NEWSCo/Lab
Understanding how news works in the digital age

Building news savvy: Best practices

▶ **Education**

Making Sense of the News

■ WHAT IS IT?

[Making Sense of the News: News Literacy Lessons for Digital Citizens](#) is a periodic six-week Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) that helps participants develop critical thinking skills so they can better identify reliable news. More than 7,000 people, primarily from six countries, have enrolled in the MOOC since it [launched](#) in January 2017.
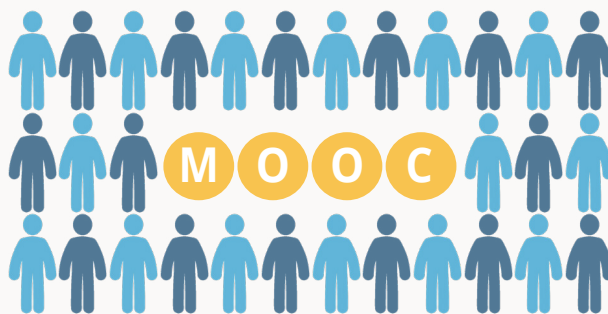
■ WHO'S BEHIND IT?

The [Center for News Literacy](#) at Stony Brook University in New York and the University of Hong Kong developed the online course based on a classroom curriculum they have developed and taught during the past decade. More than 15,000 university students in 10 countries have participated in these news literacy programs in the past 10 years, including [10,000 students](#) at Stony Brook.

■ DOES IT WORK?

Participants gave the course a high 4.6 on a five-point scale in an initial 2017 [assessment](#). "Excellent, short and concise. Offers clear and usable methods for critical thinking," one [review](#) said. The course draws on Stony Brook's decade-long experience with college and adult-level news literacy education. Other universities have adopted Stony Brook's [approach](#). A 2016 [case study](#) concluded the course produced "significantly higher levels of news media literacy … and higher motivation to consume news."

■ HOW TO DO IT

Anyone with a computer and an internet connection can [sign up](#). The MOOC is a six-week course requiring about 2-3 hours a week, but learners set their own pace. The MOOC is offered in English, with Chinese and Spanish subtitles. Participants can audit the course for free or pay $49 to earn a certificate. (You also might review other center material from the center's [Digital Resource Center](#): especially the the [Course Pack](#), updated weekly.

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Arizona State University