# Supporting Our Growing Transfer Population: The Value of Being an Informed and Collaborative Librarian

Peggy L. Nuhn, Associate Librarian
University of Central Florida

Dr. Karen F. Kaufmann, Librarian, Professor Library & Information Science
Seminole State College of Florida

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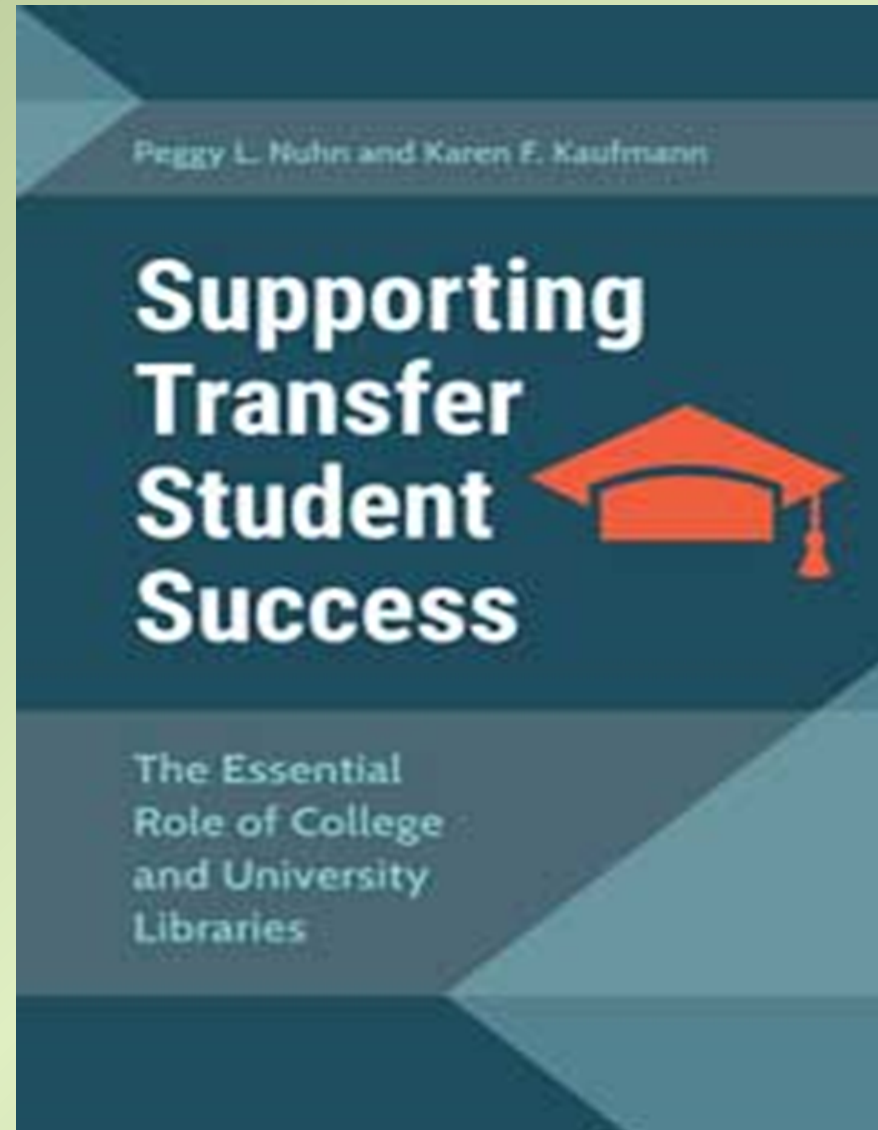
