Doctoral Forum
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THE "REAL WORLD" RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION LITERACY

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

SOCIO-COGNITIVE RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION LITERACY:
THE IMPACT ON STUDENT ACADEMIC WORK

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User Perceptions & Factors of Socio-Cognitive Relevance

Useful & Meaningful

Information Literacy Competencies

Impact on Academic Work

Defining Terms: Socio-Cognitive Relevance

- *Usefulness is defined as your perception of how valuable or essential the application of an information competency is to the completion of your paper assignment*

- *Meaningfulness is defined as your view or judgment of when information competencies are important for the completion of your assignment.*

"THE MOST PROMINENT AND CONSISTENT DETERMINANT OF INFORMATION LITERACY IS STUDENT PERCEPTION."
(POLL & PAYNE, 2006)

Literature

- Information Literacy
  - ACRL Framework & Standards

- Socio-Cognitive Relevance
  - Useful & Meaningful (Borlund, 2003)

- Academic Work
  - Application of ILC
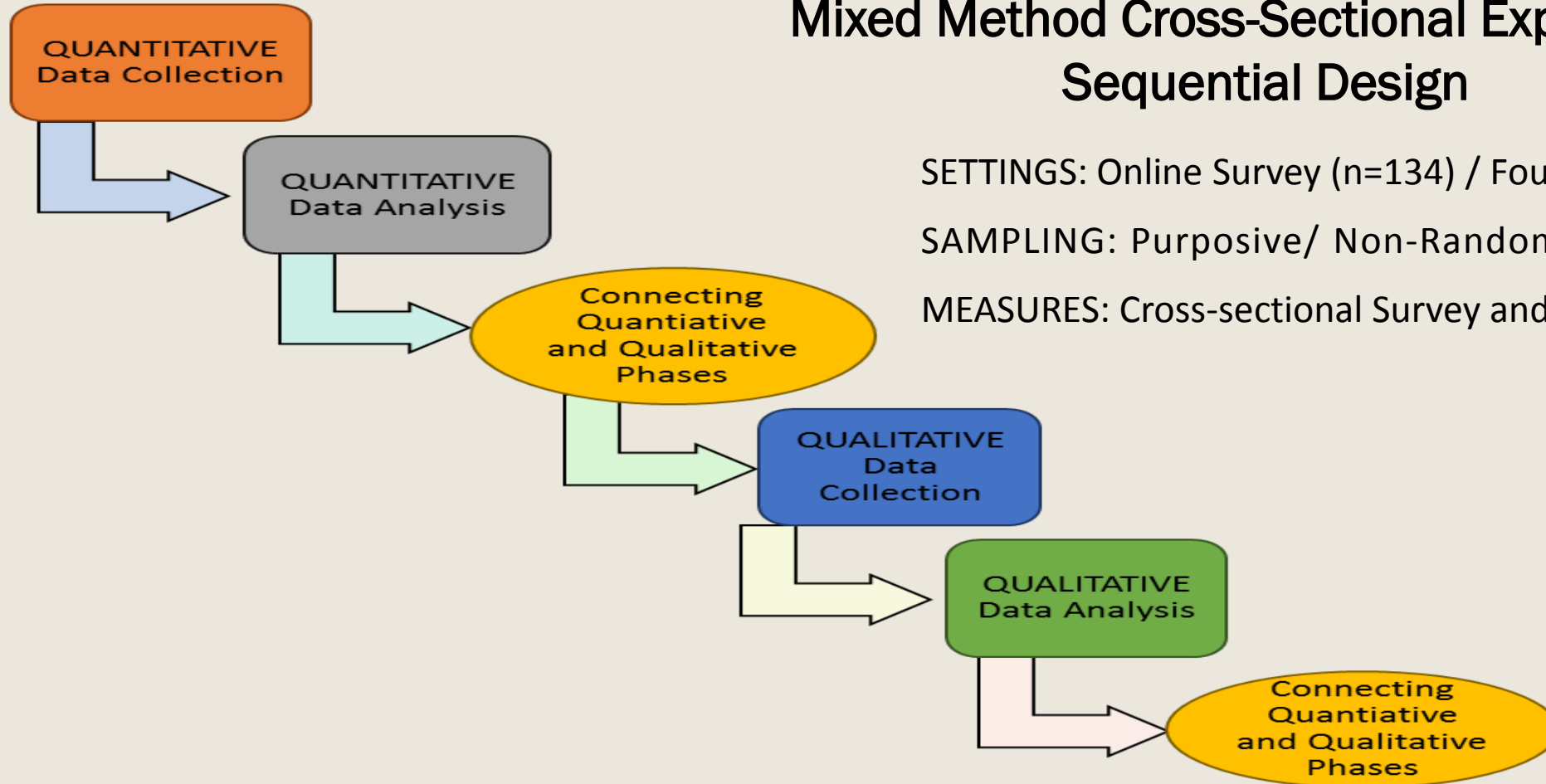 - Successful Completion of Academic Task

