

Theology Students as a Community of Researchers

by Mark Hangartner

Theology students



...as a community of researchers.

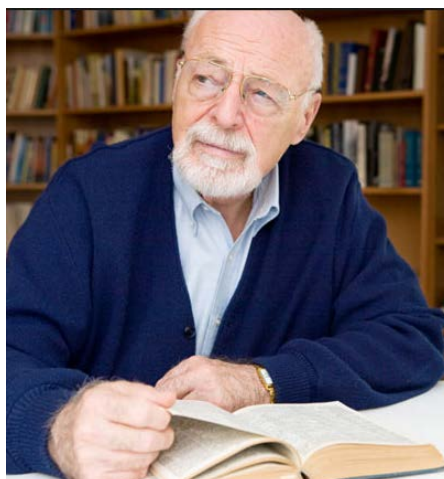
July 2014



Why are preferred information seeking behaviour models important?

For the student

- Lifelong learning
- Finding the information literacy that suits the student



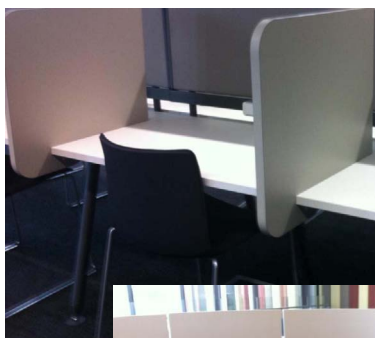
Credits: CCL image from Flickr

For the Library

Change the physical environment and services.

Variety of spaces for different users and uses

- Individual study
- Unstructured and casual group study
- Structured and planned collaborations
- Research activities



Garraway, John. "Evaluating Space in Academic Libraries - Visual Examples of the Teals Framework in Practice." In *Library Update. Auckland: University of Auckland Libraries and Learning Services, 2013.*

"The traditional profile of students enrolled in theological colleges as young, single and male has changed significantly.... A Melbourne College of Divinity survey in 1998 revealed that only 10% of students were studying for ordained ministry and that 65% of students were married women, aged over 35."



Credits: CCL images from Flickr

Brunton, Christine. "The Effects of Library User-Education Programmes on the Information-Seeking Behaviour of Brisbane College of Theology Students," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 7, no. 2 (2005): 56.

Comparing Deep and Surface

Deep

- Actively engaged
- Trial and error
- Express own ideas
- Information used to develop an argument

Surface

- Passive participant
- Memorising
- Summarising
- Facts and figures
- Support an existing argument
- Acquire and apply techniques

"How Deeply Do Our Students Learn?".
Transforming Theology, no. 5 (2012): 1.

Diehm, Rae-Anne, and Mandy Lupton. "Approaches to Learning Information Literacy: A Phenomenographic Study." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 38, no. 4 (2012): 217-25.

Connection between deep / surface and information seeking

TABLE 4 Curricular information demand intensity in terms of information seeking activities.

	Low Intensity	High Intensity
Find: How does needed information become known to students?	Instructor assigns all needed sources	Student discovers almost all needed sources independent of the instructor
Retrieve: How do students acquire information sources?	Buy book, get reserve materials	Heavy database and online catalog use
Analyze: What decisions do students make about the quality of sources?	None; Instructor has vetted sources	Many decisions about quality of information
Use: How do students use information?	Tested for content mastery	Paper placing multiple sources in dialog

Lincoln, Timothy D. "Curricular Information Demand in Theological Degrees: Operationalizing a Key Concept for Library Services." *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 12, no. 1-2 (2013): 13-28.

Focus group questions

- Is there a connection between deep / surface and group work?
 - How does a student centred environment respond to student preferences/needs?
1. How do you most *prefer* to work?
 2. When you get an assignment what are the first things you do?
 3. Being given readings or finding your own?

Baeten, Marlies, Katrien Struyven, and Filip Dochy. "Student-Centred Teaching Methods: Can They Optimise Students' Approaches to Learning in Professional Higher Education?". *Studies in Educational Evaluation* 39, no. 1 (2013): 14-22.

Alone



As a pair



In a group



Group work versus individual work

Does doing research either alone, as a pair or in a group fundamentally change the process for the student?

Contextual - appropriate for some cultures but not others?

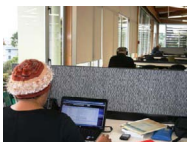
Is there something about theology that lends it to co-operative study methods?

