

My Reflection
The Internet as communication
Ruth Tsuria, Seton Hall University

I.LOC:

LOC #4 : Create messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context

- Locate and use information relevant to the goals, audiences, purposes and contexts
- Select creative and appropriate modalities and technologies to accomplish communicative goals
- Critically reflect on one's own messages after the communication event

LOC #5 : Critically analyze messages

- Identify meanings embedded in messages
- Articulate characteristics of mediated and non-mediated messages

LOC #8 : Utilize communication to embrace difference

- Articulate the connection between communication and culture
- Recognize individual and cultural similarities and differences
- Articulate one's own cultural standpoint and how it affects communication and world view
- Demonstrate the ability to be culturally self-aware

II. Length of Assignment: To be completed in one week.

III. Materials Needed: Library or public computer access. Internet access. Word processing program.

IV. Instructions:

In this assignment you will attempt to analyze your own online identity. This requires the ability to distant yourself and reflect critically. To help you in this process, follow these next steps:

Step 1: collecting data

1. Find a computer that does not have your information (that is, NOT your phone or your personal computer). I recommend a library computer.
2. Search for your name on google or a different web browser.
 - a. If you have a very popular name, try to narrow the search by adding some general information about you, such as state or school. Something a person that just met you might know about you.
3. Find at least **three** online references for yourself. These can be: your work profile or website, a news story with your name, a social media profile (see step 2), a professional profile, phonebook information, etc.
4. Gather all demographic information available.

5. Gather any other clear identity makers (awards, fandoms, family ties, etc...)
6. Write down everything you collected.

Step 2: collecting personal data

1. Ask a friend to use their social media account.
2. Search for your own profile.
3. Examine what is available in the profile section (the “about” in Facebook, for example)
 - a. Does it match the data you collected in step 1?
 - b. Can you learn anything else about your identity from this section?
4. See what you shared lately
 - a. Are there any political or social markers? (e.g. have you published a news story supporting/opposing Trump)
 - b. Are there any cultural markers? (E.g. have you shared about any music event you participated or opinions about a TV show/film/book you like, etc.)
 - c. Are there any other identity markers present in the data you have shared?
5. Collect this new information and write it down.
6. Do this for two different social media platforms (for example, Facebook and tinder/twitter/Instagram).
 - a. Note: If you only have account in one social media platform, gather as much information as possible. If you do not have accounts in any social media platforms, reflect also on how that presents your online identity.

Step 3: write down your reflection

For this exercise, we are using the online information like a mirror, which reflects back our own identity. Looking at your two lists from steps 1+2, write a 250-400 words essay, reflecting on your reflection. Answer these questions: who are you online? What are some of your identity markers (regarding race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, etc.)? What are some of the cultural and political aspects of your identity, as it is reflected online? How does this make you feel? Do you recognize the person reflected?

V. Rubric or Scoring Guide:

- 1) Two complete lists that have at list 10 items (20 points)
- 2) Critical and reflective ideas communicated in the paper (30 points)
- 3) Clear style and correct grammar (10 points)
- 4) The ability to articulate cultural and political markers (20 points)
- 5) The ability to reflect on the communication aspects of identity construction (20 points)