Using the ACRL Framework for Business Information Literacy Instruction

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Introduction
While much of the professional information literacy literature has been connected to Bloom’s Taxonomy, as of this writing, there has not yet been any published literature that has made the connections between the Threshold Concepts in the ACRL Framework and Fink’s Taxonomy for Significant Learning, such as those outlined.

This poster provides lesson plans that highlight each of the six Information Literacy Threshold Concepts in a business context and offers a trajectory toward significant and lifelong learning.

Lesson plans for teaching the ACRL framework threshold concepts

Authority is constructed and contextual. Students are prompted to learn about the major publishing professional associations in their field by going to resources in the library and online.

Link to Fink: Knowledge of the standards in practice and regulations in the field are Foundational Knowledge.

 Searching as strategic exploration. Students are given the opportunity to become entrepreneurs to collectively plan a business. Students must justify their choice and teach the search strategy they used to locate the source to their working group.

Link to Fink: Strategic and exploratory searching is refined through the practical application of critical and creative thinking.

Information creation as a process. In this lesson, students are learning about the research cycle and primary sources. In collaboration with the library’s Head of Special Collections and Archives, the students are given a hands-on demonstration where they can explore regional labor union documents, rare books and hand-written artifacts.

Link to Fink: By integrating primary sources, from archival and contemporary sources, students have a foundation for the process of information creation.

Research as inquiry. The instructor asks students to reflect on where they go for information if they want to know more. Students learn that the perfect source may not exist, but multiple sources need to be consulted and multiple questions may need to be asked to get the best answers. The students are reminded that most important learning dispositions are curiosity, persistence, and flexibility.

Link to Fink: Students learn how to learn by asking curious questions.

Information has value. The instructor begins to explain implications of intellectual property, copyright, open access and fair use in the business profession. Students are also given the opportunity to share a time they needed information and how having that information added value to their personal experience.

Link to Fink: By reflecting on their value of knowledge, students realize they care about accessing reliable information to make better decisions.

Scholarship as conversation. The instructor explains the importance of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and separately, the U.S. Census Bureau in regards to business information and implications for further research. Students are also asked to examine the content of an annual report by comparing what is popular in business news media.

Link to Fink: By learning about human dimensions, which foster the business community, students can understand how information can contribute to sustainable environments, organizations, or economies.

Threshold concepts learning outcomes for significant learning

Authority is Contextual – Foundational Knowledge

I understand… my responsibility to seek out authoritative information.

I can… determine what makes an authoritative source in my discipline.

I value… important ideas and facts in my discipline.

Searching as Strategic Exploration– Application

I understand… information systems are organized.

I can… determine when sufficient information has been gathered.

I value… developing skills to seek and locate useful information.

Information Creation as a Process – Integration

I understand… how individuals create and disseminate information in my field.

I can… identify different types of sources.

I value… being connected to the manifestation of ideas.

Research as Inquiry – Learning How to Learn

I understand… how to frame useful questions in academic research.

I can… combine findings to identify questions for future research.

I value… my persistence and flexibility in transferring knowledge.

Information has Value – Caring

I understand… implications of intellectual property and open access in my work.

I can… make informed choices when sharing information.

I value… reputable resources as contributing to my academic success.

Scholarship as Conversation – Human Dimension

I understand… all information sources display a perspective.

I can… identify influential works which demonstrate contributions to my field.

I value… my ability to critically reflect & sensitively respond in the conversation.

Materials and Results
As the business subject librarian, I created and taught a business research course, in which students were administered a pre- and post-assessment questionnaire for two semesters. The Threshold Concepts in the Framework worked well in the business discipline. Students became oriented with library and online resources and skillsets needed to execute search tasks. Students demonstrated the ability to utilize the foundational skillset they learned in this course in other classes and in the field. From initial inquiry and through exploration, the value of seeking information of contextual quality has offered transformative learning experiences for students to become more responsible leaders and participants in the business community.

Literature cited


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