Research Design

Mixed Method Cross-Sectional Explanatory Sequential Design

SETTINGS: Online Survey (n=134) / Four Focus Groups (n=10)

SAMPLING: Purposive/ Non-Random Undergraduates

MEASURES: Cross-sectional Survey and Focus Groups

Primary Research Question

- How is information literacy relevant, from a socio-cognitive user view, to undergraduate student academic work?

Secondary Research Question

Stage One- Online Survey

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o What are undergraduate student **perceptions** of the socio-cognitive relevance of information literacy competencies to their academic work?

Secondary Research Question

Stage Two – Focus Groups

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o What are **factors** impacting socio-cognitive relevance of information literacy competencies to academic work?
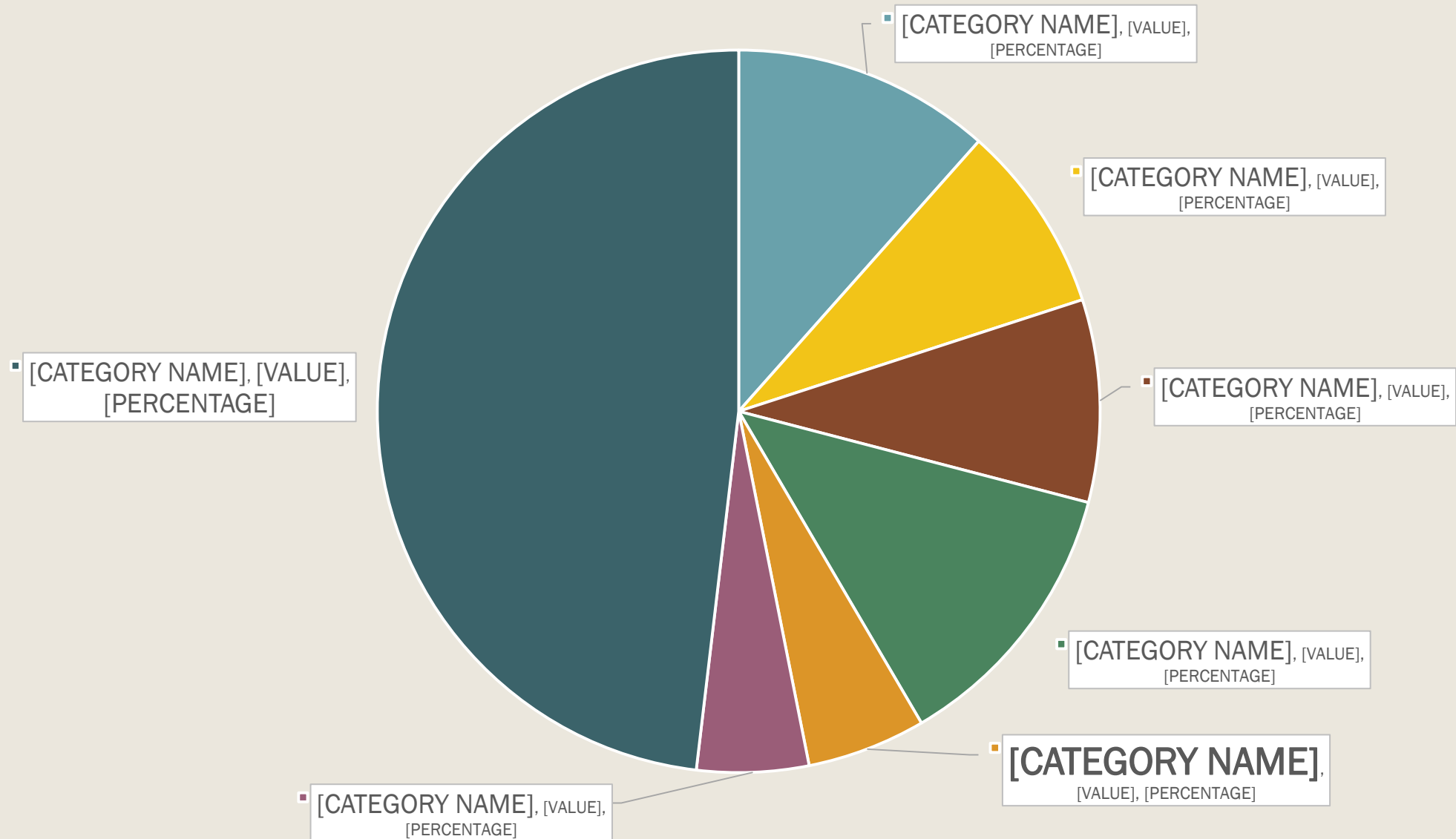
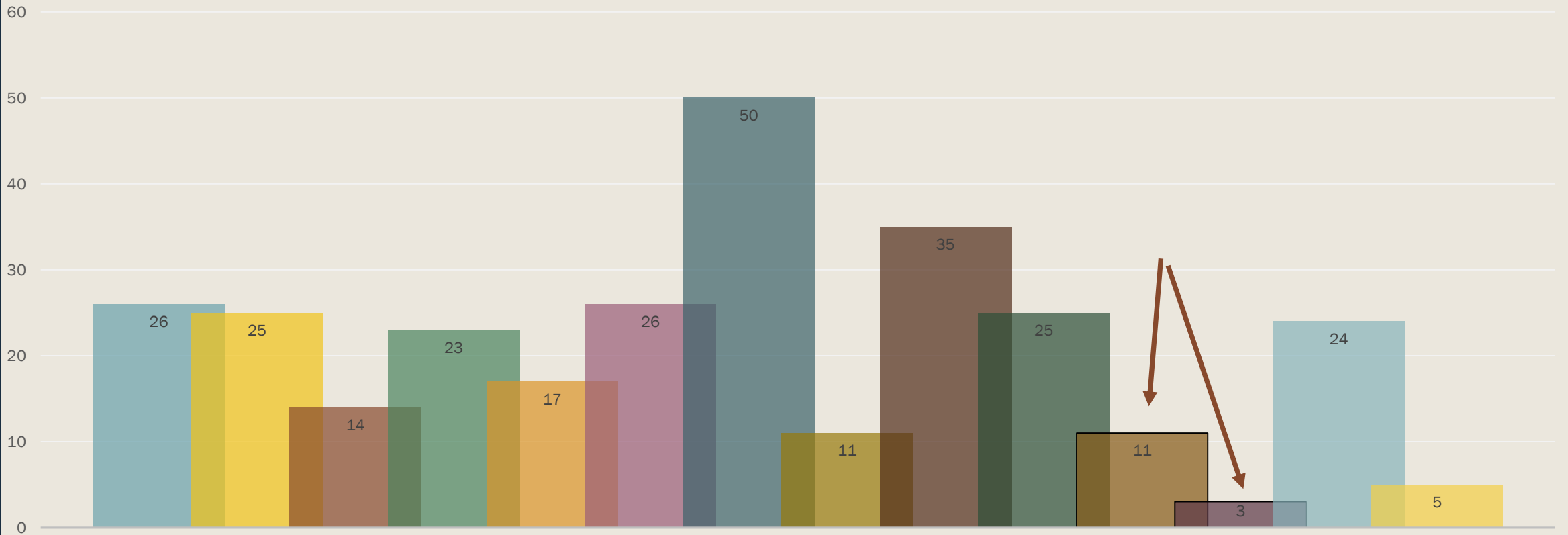# Thematic Analysis – Four Focus Groups

❑ 1 Uber-Factor

❑ 6 Key Factors

❑ 14 Dimensional Factors

Uber-Factor & Key Factors of ILC SCR

Dimensional Factors of ILC SCR

"Real World" Application

➢What do the students say are factors that make ILC SCR – useful and meaningful –when used to complete an academic task?

"Real World" Factor of ILC SCR

"I think understanding that past- you know post college- you're still going to use these [ILC]- that's important to understand."

"Real World" Factor of ILC SCR

"I think it's kind of half-and-half for me [...] I'm probably not plagiarizing anyone, but just, it's for right now in college that you need to know you're not plagiarizing - and in the real world you need that."

"Real World" Factor of ILC SCR

" Maybe, ahm, if you're going to be telling the students... you could tell them how it's [ILC] not just relevant for here at the college, but later on in life you'll probably need to be able to use IL to be able to get good sources."

