

Title: Teaching with Current Events: Practicing Media Literacy and Understanding Human Behavior

Description: Developed in collaboration with [Facing History and Ourselves](#), this micro-credential is designed to support educators in developing the foundational knowledge necessary to further students’ media literacy and civic learning through the teaching of current events. Current events serve as one vehicle for engaging students in intellectually rigorous, emotionally engaging, and ethically reflective learning about contemporary issues, dilemmas, and controversies to develop a sense of informed civic responsibility.

Educators will engage in self-directed learning and complete an active learning project that address two essential questions:

1. How can I help students understand and evaluate the news/media they consume?
2. How can I prepare students to have reflective and respectful discussions about current events, especially those that may be emotional or divisive?

This micro-credential facilitates professional learning for educators aligned with the following student standards:

- [Massachusetts 2018 History and Social Science Framework](#) – 8.T7, NML.T3, NML.T4
- Massachusetts Law: [An Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement](#) – Section 2(c)
- National Council for the Social Studies [C3 Framework](#) – Dimension 3
- Common Core State Standards – [ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8](#), [9-10.6](#), [11-12.7](#), [11-12.8](#)
- [ISTE Standards for Students](#) – #2: Digital Citizen

About This Micro-Credential	<p><u>Key Outcomes for Participants:</u></p> <p>Educators will think critically about two essential questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● How can I help students understand and evaluate the news/media they consume?● How can I prepare students to have reflective and respectful discussions about current events, especially those that may be emotional or divisive? <p>As educators work to address these two essential questions, they may find it helpful to consider the following guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● What are my goals for teaching with current events?● What are some trusted news sources that represent a range of viewpoints that I can bring into my classroom?● What are some effective teaching strategies for analyzing and evaluating primary sources?● What are some effective teaching strategies for facilitating reflective and respectful discussions about current events? <p>Successful completion of this micro-credential means that educators provided evidence that they have gained foundational knowledge about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Connecting current events to the curriculum.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The role of free press in a democratic society. ● Trusted news sources that represent a range of viewpoints. ● Teaching strategies useful for helping students separate fact from fiction and detect bias in a range of news/media sources. ● Teaching strategies useful for facilitating reflective and respectful classroom discussions about current events. ● Creating and executing an active learning project focused on teaching news/media literacy through current events.
<p>Supporting Research</p>	<p>Clarke, Pat. "Teaching Controversial Issues: A Four-Step Classroom Strategy for Clear Thinking on Controversial Issues." BCTF/CIDA Global Classroom Initiative 2005. https://www.overcominghateportal.org/uploads/5/4/1/5/5415260/teaching_controversial_issues.pdf</p> <p>Gleason, Benjamin W., and Sam Von Gillern. "Digital Citizenship with Social Media: Participatory Practices of Teaching and Learning in Secondary Education." <i>Journal of Educational Technology & Society</i> 21, no. 1 (2018): 200–212. https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1099&context=edu_pubs</p> <p>Gould, Jonathan, ed. <i>Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools</i>. The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, 2011. https://civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/GuardianofDemocracy.pdf</p> <p>Hess, Diana E. <i>Controversy in the Classroom: The Democratic Power of Discussion</i>. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2009.</p> <p>Hess, Diana, and Paula McAvoy. <i>The Political Classroom: Evidence and Ethics in Democratic Education</i>. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2015.</p> <p>Hess, Diana, and Jule Posselt. "How High School Students Experience and Learn from the Discussion of Controversial Public Issues." <i>Journal of Curriculum and Supervision</i> 17, no. 4 (2002): 83–314. http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jposselt/DiscussionOfControversialPublicIssues.pdf</p>

Hodgin, Erica R., Carrie James, and Sangita Shresthova. [“Digital Civics: Supporting Youth Voice and Action in a Networked Age.”](#) EdCan Network, Nov. 29, 2018. Retrieved July 29, 2019.

