the breadth and depth of content, and half of the points will be for the quality of the oral presentation.

**Content:**

There is no single, best presentational approach to achieve the objectives of this assignment. In general, this assignment combines ideas from “research methods” and “information literacy.” However, the following outline is provided as a working guide to help students structure and sequence their ideas into a coherent package (that can be delivered clearly in 10 minutes).

- Introduction—who is doing the presentation?
- Which two themes did your team select and why?
- What are one or two specific questions for each selected theme?
- What is the scope (“narrowed down” nature) of each question?
- How did you go about studying (called “methodology”) each question?
- What have others who have studied these questions found?
  - For quantitative results, a table and/or a graph may be helpful
  - For qualitative results, spend time summarizing the various important narratives
- Are there any trends, substantial variation, or larger issues?
- (optional) Can you draw one or more analogies from your findings to the Haddon book?
- Open questions—if you had time and resources, how would you study these questions?
- Do you have any recommendations for policy-makers (or other stakeholders)?
- Provide at least one slide of references
  - For each reference, evaluate its credibility
  - For each reference, understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of the information

This outline is adapted from the following two materials:

Neuman, W. (2003), *Social Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.), Pearson

Association of College and Research Libraries (2000), *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*, American Library Association.

[<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/standards.pdf>] accessed on October 20th, 2010.

**Presentation:**

No two individuals, much less two distinct teams, have the same speaking or presentational style. In general, the following Powerpoint entitled “The Practice of Speech” that I use for my business juniors can be helpful. See:

<http://ocw.smithw.org/bus302/speech-practice.ppt>

You need to allocate enough time to practice, both individually and as a team. There can be no substitute for practice. You’ll be doing a number of presentations and public-speaking activities in the your academic and professional life.