

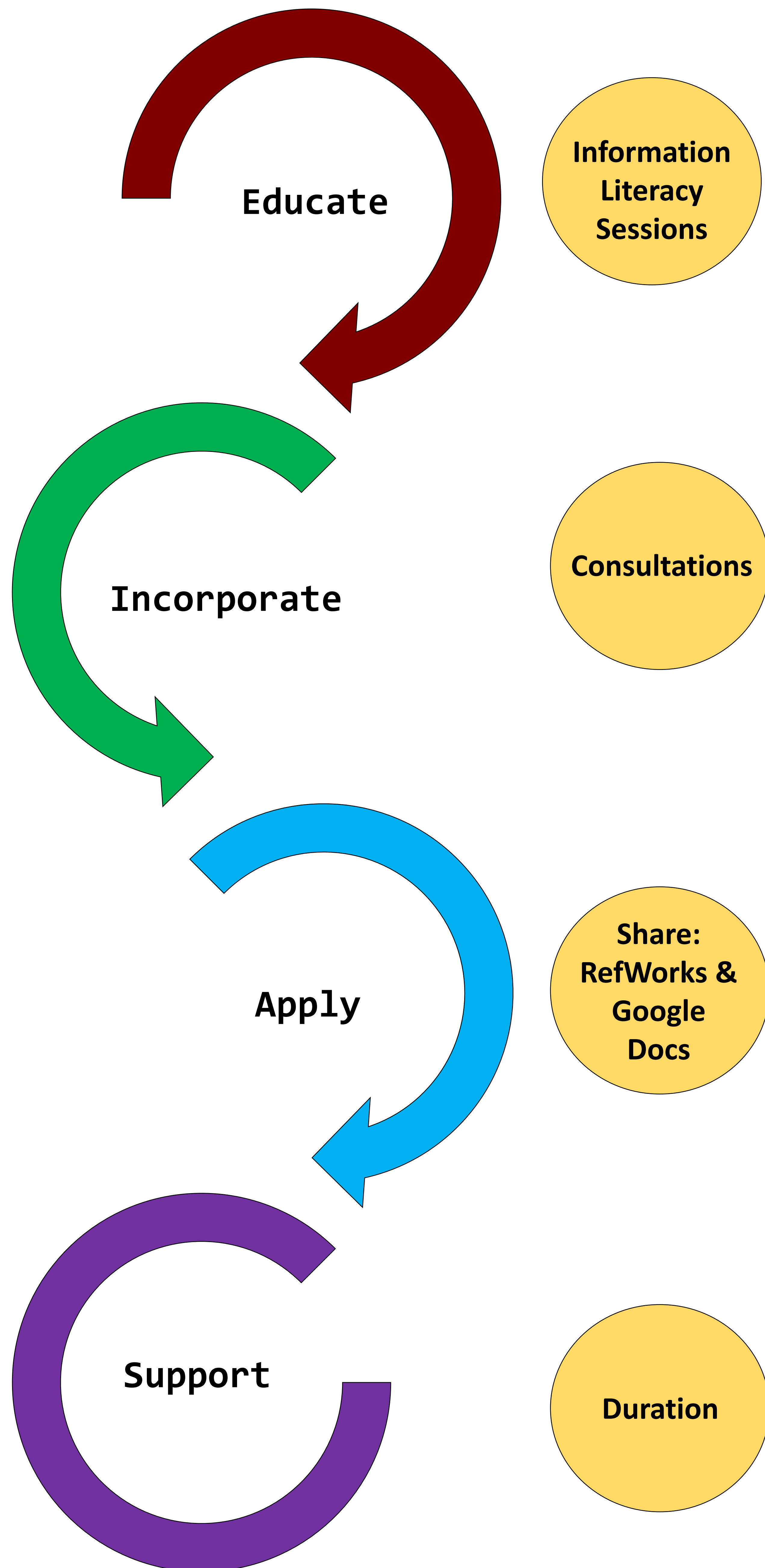
Demystifying the Thesis: Visualization Science Graduate Students at Texas A&M University

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<http://tamu.libguides.com/viz>

- First consults started in Fall 2016
- 26 students have opted for additional consulting after info. lit. sessions
 - 5 students have graduated

At Texas A&M University, the Visualization Sciences Department (VizLab) is a hot bed of talented graduate students that are plucked out of the program by animation and video game industry giants pre-graduation. The graduation rate ranges from 25% to 40%. As their liaison librarian, I have worked to demystify the thesis process and help them feel more comfortable with finding resources, but also assisting with methodology and the overall process to create their thesis proposals. These efforts have been accomplished through online tools and strategies to lessen their anxiety and make them feel more comfortable with research and finalizing their thesis for graduation. My intent is to develop a programmatic approach where students do not have to choose between a job and graduation, but can have it all with enough planning and progress before their final year at the VizLab.



