



ENG 2 – M. Bertsch

ASK A LIBRARIAN

- In person at reference desk or by appointment during open hours
- By telephone: 530-879-4024
- Via email online
- Online chat 24 hours a day: [Ask-A-Librarian](#) link on every library page
- Library → Student Learning resources → Research Paper learning Module

DATABASE FEATURES

- Each database is different in its subject headings and interface.
- Look for the PDF, HTML full-text, or PDF full text link to open the article
- You can print, save, email, listen to, or download articles
- You can find out how to **cite** the articles
- Find an article perfect for your topic? Use the **subject terms** located in the citation, on the left, right, or bottom of the article to search further on that topic
- Some databases let you combine suggested subjects to create a new search from a relevant article.
- Use the **subject thesaurus** to look for the controlled index of terms used in that database for your keywords. Every database has its own unique, controlled vocabulary

QUALITIES OF A SCHOLARLY JOURNAL

Scholarly journals are available at the library in print format or in electronic format (databases). Here are some characteristics of scholarly journals:

- Articles are written by scholars, researchers, experts, or specialists in the field.
- Authors cite their sources in bibliographies and footnotes --- you can mine both the article and the references to find more resources on your topic.
- Topics are focused in one academic field or discipline, usually scholarly research reports and in-depth analysis.
- Journals are published by recognized societies, professional associations, or academic institutions for a professional or academic audience.
- Articles go through a peer-review*, referee and/or an official editorial process before publication.
- Authors are identified and their credentials and affiliations are always provided in the document.
- Articles use jargon of the discipline.
- Journals have few or no advertisements, plain covers, and mostly black and white illustrations, charts and graphs.

GETTING TO THE SCHOLARLY DATABASES

Path: *Library Homepage* → *Search for Articles* → *Combined databases* → *[choose a database]*

Off-Campus Access

1. You will be automatically prompted to enter a user name and password if you try to access the databases from off campus
2. Enter your username: this is your last name plus the first two letters of your first name – entered as one word without spaces, lowercase.
3. Enter your password: this is the last four digits of your student ID
For example, Jane Smith with Student ID #9834765 would be:
smithja
4765
3. Click *Submit Query*.

SEARCHING THE DATABASES FOR SCHOLARLY ARTICLES

STEP 1: Picking the right database and setting limiters

Path: *Library Homepage* → *Search for Articles* → *Databases A-Z* → [choose a database]

EBSCOHost

- Use the check boxes to select the appropriate database: *Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, Greenfile, ERIC* or the various academic health databases like *CINAHL, Medline, etc.*
- Use the checkboxes in advanced search to limit to Full-text and Scholarly (Peer-reviewed)

JSTOR

- JSTOR is a scholarly archive. The articles in here are all scholarly, but also are at least 3-5 years old.
- Click Advanced Search, located beneath the search box
- Limit your search using the following check boxes:
 - **INCLUDE ONLY CONTENT I CAN ACCESS**
 - **INCLUDE LINKS TO EXTERNAL CONTENT**
 - **NARROW BY → ITEM TYPE → ARTICLE**

ProQuest

- Use the checkboxes in advanced search to limit to Full-text and the Scholarly limiter. You can also limit to Peer-reviewed and Scholarly
- You can also limit by publication name by using the Publications link
- Sort results by Most relevant first, not Most recent

Wilson Web – Omnifile

- Similar limiters as Proquest & EBSCO;
- True peer-review process applies when you limit to peer-review

Gale

- Health databases can be sorted by refereed
- Literature databases include articles written by scholars;
- Some (but not all) Biography in Context results are scholarly – no filter

Some non-scholarly resources to frame the debate

Path: *Library Homepage* → *Search for Articles* → *Databases A-Z* → [select database]

- **CQ Researcher**
 - For recent reports on news stories: *In the news* → *More* → [select topic with (+) sign] (*Example: Tainted Cantaloupes... → Food safety*)
 - To browse for ideas, click 'Browse by topic'
 - Search by keyword or phrase: "genetically modified foods"
- **Issues & Controversies on File** → select 'issues & controversies'
 - To browse for ideas, use 'Subject index' → *Medicine/Health* → *Diet & Nutrition* → ...
 - To search, enter keywords in white search box (the Boolean 'AND' is implied). (*Example: "local food"*)
- **SIRS**
 - To browse for ideas: **Top 10 PRO vs. CON** leading issues – click "**more issues**" to expand to top 100 (*Examples: Factory Farms, Fad Diets, Fair Trade, ...*)
 - Narrowing your topic
 - Click on the subject descriptors (blue links after each summary) as new searches:
 - e.g., Dairy products, Diet, Food, Food, Health aspects, Fruit, Grain, Nutrition, Paleolithic period, Reducing diets, Vegetables in human nutrition
 - Type in combinations of your search terms with the descriptor using AND
 - You can also search the databases (*Example: "caveman diet"*)

STEP 2: Building your search terms

Choosing the search terms and additional limiters

- Start with one or two keywords in your search, not a natural language sentence
Example: **firearms AND debate**
- The more words you use in your search with AND, the fewer results you will get.
Example: **segregat* AND "civil rights" AND nonviolen***
- The more words you use with OR, the more results you will get.
OR is best used when searching like terms or similar ideas.
Example: **(guns OR firearms) AND "constitutional rights"**
- You can narrow your search by using the drop-down menu to limit to SUBJECT or ABSTRACT
Hint: Any academic discipline or large geographic area is very likely going to be a subject term.
- You can broaden your search by limiting to TEXT (sometimes called DOCUMENT TEXT)
- You can also limit by date

Phrase Searching

- Use "quotation marks" to retrieve multiple words or a phrase denoting a single concept. (e.g. "college students"). Searches for words as single term with no additional words between. Brings back that **exact** phrase.

Truncation

- Use (*) to retrieve all forms of root word (e.g. librar* = library, libraries, librarian, librarians, librarianship). Especially useful for retrieving both singular and plural form of keywords

Wildcard

- The wildcard is usually represented by a question mark ?
- To use the ? wildcard, enter your search terms and replace each unknown character with a ?. The database finds all citations of that word with the ? replaced by a letter.
 - For example, type **ne?t = neat, nest or next**. You will not find **net** because the wildcard replaces a single character.

Boolean Operators

Use Boolean Operators to narrow or broaden your keyword searches. These are always capitalized. You can also access them using the drop down menu to the left of the database search box

AND – narrows a search

- searches only for articles containing both terms
- best used to retrieve more focused results

OR – broadens a search

- searches for articles containing either term (as well as articles containing both)
- best used for synonyms or close subjects (e.g., mushroom OR fungi)

NOT – narrows a search

- searches for first term, filtering out second
- best for eliminating 'false hits' that occur when words have multiple meanings (e.g., cowboys NOT football)
- Use NOT in the last row only...it excludes all words that come after the term, NOT

Help menu: Your best friend

STEP 3: Help writing your paper in MLA or APA format

- **Check out the style manuals** from the library, buy one from the bookstore or at amazon.com
- **Library Web site:** Go to <http://www.butte.edu/library/> → Reference links → Citation Formats
We recommend the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) as the best and easiest to use.
- **In person help:** The Center for Academic Success offers workshops and one-on-one tutoring on writing research papers and on MLA & APA style every semester on Main Campus in the LRC, 2nd floor and at Chico Center, Room 219.