

Step 1: Needs Assessment and Instructional Goals

Learner Characteristics:

- Public Affairs Soldiers with basic computer and web browser skills
- Public Affairs Soldiers need to be able to evaluate resources in order to protect against and stop the spread of mis/disinformation on US Military information platforms.
- This instruction would need to be added to FA1: Mass Communication Foundations Course.

Extant Materials:

- External weblinks with readings, videos, and practice sites
- Learning Objects: existing tutorials and video presentations
- Access to PAVILION (knowledge base of trusted resources relating to DoD Public Affairs) which includes a 6-minute video on media literacy.
- The Marine Corps is also developing a “media literacy” course though currently no armed service has a formalized literacy training program (Seck, 2022).

Teacher(s):

The Defense Information School requires its courses be taught by someone holding the Instructor Identification Badge. This instructor should be information literacy fluent.

Instructional Goals:

Soldiers will be able to evaluate information resources utilizing the CRAAP Test in order to protect against the malign influence of mis/disinformation in accordance with the most recent National Defense Authorization Acts (United States House of Representatives: Committee on Armed Services, 2021, 2022).

Obtain Consensus on the Goals:

The goals were defined in consultation through Public Affairs Doctrine Writers and Defense Information School Instructors. Goals will be revisited with comments from students during End of Course Critiques.

Goal Analysis:

Goals are measurable through a review of completed activities and during the Communications Capstone (FA8).

Step 2: Instructional Analysis (Task Analysis)

1. Trust/Use or Not to Trust/Use Exercise: Establish the need for evaluating resources.
2. Brainstorm Exercise: What characteristics made a good/trusted resource?
3. Introduce CRAAP Test: Establish the usefulness of the framework.
4. Describe and provide examples for all 5 steps of the CRAAP Test.
5. Practice evaluating a resource as a class using the CRAAP Test.
6. Practice evaluating resources individually using the CRAAP Test.

Step 3: Entry Behavior and Learner Characteristics

- Learners will be enlisted entry-level Public Affairs Soldiers (Army E1-E5 and meet prerequisites outlined in DA PAM 611-21).
- Learners will be enrolled in Mass Communication Foundations Course, located at Fort Meade, Maryland.
- In person class size is minimum 12 and maximum 25 with each Soldier having access to a computer and internet.

Step 4:

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of the Evaluating Resources for Public Affairs Soldiers, learners will be able to:

- Explain and apply the CRAAP test to information resources.
- Understand why evaluating information resources is important to stop the spread of mis/disinformation.
- Evaluate internet articles and websites for credibility, authority, reliability, and accuracy.
- Identify trustworthy sites and information resources.

Motivating Learners:

Motivation:

- Require learners to learn skills for passing grade for graduation from course.
- Reward learners with required skills needed to successfully perform job of Public Affairs Soldier.
- Reward learners with required skills needed to protect self, family and country against the malign influence of mis/disinformation.

Public Affairs Soldiers will be self-motivated by the desire to learn in order to graduate from Mass Communication Foundations Course, which is required for MOS qualification as a Public Affairs Soldier.

Public Affairs Soldiers will also be motivated by being able to protect their country and family from mis/disinformation.

Step 5:

Information Presentation:

Course will take place within a seated classroom where the instructor has access to a computer with projection capabilities and each student has access to their issued laptops.

7. Trust/Use or Not to Trust/Use Exercise: Establish the need for evaluating resources.
8. Brainstorm Exercise: What characteristics made a good/trusted resource?
9. Introduce CRAAP Test – lecture with accompanying presentation slides
10. Describe, provide examples, and discuss individual critical thinking for all 5 steps of the CRAAP Test:
 - a. Currency
 - b. Relevance
 - c. Authority
 - i. Investigate the source (searching vertically)
 - d. Accuracy
 - i. Investigate the information (searching horizontally)
 - ii. Trace claims, quotes, and media to original context
 - iii. Reverse image searches using google images and TinEye
 - e. Purpose
 - i. Relate back to Public Affairs messaging as well as Psychological Operations messaging
11. Practice evaluating a resource as a class (instructor led) using the CRAAP Test.
12. Practice evaluating a resource in teams using the CRAAP Test.
13. Practice evaluating resources individually using the CRAAP Test.