Collaboration: Maximizing an Existing Relationship
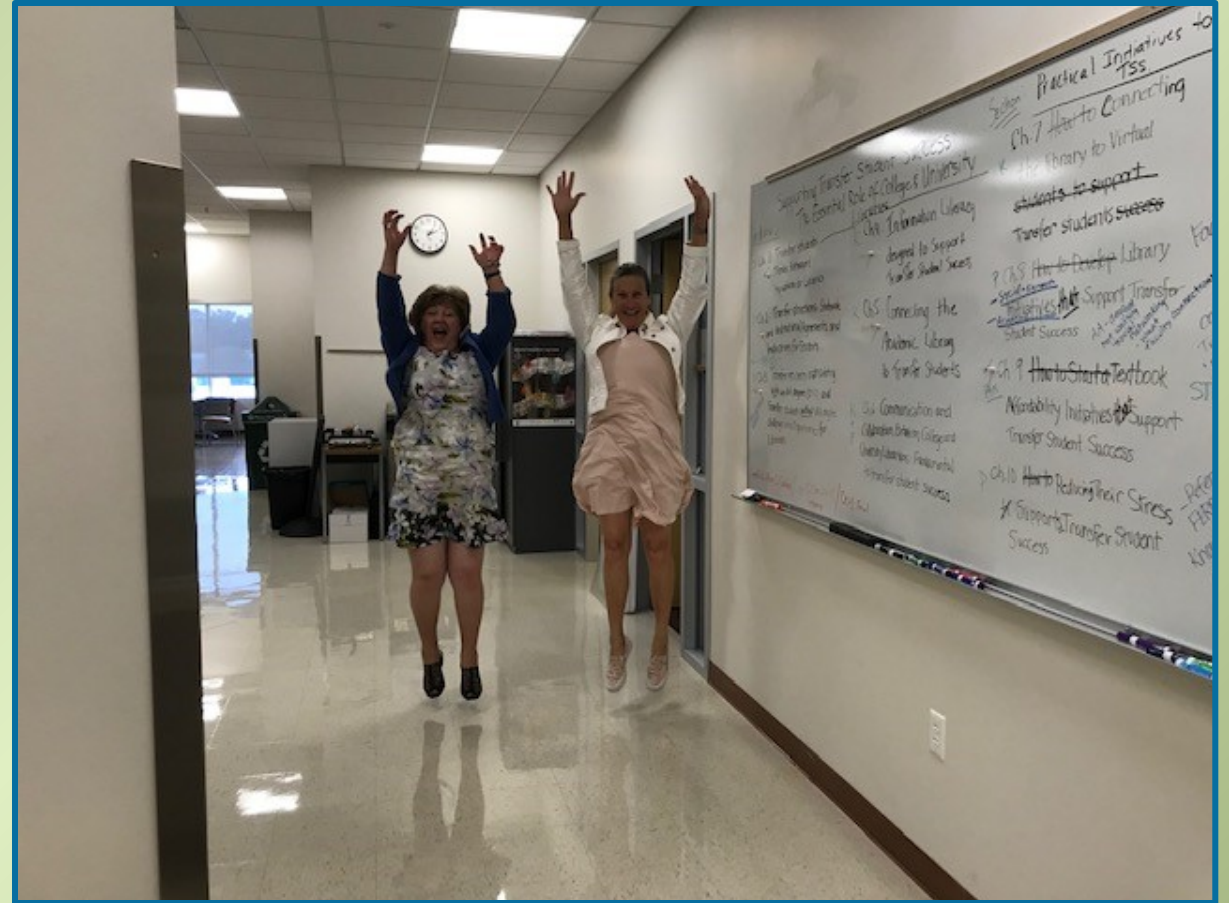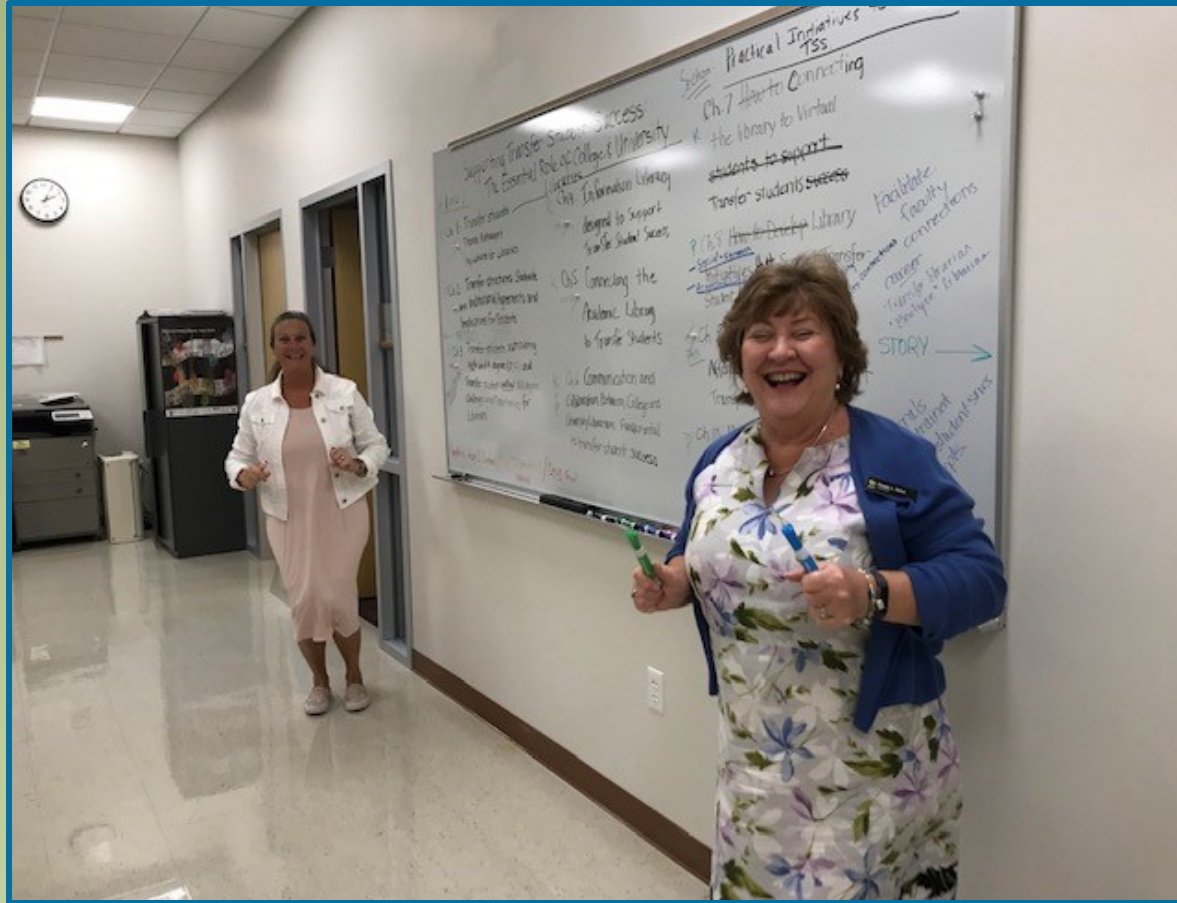
…and celebrating the milestones

