To Know Where They Are, You Need to Know Where They're At!
Tragic Backstory:

- Foundations, SACS, & RHW
  - Critical Literacy & Communication
  - RHW Gets the Charge
  - The SACS Conundrum
    "the institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources"

- Sounding familiar?
"How much have your instructors emphasized...using scholarly or peer-reviewed sources in your course assignments?"

"About how often have you...decided not to use an information source in a course assignment due to its questionable quality?"
Partners & Scope

- Composition Committee
  - How to Assess Critical Literacy Instruction Beyond Our Classroom
  - Considering "Research Readiness"
  - Conceiving a pre-course/post-course instrument

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
<th>Partner Group – 4 Faculty &amp; 7 Sections</th>
<th>Pre = 139, Post = 128</th>
<th>Lack of Library-Led Instruction</th>
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<td>Explicit Instruction vs. Implicit Modeling</td>
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Selecting an Instrument

Dick, Carey, & Carey Systematic Design of Instruction Model (2009)
Pre-Course / Post-Course Instrument

- Design guided by NSSE, Critical Literacy survey, RHW objectives, Our own instructional observations and experiences

- Motivating Questions
  - Gauging "research readiness"
  - Assessing student development
  - At what level are they operating
  - Correlating to the RHW outcomes
  - Balancing competencies and frameworks
Focal Categories

01 Accurately Identifying Resources
02 Matching Potential Sources to Need
03 Gauging Relative Authority in Context
04 Understanding Potential for Bias
05 Understanding Responsible Knowledge & Research Practices
How did they do?

Accurately Identifying Resources

01

+ 5.9%

1) The citation listed above most likely refers to a(n)...  
1. a) Scholarly book  
2. b) Encyclopedia entry  
3. c) Web site  
4. d) News article in a popular magazine  
5. e) I don’t know
How did they do?

Matching Potential Sources to Need

02

PRE-TEST 60.18%  POST-TEST 64.24%  + 4.06%
Question #10

10) When looking for a comprehensive account of economic changes in college sports, the best source would likely be...


b) "Punishingly Profitable." Economist, vol. 416, no. 8954, 05 Sept. 2015, p. 82


e) I don’t know
How did they do?

03
Gauging Relative Authority in Context

+ 7.36%

Bar chart showing pre-test at 54.90% and post-test at 62.66% with an increase of 7.36%.
Question #4

4) When looking for a reliable account of a contemporary event, the best source is likely...

a) A blog post
b) A social media post
c) An empirical report from a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal
d) A timely report from a major news outlet
e) I don’t know
How did they do?

Understanding Potential for Bias

- 6.63%
18) “Confirmation bias” refers to the psychological tendency to grant greater weight or significance to information that appears to confirm our pre-existing beliefs and assumptions. Researchers can guard against confirmation bias by...

a) Examining a wide range of evidence, both pro and con.

b) By explicitly questioning their own possible preconceptions

c) By looking for alternative explanations for the existing evidence

d) All of the above

e) None of the above

f) I don’t know
How did they do?

05
Understanding Responsible Knowledge & Research Practices

+ 9.07%
19) You’re writing a paper for your psych class. You’re interested in the relationship between mental illness and the ability to recognize emotions in other people’s faces. Your professor suggests that you look at this article -- Meehan, Kevin B., et al. “Facial Emotion Recognition and Borderline Personality Pathology.” Psychiatry Research, vol. 255, Sept. 2017, pp. 347-354. Now that you’ve read and carefully considered the article, how should you proceed?

a) Look for other useful articles in the bibliography
b) Use the keywords in the title to do a search in a psychology database
c) Look for similar articles by the same authors
d) All of the above
e) None of the above
f) I don’t know
Areas of Interest

- Relative Success
  - Most areas experienced a modest gain from pre to post no matter how we chunked the results
  - 8 Questions saw an increase greater than 7.5% with the highest overall number measuring more than 18% points.
  - Strongest overall increases by section occurred in "Gauging Relative Authority" & "Practices" -- 7.36% and 9.07%, respectively.
  - Mirroring RHW objectives or faculty wheel-house?
23) You’ve chosen a topic for your research paper – “privacy on the internet” – but your professor tells you that the topic is too broad. Which of the following might be the best way to narrow your topic while still addressing the broader subject of “privacy on the internet?”

a) “The relationship between Facebook use and self-esteem”

b) “The methods schools are using to combat online bullying”

c) “How social media companies leverage personal data to make money”

d) “How eBooks can impact student learning”

e) I don’t know
Areas of Concern

- Overall score was disappointing in both pre and post
  - 5 questions actually showed a decrease in correct responses on the post with the most significant decline being 5.7% (Q6) *(I think this is a result of the question design)*
  - Identifying Resources from catalog record – Qs 1 & 3 scored below 60% on the pre-test
- Our instrument & question design
- Primary/secondary distinction lacking
- Understanding context was a frequent challenge
- What happened to bias?
Question #6

6) When looking for a comprehensive, in-depth account of a specific area of knowledge, the best source is likely...

a) An encyclopedia entry
b) A congressional report published by the GPO
c) A book or monograph from a scholarly publisher
d) A peer-reviewed research article
e) I don’t know
Conclusions, speculations, and reflections that might inform our efforts? Inform our practice? Inform our partners?

- In terms of "research readiness," students struggled to understand the kind of information source they were confronted with.
- They struggled to understand how to deploy diverse information sources strategically and to different ends.
- They struggled to contextualize information not directly and narrowly conceived as "scholarly".

Reflection & Speculation
More generally, they struggled to understand and contextualize information across the broader information landscape

- "peer-reviewed, scholarly journal/article" as magical talisman
- Seeking understanding rather than task management
- See the need to broaden our instruction to account for that more expansive info landscape and to acknowledge and struggle with the messier aspects of that landscape
- Learning from the instrument or merely a measure – improvement even in areas not part of typical course content
Next Steps – Where do we go from here?

- Faculty follow-up
  - Real Opportunity to Strengthen our Partnership
  - Reviewing Results and Identify Additional Areas for Collaboration
  - What is actually covered in the course?
  - Are there areas where we can help them address some of the concerns we found?
- Identify or Develop "Plug and Play" content and lessons for faculty to use
- Revisit Our Instrument
Any Questions?

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