

AI as Information Literacy Partner: Transforming Research Pedagogy in First-Year Composition

Dr. Leanna Fry
BYU Library

ROADMAP

Where we are going in 15 minutes

1 · The instructional tension

Why "just ban AI" does not prepare students for AI-saturated information environments or social feeds.

2 · Course architecture

How the class scaffolds AI use across five units, from personal stake to researched argument.

3 · Cornerstone assignment

Discussion-board task where students analyze a social media post with AI support, then verify it.

4 · Rubric + sample response

How assessment criteria and student work make ethical AI boundaries and information literacy visible.

OPENING TENSION

Students live with AI and misinformation, whether we like it or not

Faculty & librarians worry about...

- Drafts, citations, and even reflections quietly outsourced to AI tools.
- Students confusing fluent language with trustworthy authority.
- Integrity policies focused on prohibition, not ethical practice.

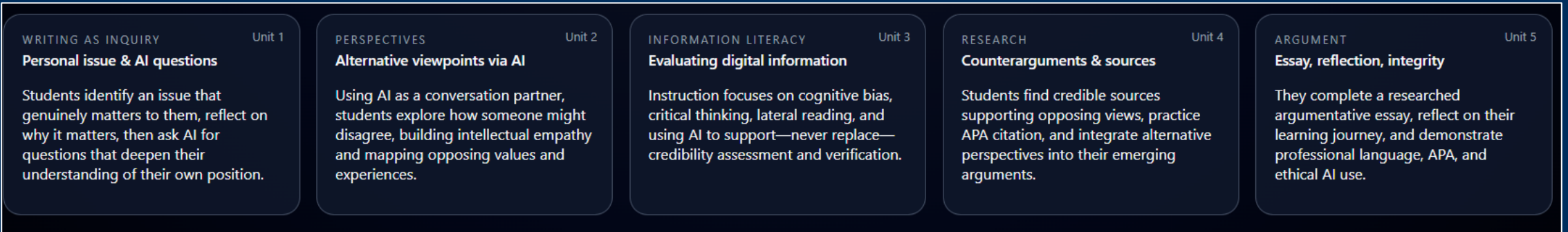
Students need practice with...

- Noticing warning signs before they click “share.”
- Using AI to generate better questions, not final verdicts.
- Verifying claims through lateral reading and credible sources.

COURSE ARCHITECTURE

How the course scaffolds AI & information literacy

Five units move from personal stake to researched argument, with AI integrated as a thinking partner rather than a shortcut.



SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT

AI-supported misinformation analysis of social media post

SEQUENCE

1

Find a social media post that makes you pause—strong claim, emotional topic, or one-sided framing.

2

Ask AI what strategies, warning signs, and verification questions to use, without asking for a verdict.

3

Verify the claim with at least one credible source and post a 200–250 word analysis.

4

Respond to at least two peers, commenting on warning signs and suggesting further checks.

DELIVERABLES

- ✓ Screenshot of the original post (personal information removed).
- ✓ Documentation of the AI conversation (screenshot or copied dialogue).
- ✓ Links to verification sources (fact-checkers, news, academic or government sites).
- ✓ 1–2 paragraphs of analysis plus two substantive peer responses.

CORE CLAIM

Use AI as a research coach, not a credibility judge

REPOSITIONING THE TOOL

- In this course, AI is framed as a metacognitive scaffold that helps students develop questions, identify possible warning signs, and plan verification moves.
- The credibility decision itself must come from the student, through evidence, source evaluation, and reflection.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

- Prompts: “What strategies can I use to spot bias?” instead of “Is this post true?”
- Students submit AI transcripts alongside screenshots and sources.
- Rubrics reward visible reasoning and ethical boundaries, not AI avoidance.

ETHICAL AI BOUNDARIES

What students may and may not ask AI to do

Allowed support

- “What strategies can I use to identify potential bias or misinformation in this post?”
- “Point out specific warning signs in the language, claims, or presentation.”
- “What questions should I ask, or what kinds of sources should I look for, to verify this claim?”

Misuse / not allowed

- Asking AI to decide whether the post is credible for them.
- Using AI to write their analysis paragraph, reflection, or peer responses.
- Relying on AI summaries instead of reading verification sources directly.

MAKING THINKING VISIBLE

Why we require screenshots, transcripts, links, and writing

Artifacts

Screenshot captures the original claim and its emotional design.

AI transcript reveals how students used prompts as metacognitive tools.

Source links show the quality of verification work and lateral reading.

Written analysis demonstrates synthesis, reflection, and voice.

Instructional payoff

- Lets us distinguish support from substitution in AI use.
- Creates teachable moments around weak sources or missing steps.
- Aligns cleanly with rubric categories for completion, warning signs, verification, reflection, and participation.