…can lead to **bigger** things

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Peggy L. Nuhn and Karen F. Kaufmann

Supporting Transfer Student Success

The Essential Role of College and University Libraries

Transfer Student Pathways

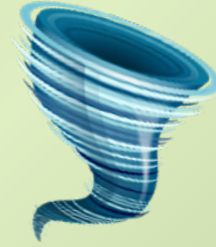- **Vertical**

- **Lateral**

- **Reverse**

- **Swirling**

- **Double-dipping**

- **Transient**

Transfer Students Compared to FTIC* Students:

* First Time in College

- Often represent **greater diversity**

- May be **older**

- Are more likely to be **employed** and/or have **family responsibilities**

- May **misapply information** from their previous institution

- Want to be **acknowledged** for previous post-secondary work

- **Have an identity** that **ends quickly**; they do not begin with a **cohort of peers** (i.e., **"Class of 2024"**), making **focused outreach challenging**

- May not be as interested in **campus social engagement** as **academic engagement**

The Mindset: Transfer Students are "Underprepared"

College

- "Self-referenced" assessment (Tipton and Bender, 2006)

- Information literacy focuses more on short-term goals, such as how to find a book (Staines, 1996)

- College seen as a "second home"; students appreciate seeing the same faces every day. (Cooper and Springer, 2021)

University

- "Norm-referenced" assessment (Tipton and Bender, 2006)

- Information literacy focuses on long-term goals, such as how to create and conduct a search strategy (Staines, 1996)

- Faculty may be perceived as "distant" or "unsympathetic" (Townsend, 1995)

What is "Transfer Shock"?

Although **defined as a drop in GPA** in the one or two semesters immediately post-transfer, **we suggest this GPA drop is similar to running a fever.**

Generally, a fever is a **symptom**, a measurable indication of another health problem, but not necessarily a stand-alone health condition.

Similarly, **"transfer shock" is measurable by a decline in GPA, indicative of other issues**, such as balancing responsibilities, unfamiliarity with campus resources and supports (librarians, writing center, veterans' services office) and financial pressures, including the cost of textbooks.

Information Literacy and Transfer Students:
Implications for Librarians

- Transfer students **may** or **may not** have had **ANY** **formal information literacy instruction**

- The new institution will likely have **unfamiliar resources** and possibly **multiple libraries**

- **Vertical transfer students** will not have been **exposed to discipline-specific databases**

- Transfer students have **"life experience"** which needs to be acknowledged; **andragogy vs pedagogy**

- Supporting institutional objectives: **Performance-Based Funding**

What can librarians do to offset "transfer shock"?

- **Transfer** specific **outreach**

- **Designate** a **transfer services librarian**

- **Develop specific programs** and **resources** for transfer students

- **Create** initiatives that are **separate and distinct from FTIC initiatives**

- **Collaborate** with **subject/discipline faculty**

- **Build relationships** with other support services

Using The Framework and Threshold Concepts to address Transfer Student Mindsets

THRESHOLD / LIMINAL SPACE

Image credit: Silvia Lu

Townsend, L., Lu, S., Hofer, A., Brunetti, K. (2015, January 30). What's the matter with threshold concepts? *ACRLLog*. https://acrlog.org/2015/01/30/whats-the-matter-with-threshold-concepts/

FRAMEWORK
FOR
INFORMATION LITERACY
FOR
HIGHER EDUCATION
(ACRL, 2015)

