

# COMPS 496 Discussion Guide

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This assignment was developed for Communication Studies (COMS) 496: Capstone in Digital Rhetoric, but can be adapted to any subject area. This discussion guide is meant to introduce students to the concept of a scholarly conversation. It is also used to introduce the final assignment for the course, a mini-literature review.

This assignment was the product of a KU Libraries Information Literacy Mini-Grant. The mini-grants program pairs faculty with a team of librarians to redesign an assignment in an undergraduate course to meet an information literacy learning outcome. One outcome of the mini-grants program is to share information literacy assignment materials as an Open Educational Resource (OER).

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## Scholarship As Conversation Discussion Guide: COMS496

This discussion is intended to debrief the following reading and videos:

Read Burkhardt, J.M. (2016). Scholarship as conversation. In J.M. Burkhardt, *Teaching information literacy reframed: 50+ framework-based exercises for creating information-literate learners* (pp.11-31). Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman.

“Scholarship as Conversation” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JS3S0Y4-ZQ>

“Research 101: Scholarship is a Conversation”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGia3gNyHDM>

### Discussion Questions:

1. You’ve read one chapter, and watched two videos, that describe the notion that scholarship is a conversation. Let’s begin by asking ourselves, what is scholarship? What is a conversation?
2. Where might scholarly conversations take place? Who participates?
3. Do individuals who contribute to a scholarly conversation agree? Why or why not?
4. When is a scholarly conversation finished?
5. How might you, as an undergraduate student, participate in the scholarly conversation?

### Final Project Introduction:

6. The final project for this class is a group research paper. This project will begin with a proposal that includes a mini literature review. A literature review is an essential step toward participating in a scholarly conversation. A literature review summarizes, evaluates, and synthesizes the scholarly conversation in order to show how the literature (scholarship) relates to YOUR research question.
7. The literature that you will use for your projects will be readings from this class. To help you stay organized, and to make writing your mini literature review easier, you will complete a reading log for each assigned reading. [Pass out reading log, or mention where it is available electronically.]
8. A literature review (even a mini literature review like you will do) is NOT simply a summary of your sources. Not all sources will be equally helpful in providing context for your projects. The literature is your opportunity to steer the conversation toward your specific goal. Not all sources will receive the same amount of attention because not all sources help with your goal (but parts of them might). The reading logs will help you and your group decide which sources are the most connected/important to your projects. This work is what allows you an entry point into the scholarly conversation.
9. [Optional: Discuss Research Lifeline, or the research cycle specific to your discipline.]

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