Martens, Hans, and Renee Hobbs. “How Media Literacy Supports Civic Engagement in a Digital Age.” *Atlantic Journal of Communication* 23, no. 2 (2015): 120–137.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1048&context=com_facpubs

Mihailidis, Paul, and Samantha Viotty. “Spreadable Spectacle in Digital Culture: Civic Expression, Fake News, and the Role of Media Literacies in ‘Post-Fact’ Society.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 61, no. 4 (2017): 441–454.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764217701217>

Rogers, John. *School and Society in the Age of Trump: Executive Summary*. Los Angeles: UCLA IDEA Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access, 2019.
<https://idea.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/school-and-society-in-age-of-trump/publications/files/executive-summary-school-and-society-in-the-age-of-trump>

Schulten, Katherine. [“When School Gets Real: Teachers Connect Classroom Lessons to Current Events.”](#) *New York Times*, Aug. 2, 2018. Retrieved July 9, 2019.

<p>Resources</p>	<p>Facilitating Civil Discourse in the Classroom:</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Resource Link & Title</u></th> <th><u>Resource Author</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fostering Civil Discourse: A Guide to Classroom Conversations</td> <td>Facing History and Ourselves</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fostering Civil Discourse, Part I Webinar</td> <td>Facing History and Ourselves</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fostering Civil Discourse, Part II Webinar</td> <td>Facing History and Ourselves</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>For Use with Students in Classrooms:</p> <p>For in-depth journalism, consider a variety of major newspapers and news outlets, such as (listed alphabetically):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AP News ○ BBC News ○ New York Times ○ Washington Post ○ Wall Street Journal ○ USA Today ○ Vox.com 	<u>Resource Link & Title</u>	<u>Resource Author</u>	Fostering Civil Discourse: A Guide to Classroom Conversations	Facing History and Ourselves	Fostering Civil Discourse, Part I Webinar	Facing History and Ourselves	Fostering Civil Discourse, Part II Webinar	Facing History and Ourselves
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For news/media resources from a variety of perspectives, consider:

- [AllSides](#)
- [News Literacy Project](#)

For radio journalism and podcasts, consider:

- [The Daily](#)
- [Listenwise](#)
- [Today, Explained](#)

For resources focused on detecting bias, consider:

- [Media Bias Ratings](#) from [AllSides](#)
- [Ten Questions for Fake News Detection](#) from the [News Literacy Project](#)

For news stories “leveled” to a variety of lexile levels, consider [Newsela](#).

News/Media Literacy in the Digital Age:

Resource Link & Title

Resource Author

[Where do we get our news and why does it matter?](#)

Facing History and Ourselves

[Checkology](#)

News Literacy Project

[Facing Ferguson: News Literacy in a Digital Age](#)

Facing History and Ourselves

[The Mind Online Podcast](#)

Teaching Tolerance

Participatory Politics:

Resource Link & Title

Resource Author

[10 Questions for Young Changemakers](#)

Facing History and Ourselves in partnership with the Democratic Knowledge Project

[Digital Civics Toolkit](#)

MacArthur Research Network on Youth and Participatory Politics

[Educating for Democracy](#)

Teaching Channel

Teaching with Current Events:

Resource Link & Title

Resource Author

[Current Events in Your Classroom](#)

Facing History and Ourselves

[Teaching in the Wake of Violence](#)

Facing History and Ourselves

[Current Events Checklist & Current Events](#)

