

COM 306: RESEARCHING TOPICS

SEARCHING FUNDAMENTALS

With Keyword Searching, you determine your search terms; you have greater flexibility but you get broader results. You must try multiple searches using different spellings and synonyms in order to match all the variations authors could use. Alternatively, Subject Searching is very organized and uses only pre-determined terms; you find your Subject Heading and you search for it. You must use the term chosen by the person who has cataloged the book or article.

1. Perform a keyword search using important terms that define your topic.
2. Find a good result and look at its Subject Heading.
3. Perform a subject search using the Subject Heading you find.

DATABASES

ABI Inform - Full-text business periodicals covering advertising, economics, finance, human resources, marketing, taxation and more.

Academic Search Complete – full-text articles from over 3,600 peer-reviewed journals

Business Source Complete - covers virtually all subject areas related to business

ProQuest – full-text articles from magazines, newspapers and journals

The database(s) that you choose make a big difference in the results that you receive. If you are not sure which database to choose, look at the database descriptions to help you with your choice(s): <http://www.sunyit.edu/library/lib/descriptions.inc>

FINDING MATERIAL

You should divide your research into two stages:

Stage 1: Use the library databases to identify a source, e.g., a journal article

Stage 2: Use various resources to obtain the source, including:

360 Link / List of E-journals – a list of magazines & journals available via our databases

List of Print Journals – a list of our print serials; the list is available in print & online

Librarians – always feel free to ask a librarian to help you locate material

Interlibrary Loan – fill out an online ILL form to obtain material we do not own

SUBJECT DIRECTORIES

Librarian's Index to the Internet – trusted sites for research

<http://www.lii.org>

Internet Public Library – lists of information on many topics from the School of Information at the University of Michigan

<http://www.ipl.org>

Google Directory – Choose your topic by selecting subject area you need to research

<http://directory.google.com>

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SCHOLARLY VS. POPULAR JOURNAL WEBSITE

What is a Periodical? – helpful guide from Erie County Community College Library

<http://elinks.ecc.edu/library/Journals.htm>

EVALUATING WEB SITES

Always evaluate your web results for their:

accuracy – does the site misstate, misrepresent or exaggerate facts? are there errors?

authority – who created the site and what are their affiliations and credentials?

bias – does the site offer a point of view or opinion?

coverage – how much information is there?

currency – when was the site last updated?

.aero | .biz | .com | .coop | .edu | .gov | .info | .int | .mil | .museum | .name | .net | .org | .pro

ADDITIONAL EVALUATION INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ONLINE

- Google's Directory page: search for *web site evaluation* and choose the *Category*

- Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply & Questions to Ask (UC Berkeley)

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>

- Evaluation of Information and Sources (Purdue)

<http://www.lib.purdue.edu/rguides/studentinstruction/evaluation/websiteevaluationchart.html>

- Five criteria for evaluating Web pages (Cornell)

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/webcrit.html>

CATALOGS

SUNYIT Catalog – A catalog of all items owned by Cayan Library.

WorldCat – An international catalog of books, websites, maps, etc.

Available at the library's webpage: <http://www.sunyit.edu/library>

DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK

Official manuals for MLA and APA styles are on Reserve and in Ready Reference.

Citation handouts are available online through the Library's *Research Guides*.

Make A Citation – <http://citation.sunyit.edu>, for older editions of APA and MLA