Making Sense of Threshold Concepts Through Graphic Design Collaboration and the Student Lens

Amanda Meeks, Research and Instruction Librarian

Teresa Burk, Head Librarian
The Role of Graphic Design in Social Awareness

Class Goals and Objectives:

• Assess the role designers have played as shapers of public perception
• Evaluate an array of historical and contemporary data and analyze its implications within the culture for which they are designing
• Generate visual campaigns which address social and political issues
• Create and present an effective plan for promoting public awareness or consciousness
• Discuss their own visual constructs and that of others in an intelligent and constructive manner
Overall Goal: Empower students by demystifying what research is, particularly in art and design.

Why Threshold Concepts? The framework has shifted the focus of information literacy from procedural instruction to a more conceptual model with room for creativity and interpretation.

Why Students? Feminist or Critical pedagogy includes the practice of validating learners in what they already know, valuing their intuition, and collaborative knowledge creation.

Ask More Questions: Encourage students to reflect and think more critically about their research practice as artists and designers.
Creative Brief

Goals:
• Empower students to do better research
• Develop an understanding of the [info lit framework] concepts
• Enable critical thinking through visual literacy

Tone:
• Approachable
• Energetic
• Fun
• Reassuring

Big Question: What does each of these concepts mean in the SCAD context and in art and design education as a whole?
It was important to act as a guide, not an authority with the “right” answers, throughout the learning and designing process.
If asked and empowered to answer, students are capable of grappling with the complexity of the framework concepts and providing valid and unique insights into this seemingly "forbidding" document.
“Research has always been a process of collecting information but now I see it more as a non-linear process that doesn't end when designing begins.”

“I believe "analyze and contribute" is important to us as creative students. After researching, we don't stop there but find/create our own voice and bring it to the creative industry.”
Solution:
Connect the dots between the ACRL Framework Concepts, Information Literacy Standards, and Visual Literacy Standards

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1w3AX1-XRYBl6gxxoTFSoLY9cp4yD85ON0-qlq34/edit?usp=sharing
# ACRL Alignment Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Info Lit Framework</th>
<th>Info Lit Standards</th>
<th>Visual Literacy Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Authority Is Constructed and Contextual**            | **Standard One**
The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed    | **Standard One**
The visually literate student determines the nature and extent of the visual materials needed. |
| Information resources reflect their creators' expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required. | **Standard Three**
The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system. | **Standard Four**
The visually literate student evaluates images and their sources. |
| **Information Creation as a Process**                  | **Standard Four**
The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose. | **Standard Five**
The visually literate student uses images and visual media effectively. |
| Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative processes of researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences. | | |
| **Information Has Value**                              | **Standard Five**
The information literate student understands many of the ethical, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally. | **Standard Seven**
The visually literate student understands many of the ethical, legal, social, and economic issues surrounding the creation and use of images and visual media, and accesses and uses visual materials ethically. |
| Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination. | | |
Evolution of the Project

• Broker conversations with administration about the importance of information literacy and the library’s role as collaborator
• Spark new ideas about instruction services across SCAD Libraries
• Embed the guide into faculty partner courses
• Produce and distribute the guide to the SCAD community
Takeaways

• Include students in your conversation around information literacy
• Find creative solutions and seek collaborations
• Test, stretch, and experiment with the Framework
• *Your* context is important
Bibliography and Recommended Readings