CARC601 Session 1:
Introduction to the Library Website, Viz Libguide, and Libcat Searching (Library Catalog)

CARC601 Session 2:
In-depth Database Searching and RefWorks Signup & Tutorial

CARC601 Session 3:
Tours of Evans & Annex Libraries and Cushing Memorial Library & Archives

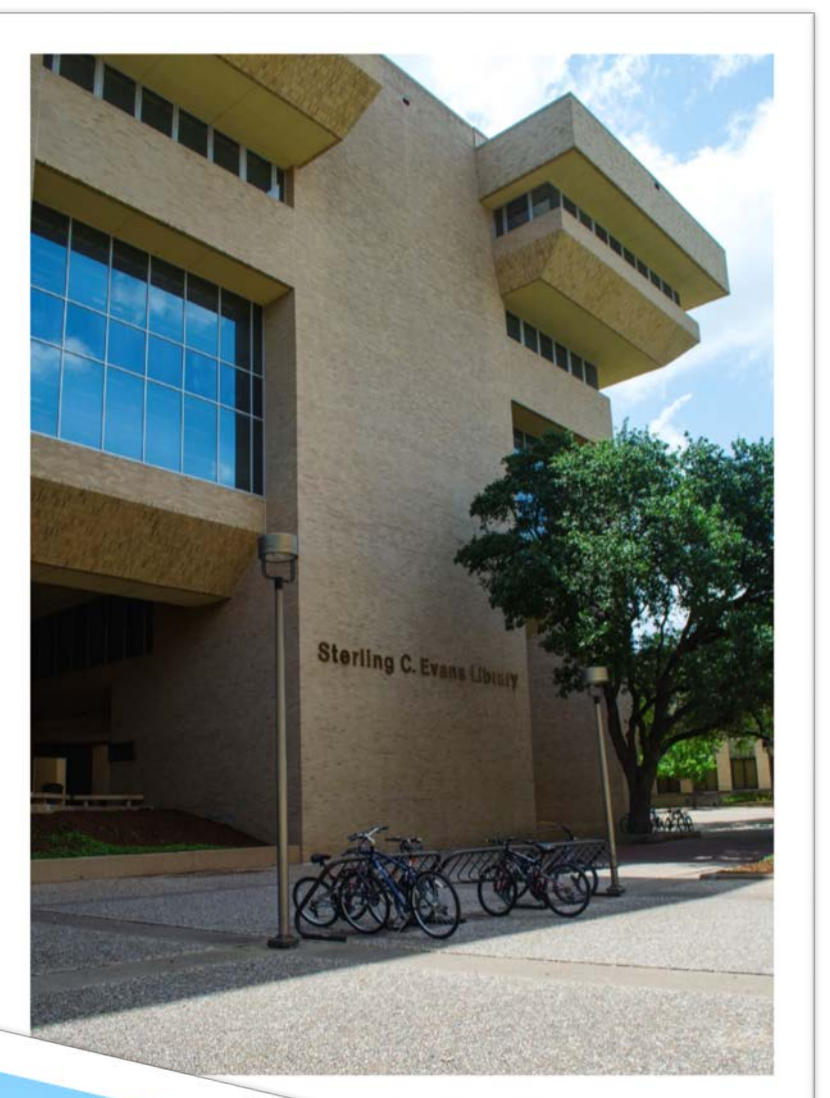


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Consultations provide further incorporation of a student's topic and searching in the library's databases. Many students are still overwhelmed with their theses after an information literacy class, and have cited the "unknown" of writing their thesis as a point of stress and anxiety.

Tailoring the consultation to the students thesis can provide specific searching, resources, and assistance. Consulting on fair use needs should be done in a timely manner to ensure use of copyrighted visual materials.

I encourage students to set up RefWorks accounts, and share with me, to help guide them on how to find scholarly research. This allows me to look at what they are finding, make suggestions, and give them a few samples. After the initial sharing, most students apply this assistance in their searching, needing less help with finding materials for their thesis as time goes on.

I also offer to review their progress on their theses in Google Docs if they want an "outside opinion." I do not suggest subject matter, as they have a thesis committee to assist, but rather progress, organization, clarity, and grammar evaluation based on the TAMU Thesis Template.

Support can come in many forms, and the duration can be short-term or long-term. Students may need help at the end of their thesis journey or at the beginning. Be prepared to work with students over a period of a few years if they ask for help at the beginning of entering their graduate program.



Image Credit:
Souvenirsofcanada. (2014, April 17). Caution...#dissertation in progress. Retrieved from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/souvenirsofcanada/13912830124>