



Incorporating US Government Information Into an Introductory Course on Digital Research

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About the Course

UC 174 *Research Methods in the Digital Library* is a one credit course taught by librarians at the University of Michigan.

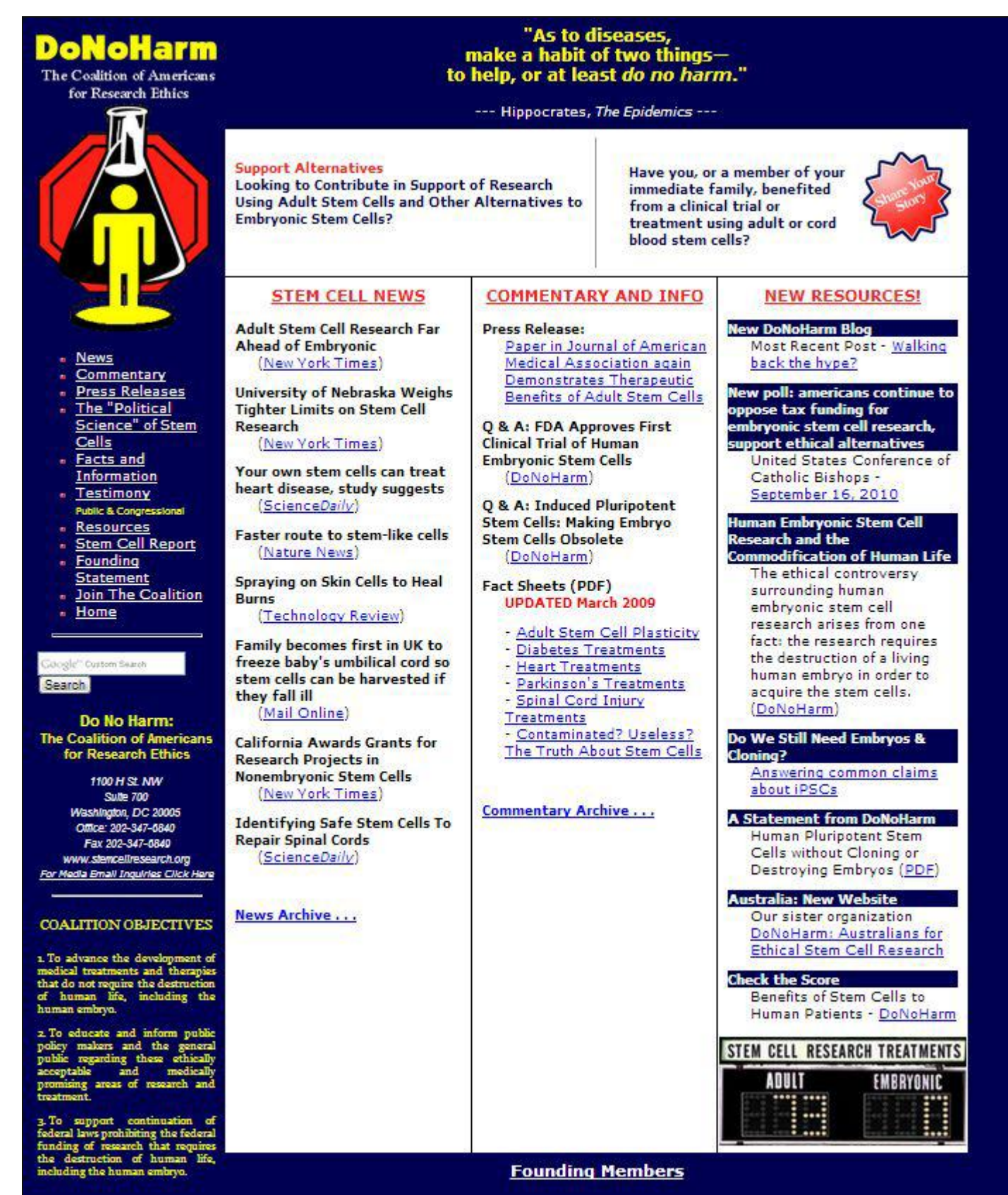
The course introduces first and second year students to information discovery, evaluation and management skills.

US government information is integrated into the lectures, discussions and assignments with the goal of preparing students to be engaged citizens and fostering lifelong learning.