- Information Has Value
- Information Creation as a Process
- Searching as Strategic Exploration
- Authority is Constructed and Contextual
- Research as Inquiry
- Scholarship as Conversation
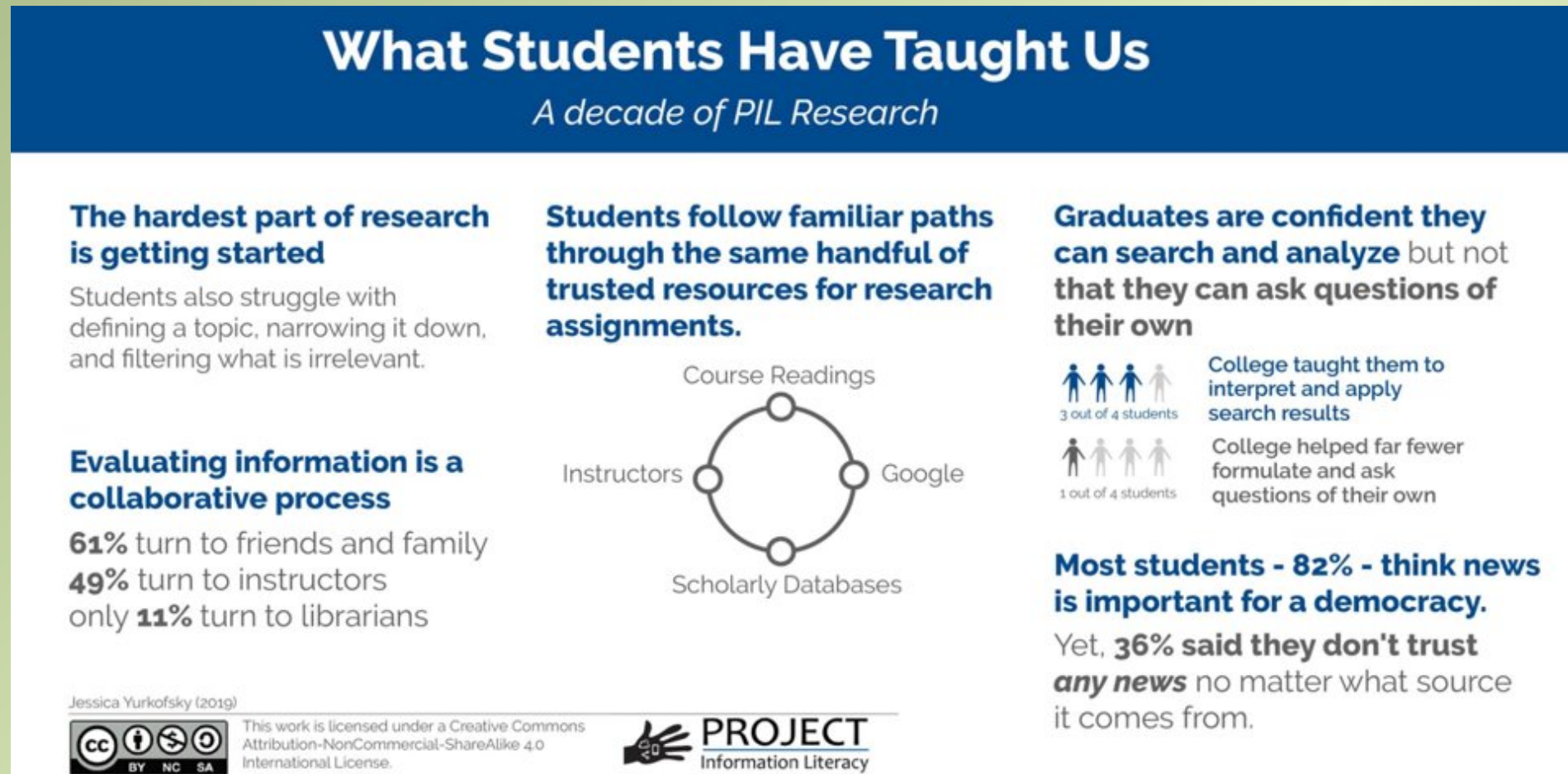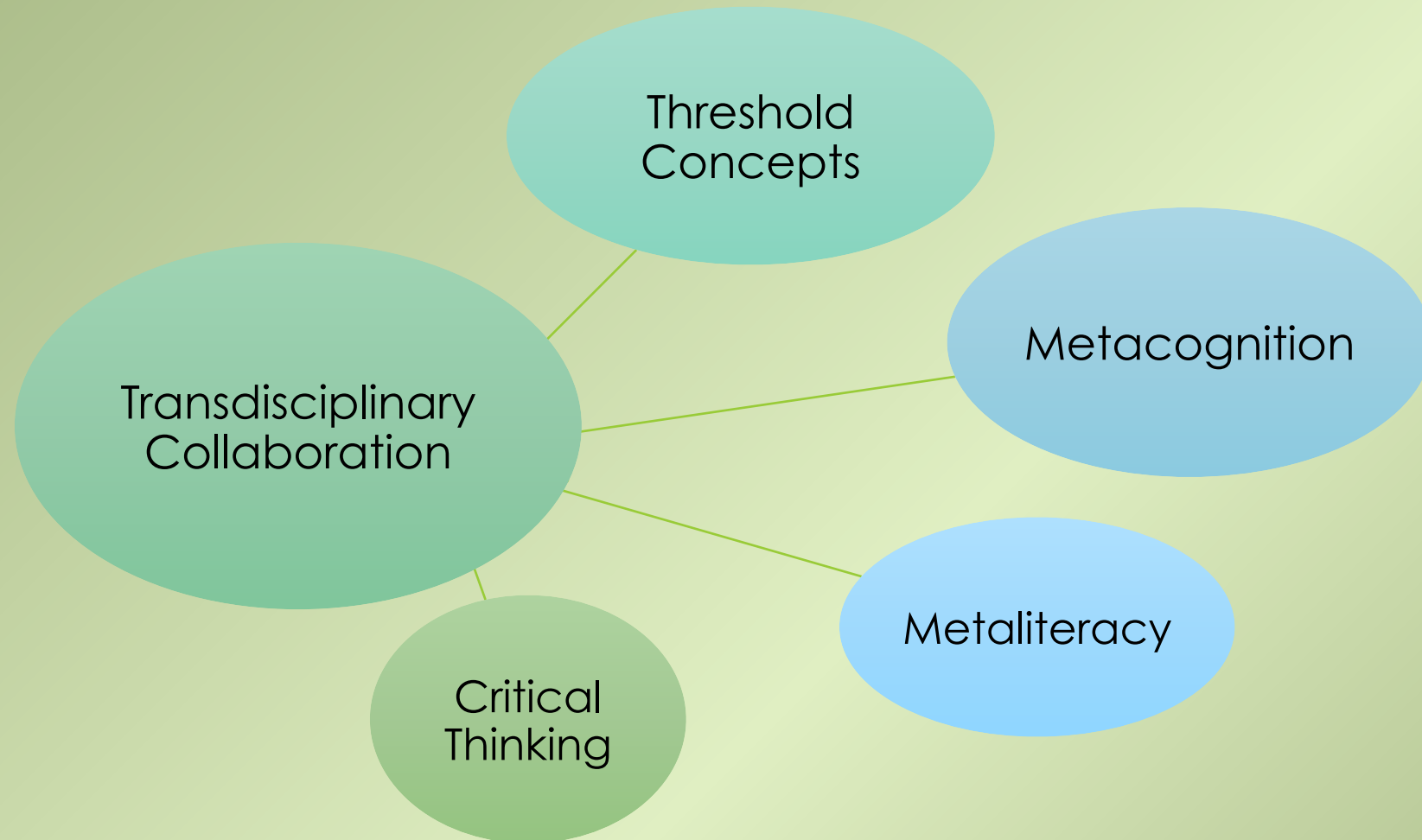
Student Information Experiences

