LOEX 2015
Crafting the perfect blend:
Student cognitive development theory and threshold concepts for student success
Catherine Johnson (catherinerae@gmail.com) & Carissa Tomlinson (ctomlinson@towson.edu)

ACRL Framework
The summaries below come directly from the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education published by ACRL this year. For more detailed descriptions see the Framework in its entirety at: http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework

Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
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.

Information Creation as a Process
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
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 socio-economic interests influence information production and dissemination.

Research as Inquiry
Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.

Scholarship as Conversation
Communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations.

Searching as Strategic Exploration
Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.

Perry’s Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dualist</th>
<th>Multiplist</th>
<th>Relativist</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Black/White</td>
<td>-Diversity recognized</td>
<td>-Context matters</td>
<td>-Faced with relativity, make choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Right/Wrong</td>
<td>-Authorities disagree</td>
<td>-Authorities can be analyzed</td>
<td>-Students stake a position in debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Authorities have answers</td>
<td>-Everyone’s opinion equal</td>
<td>-&quot;Truth&quot; depends on evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Students receive knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Students actively make meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| | | | |
| | | | |
Threshold Concept: *Scholarship as Conversation*

**Dualist**
Unaware scholars are responding to one another's ideas through writing. In search of the one "ultimate expert" who holds all of the answers.

**Multiplist**
Recognizes that sources respond to one another about a topic. Recognizes every voice in that conversation with equal weight and merit. In search of sources that fulfill assignment requirements.

**Relativist**
Recognizes that sources respond to one another about a topic and that voices have different weight and merit. In search of sources that provide a better understanding of the conversation.

**Commitment**
Absorbs the conversation and makes decisions based on all of the voices. In search of sources that provide a better understanding of the conversation.

Threshold Concept: *Research as Inquiry*

**Dualist**
Struggles to choose a research question or chooses one from thin air. Frustrated when the title of a source doesn't match their topic explicitly and will likely want to change topics as a result.

**Multiplist**
Able to identify numerous articles about a specific topic. Unable to narrow results by scope, or use sources to identify emergent patterns or themes in existing research.

**Relativist**
Recognizes that research is an iterative process. synthetizes research to identify gaps in existing body of knowledge.

**Commitment**
Recognizes that research is an iterative process. Engage research questions that explore and fill gaps in existing knowledge.

Threshold Concept: *Information Creation as a Process*

**Dualist**
Challenged to discern different types of sources. Views sources as good or bad as dictated by instructor and seeks approval to use a particular type of sources.

**Multiplist**
Recognizes that information comes in a variety of formats and begins to discover that some source formats are better than others in a given situation. Tendency to rely on source formats that have worked well for past assignments.

**Relativist**
Understands the varied processes and contexts in which sources are created. Appropriately identifies sources based on need.

**Commitment**
Understand that different source formats are valued differently depending on intended use and audience. Creates information sources most appropriate for intended use and audience.