Facing History and Ourselves

	<p>Biweekly</p> <p>Current Events in Your Classroom Webinar Facing History and Ourselves</p> <p>The Learning Network <i>New York Times</i></p> <p>Teaching Strategies:</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Resource Link & Title</u></th> <th><u>Resource Author</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Classroom video: Introduction to Contracting</td> <td>Facing History and Ourselves</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Classroom video: Think-Pair-Share</td> <td>Facing History and Ourselves</td> </tr> <tr> <td>News Article Analysis</td> <td>Facing History and Ourselves</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Resource Link & Title</u>	<u>Resource Author</u>	Classroom video: Introduction to Contracting	Facing History and Ourselves	Classroom video: Think-Pair-Share	Facing History and Ourselves	News Article Analysis	Facing History and Ourselves
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<p>Submission Requirements (Assessments)</p>	<p>Part 1. Analytic memo to address at least one of the micro-credential’s two essential questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can I help students understand and evaluate the news/media they consume? 2. How can I prepare students to have reflective and respectful discussions about current events, especially those that may be emotional or divisive? <p>Part 2. Design instructional plans for active, student-centered civics learning through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding the different functions of various types of news/media (e.g., op-eds, podcasts, social media, editorials, news articles). ● Applying methods for evaluating information and opinion in various types of news/media. ● Evaluating the benefits and challenges of consuming digital news/media in a democratic society. ● Connecting current events to the curriculum. ● Engaging in reflective and respectful classroom discussion about current events. <p>Part 3. Evidence of student learning with educator reflection</p>								
<p>Submission Guidelines</p>	<p>Part 1. Analytic memo: Choose and respond to at least one of the following essential questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EQ 1: How can I help students understand and evaluate the news/media they consume? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Briefly summarize your point of view prior to taking this micro-credential about our roles and responsibilities as consumers of news/media in the digital age. 								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describe how you had either (a) planned to prepare or (b) prepared students to understand and evaluate news/media in the digital age prior to completing this micro-credential. ○ Analyze how your learning has shifted the way you will, moving forward, teach students to understand and evaluate news/media in the digital age. Include specific examples of learning that led to this shift. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EQ 2: How can I prepare students to have reflective and respectful discussions about current events, especially those that may be emotional or divisive? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Briefly summarize your primary reasons and goals for teaching with current events prior to taking this micro-credential. ○ Describe how you had either (a) planned to prepare or (b) prepared students to have reflective and respectful discussions of current events prior to completing this micro-credential. ○ Analyze how your learning has shifted the way you will, moving forward, identify learning goals, news/media resources, and teaching strategies for preparing students to have reflective and respectful discussions of current events. Include specific examples of learning that led to this shift. <p>Part 2. Instructional plans</p> <p>*De-identify all student work before submitting.*</p> <p>*If submitting photos, ensure that all students have photo releases.*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructional plan with a focus on both (a) active, student-centered learning and (b) teaching media literacy through current events ● Supplemental materials (e.g., student-facing resources, classroom activities, assessments) necessary for executing the instructional plan ● 1–3 examples of <u>student engagement</u> with the learning process (photos, journals, artifacts showing participation in an activity, etc.) <p>Part 3. Evidence of student learning with educator reflection</p> <p>*De-identify all student work before submitting.*</p> <p>*If submitting photos, ensure that all students have photo releases.*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1–3 examples of <u>student learning</u> (graded activities, assignments, formative and/or summative assessments, student self-reflections, etc.) ● Reflective memo about your observations of (a) student learning and (b) your own learning after executing your instructional plans
<p>Evaluation Criteria</p>	<p>(Include rubrics & other scoring guidelines)</p> <p>Part 1. Analytic memo</p> <p>YES – The memo sufficiently and thoughtfully addresses one of the prompts.</p> <p>NO – The narrative does not sufficiently and thoughtfully address one of the prompts.</p>

Part 2. Instructional plans

Must demonstrate proficiency in all elements of the rubric:

	Proficient	Approaching Proficient
Content	Performance task sufficiently engages students in the eighth-grade civics content OR the News/Media Literacy elective content outlined in the 2018 Massachusetts History & Social Sciences Framework.	Performance task insufficiently engages students in the eighth-grade civics content OR the News/Media Literacy elective content outlined in the 2018 Massachusetts History & Social Sciences Framework.
History & Social Science Practice Standards	Performance task sufficiently engages students in History & Social Sciences Practice Standards outlined in the 2018 Massachusetts History & Social Sciences Framework.	Performance task insufficiently engages students in History & Social Sciences Practice Standards outlined in the 2018 Massachusetts History & Social Sciences Framework.
Supporting Materials	Supporting materials are sufficient in giving the assessor a clear understanding of the task and its intended learning outcomes.	Supporting materials are not sufficient in giving the assessor a clear understanding of the task and its intended learning outcomes.

Part 3. Evidence of student learning with educator reflection

YES – Student evidence is present and sufficient AND reflective narrative sufficiently addresses the prompts.

NO – Student evidence is absent/insufficient AND/OR reflective narrative insufficiently addresses the prompts.