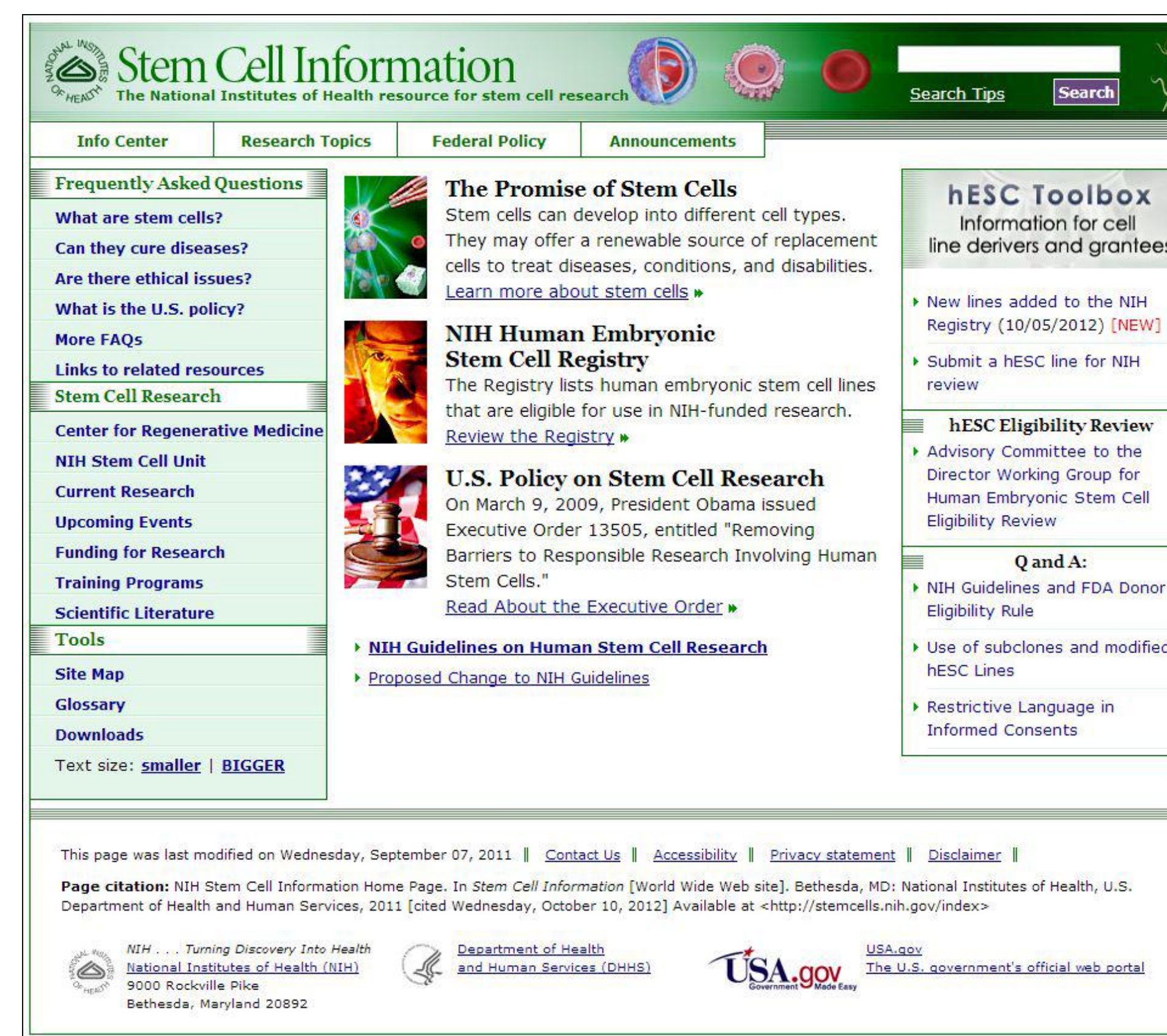
Information Evaluation

Assignment:
Compare and evaluate the following websites

www.stemcellresearch.org



stemcells.nih.gov



Finding Primary and Secondary Sources

In class exercise:
Find primary and secondary sources on the Watergate Scandal

Discussion:
Who created the primary source and what is this person's relationship to the event?
Where did you look for primary sources? And secondary sources?