Focus group and limitations

- A focus group of 12 theology students met for one hour with a little warning about the nature of the questions.
- People interact with each other
- Mixed group of students
- Self-selection
- Confident about doing research
- Sometimes moved away from the questions

Question 1

How do you most *prefer* to work?



Alone



With one person



As a group



Question 2

How I start to work on an assignment / exam:



Alone



With one person



As a group



Question 3

Guided  Open opportunity

"printed course reader"

"my own assignment topics, and research using my own skills"



Alone



With one person



As a group

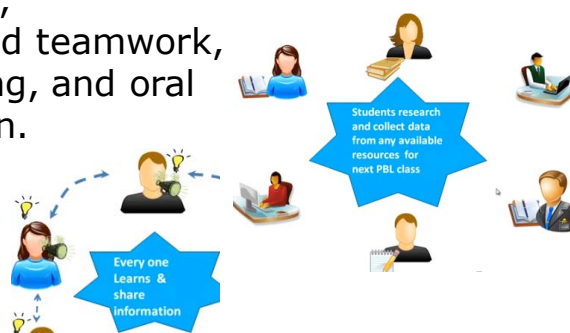
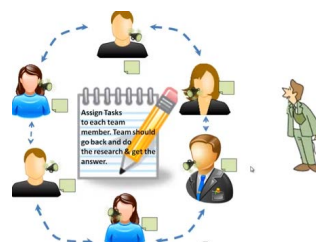


Problem Based Learning (PBL)

Improved student engagement

Skills developed:

- research skills,
- negotiation and teamwork,
- reading, writing, and oral communication.



Allen, Deborah E., Richard S. Donham, and Stephen A. Bernhardt. "Problem-Based Learning." *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 2011, no. 128 (2011): 21-29.

Group learning

Focus group reflections

Positive

- *Great for communication skills.*
- *The outcome you want determines if a group process is good.*
- *Useful if you all have knowledge to share.*

Negative

- *Others in the group have incorrect information.*
- *Hard for part timers.*
- *I work alone so I can work as I please.*
- *Others take your ideas as their own.*

Structure

- *Set a timetable for partial outcomes; week by week eg have your literature review ready by week 2.*
- *Identify roles, provide job descriptions and checklists.*
- *Allow self evaluation.*

Individuals

- *Allow group members to do some tasks on their own.*
- *Provide roles for part timers.*
- *Use shared documents with personalised spaces.*

Summary

- Student preference for individual information seeking.
- Student preference for challenging tasks with some guidance but room for self directed research.
- Students welcomed deep learning.
- Group information seeking or PBL needs to be prepared well and allow for individual perspectives.

Directed study course

Research with “training wheels”

In 2014 an undergraduate (3rd year) research course for directed study was initiated.

14 students enrolled.

Each student:

- proposes a topic, then works with a supervisor;
- prepares an annotated bibliography & essay.

Self evaluation

- [Library Catalogue](#)
- Articles & More
- Theses and Dissertations
- Indexing databases eg *ATLA*
- Full Text databases eg *Religion and Philosophy Collection*
- Interlibrary Loan
- Referencing and Referencing Management software

Your Name: _____

Contact email: _____

Theology 335

Here are some of the research tools which you may use for your directed study. Please indicate (✓) your assessment of how well you can use these.

Research tool	I use this expertly	I can get by	I'd really like some help / I've never used this	Not applicable to my study
Library Catalogue	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○
Articles & More	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○
Theses and Dissertations	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○
Indexing databases eg <i>ATLA</i>	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○
Full Text databases eg <i>Religion and Philosophy Collection</i>	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○
Interlibrary Loan	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○
Referencing and Referencing Management software	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○

Self evaluation 1 = low, 9 = high

Research tool	Pre-course average
Library Catalogue	7.27
Articles & More	6.45
Theses and Dissertations	3.36
Indexing databases eg ATLA	4.82
Full Text databases eg Religion and Philosophy Collection	4.55
Interlibrary Loan	4.09
Referencing and Referencing Management software	4.27
Overall	4.97

Min	Max
5	9
4	8
1	9
3	7
1	7
1	9
1	9

Some issues with self evaluation

- Knowledge of the categories
- Levels 1-9 ... what is an expert?
- No-one chose not applicable

Theology 335

Your Name:

Contact email:

Here are some of the research tools which you may use for your directed study. Please indicate (✓) your assessment of how well you can use these.