"Real World" Factor of ILC SCR

"Um, in terms of usefulness I found, any of the texts that included case studies that showed how the information that you were reading or learning could be applied to the field, I found that - I guess if we're gauging these in terms of usefulness and meaningfulness, I found that useful; and it showed how you can use the information. (continued on next slide)

In terms of meaningfulness – having high level technical data – good descriptions of the technology being studied at least in the program that I'm in - that was helpful to have the breakdown of how it should work from a technological standpoint and then the case studies that show; here's how you apply the technology you're learning to a real world example."

Dimensional Factors

- Personal Relevance
- Professional Relevance

Personal Relevance – Dimensional Factor

"For my sources, when somebody would go on to talk about a real life example to tell how this could affect people – real life examples was a factor [of ILC SCR]."

Personal Relevance – Dimensional Factor

"I agree, it did add to writing in the paper and our knowledge. Cause that's where looking up these things to write about the paper, we kind of learned them [ILC] as we're going through that."

Professional Relevance – Dimensional Factor

"Yes, useful added to my knowledge; meaningful will help in my actual career."
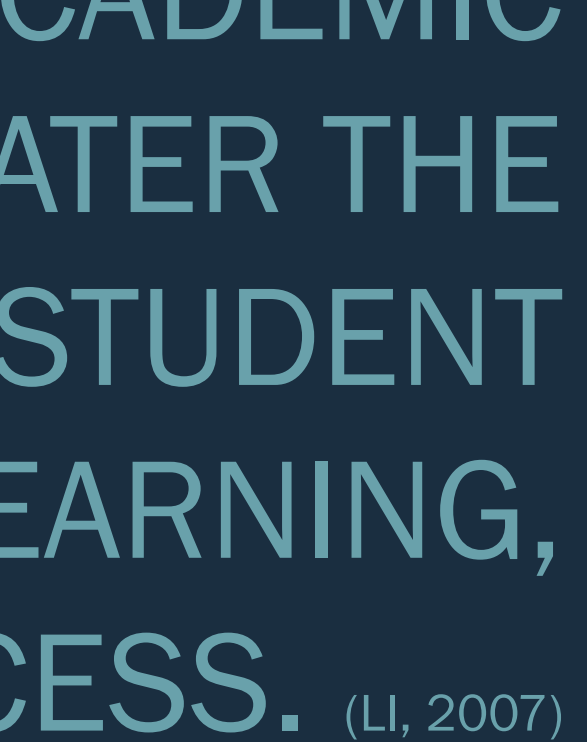
Professional Relevance – Dimensional Factor

"Yes, and you don't have to be in the field of technology to use that [ILC]. You're going to use these [ILC] again in any professional field, and at some point in your life. Understanding that maybe will make it [ILC] more relevant to someone who is just now learning them."

Professional Relevance – Dimensional Factor

"Learning about copyright, licensing, and plagiarism stuff like that it's useful for me because [of] the profession I want to go into. I don't want to code a game and then have somebody steal that code for the game if I make it open source and use it to make money off the code that I wrote. And it's meaningful because at the same time you don't want other people to have to go through that where you're stealing their work and profiting off of it."

THE MORE MEANINGFUL ILC ARE TO THE STUDENT ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE, THE GREATER THE OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS, LIFELONG LEARNING, AND CAREER SUCCESS. (LI, 2007)

Implications to consider:

- These insights of how undergraduate students perceive the SCR of ILC for the "Real World" – as transferable skills for workplace environments, social, and everyday information needs may inform information professionals on ways to communicate about what makes information relevant to specific information environments.

■ These newly identified factors that impact the SCR of Information Literacy Competencies assists in understanding what makes these information literacy competencies *useful* and *meaningful* to undergraduate students as they use them to successfully complete academic assignments and for future use in other information ecologies – like the "Real World."

- Empirical data from this study reflects and connects possible ILC impact and implicitness of relevance from the academic information ecology to the "Real World" – possibly answering the question Goldstein & Whitworth (2017) address relating to the often questioned impact of IL instruction in academia to the workplace.

- The "Real World" application of ILC expressed by students as a factor of SCR – the crossing of a threshold of understanding if you will – expressed as a perception in either personal or professional dimensions, unveils some new data. That students were connecting the "Real World" application of ILC to information uses beyond their current academic work and, when they did, ILC became more SCR to the students.

Thank you!

- Questions?
- Comments?

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