

# Writing our way into critical practice: Reflecting on university teaching and information literacy instruction

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A hand-drawn heart on a piece of brown paper.

Follow Your

## Our journey

Starting a conversation about:

- the changing nature of our work
- our students
- the broader context in which we educate students to work



*Carol Collier Kuhlthau*



*Elizabeth Ellsworth*

# Theory

Intuition, curiosity, imperfection and mess

- Kuhlthau: Seven stages of Information seeking process (ISP)
- Ellsworth: Understanding the frame



# The problem

- Graduate students in professional programs and their desire for applied learning
- Resistance to theory
- When and how to intervene





## Learner analysis: A short survey

Have you or do you read things outside of course material to enrich your practice? What types of materials have you or do you read?

- No
- Only material that is directly applicable to the work I do
- I read fiction of light material



If you haven't or don't read outside materials, why (what gets in the way of doing so)?

- Lack of time
- Material too dense not sufficiently applied
- Too much out there so I don't know where to begin
- Limited time and knowledge of where to search



What is frustrating or helpful when integrating academic scholarship with your practice?

- Not having someone to debrief with about what I read
- I need advice on how to access the most relevant and helpful articles
- I don't have access to academic scholarship through my workplace
- I don't have the opportunity to see what I learn in practice or to apply it myself
- I learn better by doing than just reading
- I like case studies or examples of directly applying theory to practice





## The intervention (B)

### In class

- Two weeks before assignment
- Relevance of scholarly conversations
- How to access conversations
- Specific research strategies for upcoming assignment





- One student sought one-to-one consultation
- Quality of papers
- Kuhlthau & Gambrill



# Reflections & learning

“What I’ve come to realize is that this course is a jumping off point, and that it falls to me to put the time and energy into staying on top of the current research—and that this will be an ongoing effort that I must maintain throughout my career.”

~ Student, SOWK 5302





# Reflections & learning

Sarah

- Process learning
- Framing of relationship to research and the library in class

Martha

- Power relations: faculty and library staff
- Teaching is messy
- “Knowledge is created through conversation” (Lankes): a recurring theme





- Our relationship
- Integrating classroom and library teachings
- Articulating for/with students the journey that they are on.



Letter writing is the only device for  
combining solitude with good company  
~ Lord Byron