

WIKIPEDIA PROJECT

Description:

Because this class awards four credit hours and meets for only three credit hours per week, there will be an ongoing online component to supplement our in-class time that will count for the last credit hour. This component will take the form of a multi-part Wikipedia editing project where you will be contributing to the knowledge database of Wikipedia, improving the complexity and accuracy of information on the site.

The project will kick off in our third week of class and run until the end of the semester. There is an online dashboard where assignment details, trainings, and instructions are located. Once you are enrolled in the course dashboard, you will be able to see it at: dashboard.wikiedu.org

Learning Goals:

This project is designed for you to:

1. Develop different and complementary writing skill sets based in factual reporting to the typical college analytical or argumentative essay.
2. Practice evaluating articles for missing information, messy organization, unreliable sources, and biased perspectives.
3. Participate in the production of knowledge in a lasting, public, and impactful way on one of the most utilized sources on the internet, within a social network of other “Wikipedians.”
4. Reflect on the ethics of information access, editor demographics, and the representation of certain viewpoints or populations in Wikipedia’s coverage, as well as have the chance to directly impact such ethically-fraught issues in your editing.

Project Components:

Complete assignment details are listed on the Wikiedu Dashboard. There will be a number of small assignments (practicing posting, for example) that correspond to trainings, and are not listed here. In addition to these, you will be asked to:

- write short pre- and post-project reflection papers,
- read articles about ethical issues facing Wikipedia,
- complete tutorials on how to edit Wikipedia,
- evaluate Wikipedia articles,
- provide peer critiques, and
- substantially edit, add to, or create one Wikipedia article as your “final project.”

Final Article Specifics:

You have a number of different options for the final article.

1. Content-wise, it must be on either:

- some intersection between online social networks/social media and ethics, **or**
- an ethical concept, author, or text we discussed in class (even if only in passing) or otherwise pertaining to ethics at an introductory level.

An article purely about social media without an ethical component is not acceptable.

2. You may either:

- select an article from the list that I provide (granting that for some of these articles I also have a particular focus for your contribution in mind)
- come up with your own topic.

If you have ideas you would like to pursue outside of the suggested articles, **you must clear the topic with Jordan in advance** of the “article chosen” due date. **Start contacting me about this as soon as possible.** I do not want last-minute proposals. Talk to me before/after class, during office hours, set up another time to meet in person to discuss your ideas, or send them to me via email with a short explanation as to the ethical relevance, what you find interesting about it or why you want to write on this topic, if there is room to expand in this direction on the currently existing Wikipedia article, etc. I will review the proposed topic/article(s) and let you know if I think it is appropriate and feasible.

3. You will be either:

- drafting a new article, for topics that are not yet covered on Wikipedia, **or**
- adding a new section to a currently existing Wikipedia page, **or**
- substantially expanding (and probably editing) an already existing section of an already existing Wikipedia page.

Wikipedia has a rating system for its articles, ranging from “stub” class (bare-bones articles that need more content added or substantial revisions), to “start” class (an article still in its beginning stages, though with a bit more meat than a “stub class), to letter grades C through A depending on quality.

If you are drafting a new article, your article does not need to be exceptionally long or detailed. Creating a “stub” article where there was no article before is acceptable.

If you are adding a new section or expanding a section of an already existing Wikipedia article, focus on “stub” class articles, then “start” class. In some cases it may be acceptable to add to a C-class article. We will not be editing any rank above “C,” since those articles are fairly detailed and of high quality already and aren’t in need of our help! Your additions/expansions will range in size depending on the article, but will probably be around 2-5 good quality paragraphs.

Timeline (highlights only, see online dashboard for complete timeline):

TU 1/26	Everyone has a Wikipedia account, project begins
TU 1/31	Pre-project reflection paper due
TU 2/14	Article evaluations due
TH 2/16	Article topics chosen (a little less than 5 weeks until first draft due, 9 until final)
TU 3/21	First draft due (4 weeks until final draft due)
TU 3/28	Peer reviews/copyedits due
TU 4/18	Final draft due
	Post-project reflection paper due

Grading:

	% (out of 25% total)
Tutorials & Associated or misc. tasks in sandbox/talk pages	2
Pre-project reflection	2
Article evaluations x2	4
Peer reviews/copyedits x2 & review response	2
Final article	10
Post-project reflection	5

The final article will be out of 100% and I will assess it for “Wikipedia” style tone, amount and quality of sources and citations, adequate and accurate summary of content, appropriate linking to other Wikipedia articles, degree of fit into already existing article, and relevance of content to ethics/social media theme.

All other assignments will be graded on completion (Was it on time? Did you include all the required components?) and a “good effort” standard.