Welcome
Every day we witness the exponential growth of information in all its formats. New web sites, books, journals and multimedia resources are constantly being added to the “library of life”. As a student gathering research for a term paper, how do you navigate through all of this information and be able to identify what you need for your project? This course will provide you with opportunities to develop and strengthen your research skills and learn the core concepts of information retrieval. You will learn the essential techniques to finding, evaluating, analyzing and presenting information key skills for a successful college career. Topics to be covered include:

- Using the online catalog and the West Valley Library’s electronic resources to locate information sources
- Creating and modifying research strategies to find relevant information
- Exercising critical thinking to evaluate information
- Understanding bibliographic citation format
- Using the Internet as a research tool
- Understanding and applying the use of information ethically and legally

Course Objectives
The course is designed to enable the West Valley College student to:

- Describe a variety of information sources and tools used to access these sources
- Develop an understanding of and appreciation for the research process
- Develop and modify a search strategy for finding information using access tools
- Evaluate information for its authority, relevancy & quality in relation to a given research topic
- Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the Internet as a research tool
- Apply knowledge of the MLA (Modern Language Association) style by compiling an annotated bibliography
- Recognize the ethical and legal issues of information use

Student Learning Outcome
The student learning outcome for this class is to produce an evaluative annotated bibliography. This will be assessed as the final project worth 34% of your grade.

Prerequisites: None
Required textbooks: None

Professional Skills
The course is designed to facilitate the acquisition of following skills. This knowledge is highly valued in the workplace and in four year colleges:

- Knowing where to look for information
- Using effective skills for finding the information without wasting time looking for it
- Evaluating the information for its relevancy to your project
**Student Responsibilities**  
Each student is expected to contribute to a positive learning environment. As such, student contributions include but are not limited to:

- Respecting the opinion of others
- Being prepared to actively participate on the Discussion Board
- Knowing when assignments are due
- Taking responsibility for your learning and progress in the course
- Requesting assistance from the instructor when needed
- Reading & following the “Course Guidelines” page
- Reading & understanding the Student Conduct Policy in the West Valley Catalog

**Weekly Time Commitment**  
This course is not self-paced. You will have weekly assignments with weekly due dates. In order to successfully complete this course, you must submit your assignments on time. Expect to spend an average of 9 hours per week on this condensed one-unit online course.

Even though this course does not have a weekly face-to-face meeting, the time commitment per week is the same as a one-unit lecture class.

Why? Academic courses are assigned units based on the amount of time a student is expected to devote to learning per semester. A one-unit course requires a minimum of 48 total hours of student work. For one-unit classes that last an entire semester (16 weeks), this equals only 3 hours of student work per week. Since this is a condensed course (only 6 weeks), the minimum is 8 hours of student work per week.

So, even though this class is only one unit, it is completed in 1/3 the amount of time, thus the amount of time spent per week should feel the same as a 3-unit class.

**Online Learning**  
Often students new to online learning perceive and expect online courses to be easy and involve little to no work on their part. This is a misperception. In fact, online courses may be more demanding, depending on the learning style of the student. When taking an online course you must take the initiative to ask your instructor questions if you do not understand the material. Online courses are not recommended for all students. To find out if distance learning is right for you, go to the West Valley Distance Learning Web page: [http://www.westvalley.edu/dl/index.html](http://www.westvalley.edu/dl/index.html)

Grammar, spelling, and style will be taken into account when grading written assignments. Please check your spelling and grammar before submitting your work. You are expected to use proper English grammar. IM, chat, and email slang and abbreviations are not acceptable forms of communication in this course.

NOTE: Computer related problems are never a valid excuse for not completing or submitting an assignment on time, therefore it is advisable to complete the assignments early enough to take into account any problems that may occur.
Grading
The course grade will be determined by the student’s performance on the following:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Grade Percentage

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>80-89</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>70-79</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>60-69</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>60 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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Dates for Dropping the Course
Please note that drop dates are different for short-term classes. Students who wished to be dropped from the course after are responsible for doing this on their own. **I will not do this for you.** If you stop participating in class but your name is on the course roster at the end of the semester, you will receive an "F" in the class with no opportunities to change the grade to a "W."

If you stop showing up but your name is on my roster at the end of the semester, you will receive an "F" in the class with no opportunities to change this to a "W."

Student Attendance Policy (from the WVC Catalog, p. 181)
Students are expected to access all sessions of each class. Instructors may drop students from the class if they fail to log on to the first class meeting, or when accumulated online sessions of inactivity exceeds ten percent of the total number of hours the class meets during the semester. Moreover, an instructor may drop from the class any student who fails to attend at least one class session during the first week of instruction.

Pass/No Pass Option
If you wish to take this course on a Pass/No Pass basis (rather than receiving a letter grade), you must notify the Admissions and Records by filling out the Pass/No Pass Form found here [http://westvalley.edu/admissions/forms.html](http://westvalley.edu/admissions/forms.html).

You may take this course as Pass/No Pass even if you are taking it to fulfill the Information Competency Proficiency Graduation requirement. You only need to pass this course to fulfill the proficiency; you do not have to receive a letter grade.

Assessment, Assignments, and Discussion Forums
Visit the “Lessons” page to access assignments within the weekly folders.

Final Project (Annotated MLA Bibliography)
Students are required to compose an annotated bibliography on a topic of their choice. This must be submitted in order to pass the class. Detailed information will be available in ANGEL.
Final Exam
The final exam will be given during the last week of class and will cover all material presented in the course. This may include multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the blank and short essay questions. This is a timed exam. Students will have a week in which to take the exam, but only 120 minutes to complete it. There will be no make-up exams, unless for a reason deemed valid by the instructor.

Course Policies
Read and become familiar with the “Course Guidelines” document located in ANGEL.

Course Schedule
The course schedule and syllabus are both subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to stay informed of these changes.

Disability and Educational Support
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact DESP in the Learning Services Bldg. At (408) 741-2010 (voice) or (408) 741-2658(TTY) for assistance.

Unlawful Discrimination/Sexual Harassment
If you have a complaint or someone has shared information with you as a student or employee that is unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment, contact the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources at West Valley-Mission Community College District, Human Resources Department, (408-741-2060). If the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources is not available, contact the President of the college in which you attend or are employed. For West Valley College, contact the office of the President at 408-741-2097.