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# The Web Safari: Connecting Theory to Practice Through Student-Led Discovery of Contemporary Material

*CAPPA e-workshop: Teaching Public Policy and Public  
Administration in a Time of COVID-19*

June 2 2020

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Slides at [@giustinolongo](https://bit.ly/LONGO_CAPPA_JUN2)



# Outline

- Overview
- Teaching and Learning Intent
- Mechanics
- Experience to Date
- Online Adaptations



# Overview: Principles of the Web Safari

- A **collective effort** to build a repository of web-accessible resources related to the course themes and content.
- Can be used in any class in which **contemporary events or commentary** can be found that support course theory.
- For **course-credit** (1% per contribution per session = 10%).
- **Tweeted** from the student's account + **posted** to class notes.
- **Due before each session** to allow for instructor review.
- Students can **present** contributions in a synchronous class.
- **Asynchronous** classes require other methods (see below).



# Teach and Learning Intent

- An **alternative** to “participation grades”.
- **Incentivize** student contributions without penalizing introverts.
- Incentivize student-led **exploration and discovery** of course-related material in the wilds of the Internet.
- Tapping the **collective intelligence** of the class to source contemporary resources that connect session theory to practical implications.
- Provide a **guided pathway** into Twitter for new users.



# Mechanics: Posting Infrastructure

1. Web-accessible **course notes page** outlining the theme or topic ([example](#)).
2. Web-accessible **submission form** for students to post contribution ([example](#)).
3. Web-accessible **display of contributions** ([example](#)).
4. Use #Hashtags to **collect contributions in Twitter** ([example](#)).

# Mechanics: Designing Infrastructure

Session 9 - May 14 - In Graphic Detail: Information Visualization & Infographics

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Editing

Session 9 - May 14 - In Graphic Detail: Information Visualization & Infographics

Visualization is a category of techniques used for data analysis and the communication of quantitative findings using informative graphics. Good visualization should help the viewer understand the underlying data, appreciate the information contained in the analysis, and grasp the complexity of the system. Infographics are visual representations of information and data, combining visual summaries and explanatory text, for presenting information quickly to a generalist audience and in an appealing way.

[Class recording](#)

Readings:

- Lindquist, E. (2015). "Visualization Meets Policy Making: Visual Traditions, Policy Complexity, Strategic Investments." In Erik W. Johnston (ed.) [Governance in the Information Era: Theory and Practice of Policy Informatics](#). Chapter 4, pp. 62-82. New York: Routledge. [Link](#).
  - If interested, a more recent article: Lindquist, E. A. (2018). Visualization Practice and Government: Strategic Investments for More Democratic Governance. In *Policy Analytics, Modelling, and Informatics* (pp. 225-246). Springer, Cham. [Link](#)
- Otten, J. J., Cheng, K., & Drewnowski, A. (2015). Infographics and public policy: using data visualization to convey complex information. *Health Affairs*, 34(11), 1901-1907. [Link](#)
- [Data Visualization: A Primer](#) (Government of Canada)
- Is That Chart Saying What You Think It's Saying? [Link](#)
- How to make infographics: a beginner's guide to data visualisation. [Link](#)
- Briefing Materials Infographic, *Canadian Government Executive Magazine*, October 2017. [Link](#)
- [Graphic Detail Series - The Economist](#)

Software / Services:

- [Flourish](#)
- [Tableau](#) (optional)



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Structure

1. Web topic
2. Web content
3. Web example
4. Use (example)

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## Web Safari Session 1

A collection of news stories, articles, videos, blog posts, and other web-accessible resources related to the course themes and content. Contribute a unique tweet related to the session theme. Also post here following the example. Due at 9 am on the day of session 1.

\* Required

Given Name \*

Your answer



Surname \*

Your answer

Link to Article \*





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**Web Safari Example**

A collection of news stories, articles, videos, blog posts, and other web-accessible resources related to the course themes and content. Contribute a unique tweet related to the session theme. Also post here following the example. Due at 9 am today. Those joining the class might be asked to talk about their contribution.

(N.B.: if you fill out [the form here](#), your contribution will appear below when this page is updated by the instructor. To see the real-time list of contributions, see [this spreadsheet](#))



Times stamp	Given Name	Surna me	Link to Article	Link to Tweet	Article Title	Interesting because ...
5/28/2020 11:52:17	Justin	Longo	<a href="https://www.axios.com/health-experts-puzzled-by-hhs-analysis-of-ted-cruz-amendment-2020062072844.html">https://www.axios.com/health-experts-puzzled-by-hhs-analysis-of-ted-cruz-amendment-2020062072844.html</a>	<a href="https://twitter.com/giustinolongo/status/1023000629902360576">https://twitter.com/giustinolongo/status/1023000629902360576</a>	Health experts puzzled by HHSGov analysis of Ted Cruz amendment	Competing policy proposals based on undisclosed assumptions and model parameters make it impossible to critique the analysis. This article shows the problem with "black box" policy analysis
			<a href="https://www.w">https://www.w</a>			



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# Mechanics: Student Action Items

1. **Preview** a coming session to understand the general theme or topic.
2. **Search** for contemporary web-accessible content (blog posts, tweet-threads, videos, news articles) that align with the theme. (Check that it has not already been [added](#)).
3. [Tweet the link](#) to the resource + add commentary.
4. **Add** article title, article URL, [link to tweet](#), and “why you should read this article” to the course notes (see [form](#)).
5. Brief **verbal recap** of their post (in synchronous classes).

# 1. Definition: *Definition: definition* is a word that defines the word.

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## Tweet



**YuanYuan Zhang** @YuanYua49052127 · May 13

What is the difference between infographics and data visualizations, and when should I use what. [#JSGS807S9](#)



Getting it right: why infographics are not the same as data visualizati...

A rundown on the key differences and ideas for when to use each

[blog.prototypr.io](#)



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# Experience to Date

- Student response
  - Survey: **“The ‘web safari is a waste of time”.**
    - Three year average = 5.75/7 (**disagree**)
  - Text feedback
    - **Too much work** for 1%
    - Twitter is an **inappropriate platform** for a graduate professional school.



# Experience to Date (continued)

- Categories of contributions:
  - **News articles** (Economist, Globe & Mail, Washington Post, Guardian, Forbes, CBC)
  - **Pop-academic articles** (HBR, MIT Technology Review, Policy Options, The Conversation, phys.org).
  - **Blog posts** (academics, think tanks, industry associations, vendors)
  - **Course-specific posts** (e.g., StatsCan for public sector statistics class)
  - **YouTube videos** (some students post only videos)



# Online Adaptations

- F2F or synchronous online: no problem - have students briefly speak to their contribution. About two minutes each.
- Adapting to online / asynchronous
  - **“Post one, comment on two”**
  - **Upvoting?**
- **Adding value?**
  - **Categorizing / link** explicitly to course notes
  - Record a web safari **video walkthrough**.