****United Arab Emirates University  
University College  
Information literacy GEIL 101  
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**REFLECTIVE ESSAY**



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Information literacy course(GEIL101) is simply focused on how to write a research academically using the correct methods and steps that the students will acquired during the course, getting a number of new skills such as the 21st century skills which are collaboration, communication, solving problems…etc., and then applying the presentation skills to present the research.

In the first week, the add and drop week, students join the class to take a brief idea about what they are going to study, the doctor’s teaching style, and marks grading. I went to the class, and I was happy to know that this course is very important in my academic life, as well as my personal life because it will help me in many cases in the university or in my real life, so that is why I took this course in the first semester in the university. In addition, this course is not depends on memorizing but on organizing the ideas because the exams are an open book exam, so I have to change my studying style in this course. At the end of the week, I feel comfort to choose this course.

The first chapter we studied in this course was the effective presentation skills. In this helpful session I became able to recognize the good and bad presentation. Actually, there are standards for the presentation and the presenter as well, that should be applied to come up with a good presentation such as preparation, structure, and content. I was very happy by learning the presentation skills and how to make a good PowerPoint presentation with all required standards. Also we looked on the grading form, so we can avoid mistakes.

Next week we went to the library; I was excited to know that this library is one of the biggest libraries in the UAE. We attended the orientation presented by a master student who explained the services available in the library, and he answered all the questions then we walked around; it was a very huge building full of books, and letters. It was an interesting and useful visit, and l could not wait to visit it again. Therefore, l went to the library next day, and I start to read books.

Then, we have been asked to make our own groups made from 4 or 5 students, most of this course is depending on team work, and the best thing was that we chooses our groups by our choice, no one force us to join a specific group. In the third week I prepared myself to make the individual presentation. I have finished the PowerPoint using all the tips, and then I practiced a lot. At the end of the week, I did the presentation and it was very good. After that my best friend Ahmed did his presentation, he used another presentation tool, Prezi; he was the first one in this class using it, his work was professional, and he talked about HH sheikh Zayed. In addition, he was very fluent in speaking; Actually, I was impressed a lot because I thought that his presentation will not be good because his academic level not that match good, but I recognized that everyone is talented in something, and I have to respect them. Therefore, I asked him to teach me how to use Prezi, and we decide to use this tool in our project presentation. After knowing each other, we as group members have chosen a leader for our group, my colleagues chose me to be the leader.

We start the first step of our research project process which is Research Question with a brainstorming of ideas. Eventually, after making some researches we decided to choose Education as our topic, and then we came up with a research question and we submitted the C1 assignment, this project has 4 deliverables called challenges **(C1, C2, C3, and C4)**.

At the class we studied many things, of them: the difference between data, information and knowledge, the definition of the research and its types, and the information sources. This helped us to know witch type of researches we are going to make, which information source to use and it was introduction to the second step “Information seeking strategies”, the way of looking for information. In the second step of the Big 6, we learned how to use Boolean operators, and we practiced through a class activity; it was a funny and useful class. After making a map of keywords and synonyms, each of our group members used different search criteria in different search tools and write down the results. The next step was to find as many resources as we can; we spent hours searching on books, journals, articles and any other relevant source. At the end we find a number of articles, but the unexpected thing was that we just find two books, probably because our research about something modern and it is under study.

In the Midterms week we faced a problem, it was that we have to submit the second challenge before the midterm, but we were busy studying exams, so we asked our instructor to delay the due date, and he accept. Moreover, we tried to make meetings after the class, but we could not because some of us have classes; it was hard to find time that all of us are free then we come up with an idea, we decided to make our meeting in the hostel because 4 out of 5 of us are staying at the hostel.

The four and fifth step bounded together, we have to analyze and evaluate the information and its sources that we got from the previous step. The evaluation passes through 6 stages and they are Relevancy, Scholarly purpose and objectivity, Authority, Accuracy, and Currency. The thing I most liked in this course was that the teacher clarifies each step and provides samples, and then we divide the work on the group mates, so it became much easier and faster. During the spring break, we did an electronic survey and send it to our friends; we used it to support our findings. The last step before the final presentation was making the reference list, the most important step in the whole research, referencing helps to avoid plagiarism which considered as an academic violation. We learned how to cite using APA style. Moreover, we prepared our presentation and get ready for it, but the thing that I felt worry about it that the whole group will get the same mark in the presentation, but as we know, students have different potentials, so we practiced a lot to not lose any mark. Also, I liked the idea that each member in the group will evaluate his friend, so no one is subjected to injustice.

At the end, I would like to say that this course is very helpful and interesting at the same time; I learned a lot of things that it will help me in my university life, and I had a funny time with my new friends with a lot of memories. I recommend making this course mandatory for students in the first semester because it is like the basis for other courses. In addition, I suggest making sharing classes with other classes in the same subject, so we can get more experience, especially in the presentation. Also, I advise all students to take this course with their friends, so it will not take that match of time to choose a group to join. Finally, I hope to make this course an online-course.