CONNECTIONS

- HIGHER EDUCATION
- RESOURCES
- INFO TECH
- TEACHING & LEARNING
- LIBRARIES
What is PIL?

1. NATIONAL & ONGOING STUDY
2. + 260 US COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES
3. SOCIAL SCIENCE METHODS
4. STUDENTS’ RESEARCH BEHAVIORS
TIMELINE

2009
FINDING

2010
EVALUATING

2011
MULTITASKING

2012
TRANSITIONING: WORKPLACE
How do today’s students find and use information?
5 research takeaways
#1
Students say research is more difficult than ever before.
fear, tired, angst, dread, excited, overwhelming, disgusted, confused, intrigued, stressed, annoyed, anxious, tired, 2013 interviews, N = 35 first-year students, 6 schools; 2009 interviews, N = 86 students, 7 schools.
INFO TRANSITION

9x LIBRARY COLLECTION

16x (MLS) LIBRARIANS

19x LIBRARY DATABASES

Shift from scarcity to abundance

2013 interviews, N = 35 first-year students, 6 schools
#2
Students have most difficulty with getting started on assignments.
MOST PROBLEMATIC?

69%

Defining, narrowing, and settling on a topic

Research can feel like a risky gamble

2010 survey N = 8,353, 25 US schools
#3

Frustrations begin with finding context.
Research process varies for every student, each time

2009 survey, N = 2,318, 6 schools; 2010 survey, N = 8,353, 25 schools
Students use a strategy driven by familiarity and efficiency.
MEET MICHAEL

- Risk-averse
- Looks for “the answer”
- Thinks everything is online
- Must appear self-sufficient
- Waits until the last minute

3 Cs
CURRENT
CONVENIENT
CREDIBLE

2010 survey, N = 8,353, 25 US schools;
2017 focus groups, N = 26, 5 schools
WELL-WORN PATH

2010 survey, N = 8,353, 25 US schools; 2017 focus groups, N = 26, 5 schools
GO-TO EXPERTS?

HANDOUTS

60%

Recommend a book, a place-based source.

Small compass for navigating info landscape

2010 survey, N = 8,353, 25 schools;
2010 content analysis, N = 191 handouts, 28 schools
Most information skills evolve and improve over time.
DURING COLLEGE

- FIRST YEAR
- SOPHOMORE
- JUNIOR
- SENIOR

- Citation trail
- Evaluation criteria
- Ethical issues

- Journal abstracts
- Google Scholar ≠ Google
AFTER COLLEGE

2015 survey, N = 1,651, 10 schools
WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT

INTEGRATE & CONTEXTUALIZE

EVALUATE & REVISE

ENGAGE & DISCUSS

SYNTHESIZE & CROSS-CONTEXTUALIZE

Research is fundamentally social

2012 interviews, N = 23 employers; 33 recent graduates, 4 schools
## PROMISING CHANGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIL FINDING</th>
<th>BEST PRACTICES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Defining a topic is harder than finding sources.</td>
<td>• Fewer lessons on “search”&lt;br&gt;• Integrate curiosity into search lessons&lt;br&gt;• Embed librarians within courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using same sources; many from high school assignments.</td>
<td>• Teach abstracts&lt;br&gt;• Teach how to “tie it all together”&lt;br&gt;• Peer-to-peer support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluating online sources using different criteria.</td>
<td>• Work closely with educators K-12&lt;br&gt;• Next step: Teach students how to frame and ask their own questions</td>
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Thank you

WHAT TODAY’S STUDENTS HAVE TAUGHT US