Research tool	I use this expertly									I can get by									I'd really like some help / I've never used this									Not applicable to my study
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Library Catalogue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Articles & More	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Theses and Dissertations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indexing databases eg ATLA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Full Text databases eg Religion and Philosophy Collection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interlibrary Loan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Referencing and Referencing Management software	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Self evaluation

- Students may perceive their own abilities and knowledge to be much higher than they actually are.
- User-friendly interfaces have an inherent advantage.

Bandyopadhyay, A. "Measuring the Disparities between Biology Undergraduates' Perceptions and Their Actual Knowledge of Scientific Literature with Clickers." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 39, no. 2 (2013): 194-201.



Combined session and individual consultations

- RefWorks
- Student consultations

Creating a database of each student's own resources.

To focus on individual needs and confirm the accuracy of the self evaluation.

Evaluation from student work

- Study looked at annotated bibliographies
 - Major conclusion too little critical evaluation, good for relevance and authority.

Rinto, Erin E. "Developing and Applying an Information Literacy Rubric to Student Annotated Bibliographies." *Evidence Based Library & Information Practice* 8, no. 3 (2013): 5-18.

- Students produced draft papers and librarians advised on sources used, then evaluated final paper.
 - Some evidence of better performance

Reinsfelder, T. L. "Citation Analysis as a Tool to Measure the Impact of Individual Research Consultations." *College & Research Libraries* 73, no. 3 (2012): 263-77.

Looking at Bibliographies

- Susanna and Louise Nicholas



Books / chapters	6	1999-2010
Articles	4	2001-2013
News	3	2013
Internet	2	2013-2014

Susanna and the Elders, from the Visigothic-Mozarabic Bible of St. Isidore's, fol.324v., A.D. 960 (tempera on vellum)



Examples from bibliography

- News (from Database)
 - "New Zealanders Protest Rape Culture as Roast Busters Remain at Large." *International Business Times*. November 19, 2013. *Regional Business News*. EBSCOhost. Accessed April 15, 2014.
- Internet
 - "Statistics: Sexual Violence in Aotearoa New Zealand." *Rape Prevention Education Whakatu Mauri*. <http://rpe.co.nz/statistics/>. Accessed 24 May, 2014.
- Internet News
 - Satherly, Dan. "Police Apologise to Alleged Roast Busters Victims." *3 News*. November 7, 2013. <http://www.3news.co.nz/Police-apologise-to-alleged-Roast-Busters-victim/tabid/423/articleID/320370/Default.aspx>. Accessed 24 May, 2014.

Contrasting bibliographies

Mostly books, focus on biblical commentaries



Books	22	1990-2013
Articles		
News		
Internet		
Chapters	1	2010
Reference	3	1996-2000



Books /	7	1991-2010
Articles	1	1963
Chapters	5	1995- 2003

What about Wikipedia?

Citation

Wikipedia contributors.
"Louise Nicholas." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Louise_Nicholas&oldid=492609056. Accessed May 28, 2014.

From the Page

Louise Nicholas

... a [New Zealand](#) woman who alleged that several policemen raped her and obstructed evidence in the subsequent trials for rape.^[1]

... Legacy of Nicholas

On 15 December 2007, Louise Nicholas was named New Zealander of the Year^[2] by the [New Zealand Herald](#) due to her courage shown during the rape trials of former policemen Rickards, Shipton and Schollum.

Nicholas has taken a role in pushing for the recognition of victim rights, advocating changes to name suppression law after a prominent entertainer received name suppression after sexually assaulting a 16-year-old girl.^[3] Nicholas has been working as a survivor advocate for Rape Prevention Education.^[4]

Group discussion

- Does your institution have a policy on citing Wikipedia?
- Do students get ideas from Wikipedia?
If so, then is it dishonest to cite only the Wikipedia references to add academic credibility?
- Does it make a difference if the topic is controversial, i.e. are controversial topics less reliable on Wikipedia?

If you want discuss any non-scholarly sources.

Lecturer feedback

- Overall very happy with work produced.
- Individual cases where sources were adequate but could have been more up-to-date.
- *Students need to become virtuosi at hunting out information.*
- *I am not so particular about exact reference formatting.*

Photo credits

Many thanks to Jenny Harper, Library Assistant, John Kinder Theological Library for the photos of students working alone or in groups.