Becoming Informed Voters

Assignment:
Look up how your representative voted on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

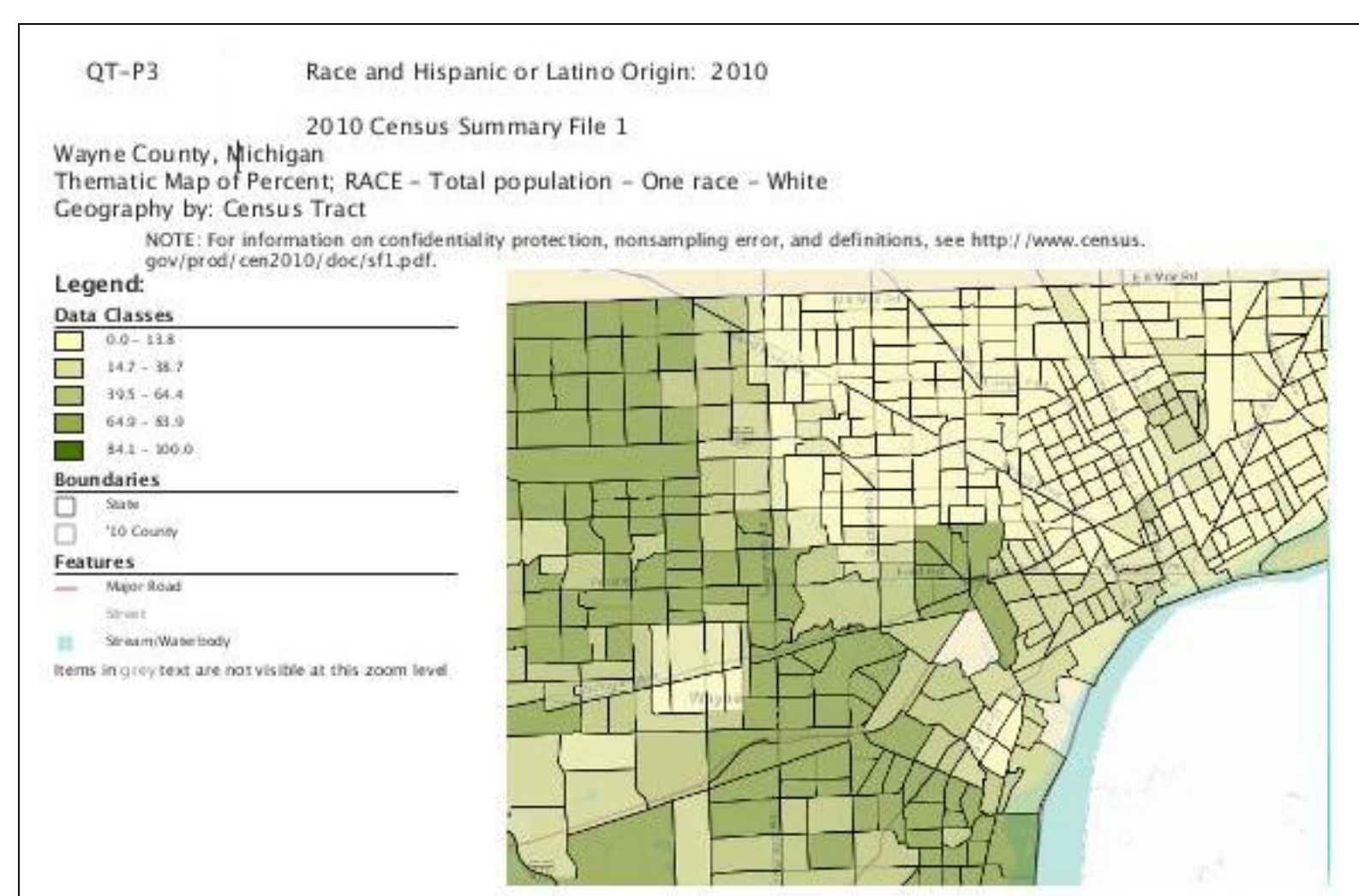
Discussion:
How do you inform yourself before an election?
What sources do you rely on?

Investigate:
Vote411.org (League of Women Voters)
— Project VoteSmart

How Information is Created and Used

In class exercise:
Use American Factfinder to find Census data on race from your hometown. Do the results surprise you? Do the categories make sense?

Discussion:
How is this data collected and how are the categories are defined



Critical Thinking

Government information provides a context for students to develop higher order thinking skills. Students are more engaged in discussions about information creation, evaluation and analysis when they understand why these issues are important. Incorporating government information into the curriculum helps students see the value of thinking critically about information.