Learner Participation:

- Participate introduction activities.
- Listen to lectures (and read accompanying presentation slides), and participate in discussion.
- Participate in instructor-led and then student-led teams in evaluating a resource.
- Participate in individual evaluation of a resource with feedback from instructor.

Testing/Assessment:

Testing and assessment will be done through assigned individual evaluation of a resource in the form of a worksheet and essay describing their thought process and recommendations. Additionally, this skill will be further evaluated throughout the course and with the culmination Communications Capstone (FA8).

Step 6:

1. The instruction for my course will be in-person. This course will be added to the FA1: Mass Communication Foundations Course for Public Affairs Soldiers which is held in-person at Fort Meade, Maryland. Since the learners will already be in person, it would make no sense to hold the instruction online especially since the instruction is designed to allow for person-to-person interaction.
2. The specific materials or learning objects to be developed are:
 - The lecture/presentation – which will include overheads/PowerPoint presentation with highlighted screenshots as well as guided, live walkthroughs on the internet
 - Pdfs (printed and electronic copies):
 - i. List of prepared examples of resources to evaluate (updated frequently)
 - ii. CRAAP test evaluation handout/checklist
 - Create example videos using Camtasia to be uploaded to Microsoft Teams for learners to watch on an individual basis as a refresher. These videos would include visuals and narration.
3. I would not specifically utilize classroom communication tools since the instruction will be held in-person in a classroom with reasonable class size (minimum 12 and maximum 25) which enables the opportunity for discussion. However, Microsoft Teams is available for all military members so learners could utilize this tool to share their documents or even work on the same document simultaneously while they work in a group setting. Microsoft Teams also would allow the instructor to upload the presentation/overheads, any additional support videos, and the printed materials so that the learners have access to these materials outside the classroom. This would be beneficial since the culmination Communications Capstone (FA8) is not immediately after this block of instruction and the learners will need to be able to utilize the learned skills during the capstone event.

Step 7:

Formative Evaluation (ongoing checking of student progress towards the outcomes to assess the ongoing success of the instruction)

The Formative Evaluation of this course will include the ongoing checking student progress towards the desired outcomes - to see if the students have understood the reasoning behind properly evaluating resources and the ability to apply that reasoning to their projects and future decision making. This will include the in-class and in-person discussions, the assigned individual worksheet and essay, as well as the culmination Communications Capstone (FA8).

Most of this evaluation will be done based on observable behavior on the part of the learners, rather than in a physical format. The questions asked will center around the steps of the CRAAP Test and

how the students are using it with their own critical thinking. Instructors will be able to adjust and make on the spot corrections if the responses are not in line with learning goals.

Summative Evaluation (assessment of the success or failure of the instruction overall)

The Summative Evaluation will be done three parts:

- End of Course Critiques for the students to respond to opinion questions about the quality of the instruction and instructional materials, and the effectiveness of the instruction. This will be a print form given at the end of the course that includes both multiple answer questions as well as space for students to give written feedback.
- End of Course Reviews for all the instructors of FA1: Mass Communication Foundations Course to response to questions on if the desired learning outcomes were observed in the students and if it improved the course outcomes. This will be a print form given at the end of the course cycle that includes both multiple answer questions as well as space for the instructors to give written feedback.
- A Field Survey for Public Affairs Officers and NCOs to respond to opinion questions about whether newly training Soldiers have the required skills and if they are using them in real world situations. This would be a yearly electronic survey of the force that includes both multiple answer questions as well as space for written feedback.

Depending on responses from these three evaluations, changes will be made to the instructional course in order to better meet the needs of the force and become compliant with the requirements in the most recent National Defense Authorization Acts.