Image credit: Jessica Yurkofsky, PIL 2020, Figure 2, p. 10 Figure 2: PIL findings on students' research habits, 2009-2018.

Metacognition & Information Literacy

Image Credit: Wendy Dover & Karen F. Kaufmann

Partner & Collaborate

Collaborations for Transfer Student Success

Opportunities for Collaboration	What Students Have Taught Us (PIL Study, 2020)
Transdisciplinary Collaboration	Evaluating Information is a Collaborative Process
Threshold Concepts	Graduates are confident they can search and analyze; but not that they can ask questions of their own.
Metacognition	Students follow familiar paths through the same handful of trusted resources for research assignments:
Meta-literacy	Most students – 82% - think news is important for a democracy: yet 36% say they don't trust any news no matter what source it comes from.
Critical Thinking	The hardest part of research is getting started

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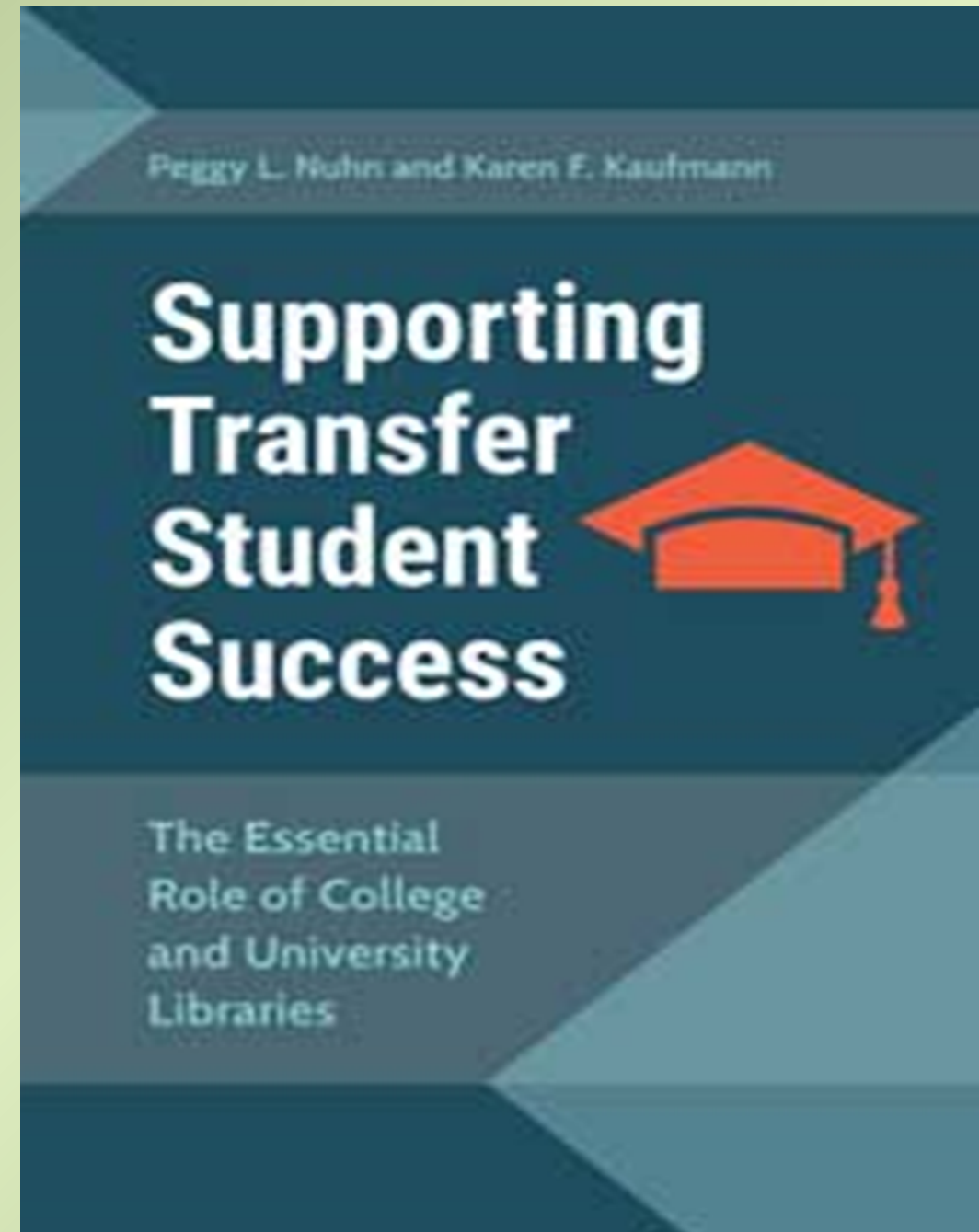
Q&A

You are also welcome to contact us:

Peggy L. Nuhn: Peggy.Nuhn@ucf.edu

Karen F. Kaufmann: kaufmannk@seminolestate.edu

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