ASSESSMENT DESIGN

Rubric emphasizes process, not AI avoidance

Core criteria

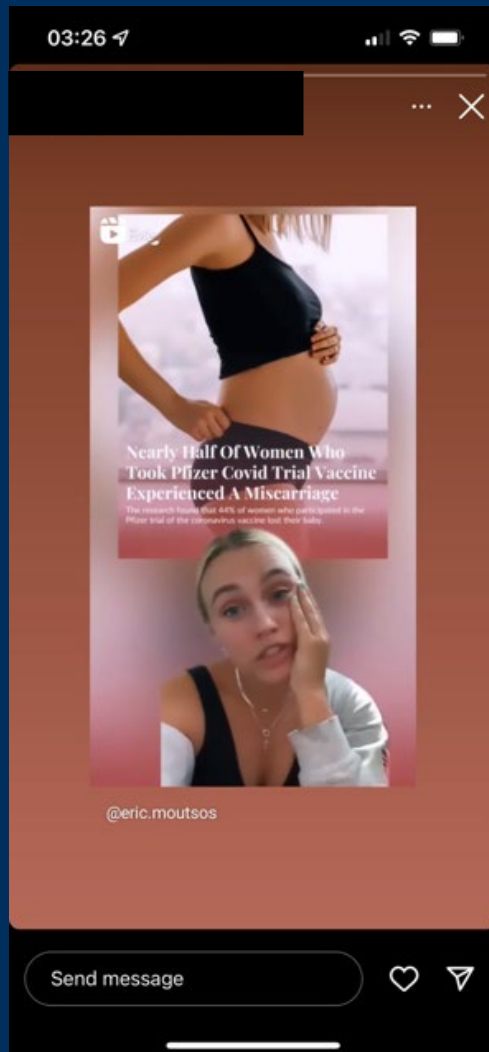
- **Completion & organization (15 pts)** – All required parts submitted; analysis meets 200–250 words and is clearly structured.
- **Warning signs (20 pts)** – Specific warning signs identified with concrete examples from the post.
- **Verification & source quality (20 pts)** – Credible fact-checking and clear comparison between sources and the social media claim.

Reflection & participation

- **Learning reflection & writing quality (10 pts)** – Thoughtful lessons about online information; clear, polished prose.
- **Participation (4 pts)** – At least two substantive peer responses.
- **Peer responses quality (6 pts)** – Specific feedback on warning signs and verification, not generic praise.

SAMPLE STUDENT WORK

Fact-checking a viral claim



What the student did

- **Initial skepticism.** They questioned how 50% of women could have miscarried and whether all trial participants were even pregnant.
- **AI-supported analysis.** AI helped name warning signs: very large, shocking statistics; absolute phrasing (“nearly half”); emotionally loaded imagery designed to trigger fear.
- **Independent verification.** Using AI-suggested search strategies, the student consulted Reuters and AP fact-checks, which showed the figure came from misinterpreting a subset of data and ignoring baseline miscarriage rates.
- **Reflection.** The student concluded that social media claims—especially fear-based ones—should be treated as prompts for verification, not as evidence, and that AI is most useful for generating questions, not verdicts.

WHY THIS MATTERS

What changes when AI and information literacy are taught together

For students

- They practice skepticism and verification in the same spaces they actually encounter misinformation.
- They gain language for ethical AI use—support versus substitution—across courses.
- They see how argumentative writing depends on evidence quality, not just thesis phrasing.

For faculty & librarians

- Assignments and rubrics make AI use inspectable rather than invisible.
- The focus shifts from policing tools to teaching verification habits.
- Course documents are shareable templates that can be adapted across contexts.

ACRL FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

How this assignment teaches information literacy through ethical AI use

AI helps students generate questions, but the information-literacy work happens in the verification, comparison, and judgment stages.

ACRL frame	What students do in this assignment
Authority Is Constructed and Contextual	Evaluate whether the original post, the AI output, and the verification sources deserve trust in this context.
Searching as Strategic Exploration	Use AI to generate search paths, then verify through lateral reading, fact-checking, and source comparison.
Research as Inquiry	Begin with questions, investigate warning signs, and refine conclusions as evidence accumulates.
Information Creation as a Process	Compare a fast, emotionally-framed social media post with more deliberate fact-checking and journalistic verification processes.

Transferability Across Disciplines

SCIENCES

HEALTH CLAIMS • CLIMATE DATA

BUSINESS

MARKET STATS • FINANCIAL NEWS

SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEMOGRAPHICS • POLICY CLAIMS

HUMANITIES

SOURCE AUTHENTICITY • CONTEXT

Questions?