



http://www.keystone.edu/Miller_Library

Library Guide

Library Research Guide

I. Some Research Sources Available In Miller Library

A. Print/non-print resources (non-internet)

1. Indexes for articles published prior to the years covered by online resources.
2. Encyclopedias—in reference collection
3. Almanacs and fact books—in reference collection
4. Reference books on various subjects.
5. New York Times on microfilm
6. Selected periodicals on microfilm
7. Periodical collection
8. Pamphlet file
9. Book collection—Online

B. Non-print resources (Subscriptions)—Full text and abstracts

1. Agricola
3. Books in Print
4. CINAHL
6. ERIC
10. Medline/Medscape
11. Proquest
12. PsychFirst
14. WorldCat
15. POWER Library databases
 - a. EBSCO MasterFile Elite
 - b. Business Source Elite
 - c. Health Source Consumer & Academic editions
 - d. Scientific American
 - e. Professional Development Collection
 - f. Grove's Dictionaries
 - 1) Art
 - 2) Music and Musicians
 - 3) Astronomy and Physics
 - 4) Life Sciences
 - g. Scribner's Author Series
 - h. Contemporary Authors

C. Internet resources

1. Use the Miller Library's website at http://www.keystone.edu/Miller_Library
 - a. The "Research a Subject" page offers links to information by subject
 - b. The "Search the Internet" page offers links general and specialized search engines & directories

II. Evaluating a Web site for research—suggested criteria

A. Subject matter—Will this information enhance your research?

B. Contents—

1. Is this information biased or balanced, based on facts or opinions?
2. Can the information be verified by other sources?
3. Is the information well researched with supporting documentation?
4. Is the author objective and impartial?

C. Is the author qualified to present the information?

1. What are the author's qualifications and background?

2. Is the author expressing his point of view or an organization's?

D. How current or timely is the information?

1. Is it up-to-date or does it need updating?
2. Is there a date given for the latest version?

E. What is the writing style and how is the page organized?

1. Do you find the information easy to read and logically presented?
2. Are there advertisements or is the page laid out in a professional manner?
3. Are there graphs and charts to explain statistics or to justify the text?
4. Does the author include his name or email address on the page?

F. Is the work significant?

1. Is the material likely to found elsewhere in print or on the Internet?
2. Is the Internet the best source for this information?

III. Basic Search Strategy

A. Unless the topic is assigned, select a topic

1. That interests you.
2. That you can cover adequately with the limits assigned
3. On which you can find enough information.
 - a) You may need to select more than one topic in order to find enough information.

B. Do background reading to determine what the scope of your research is.

1. Book and article bibliographies are useful in locating additional information.
2. Topics based on current events and new research may not have sufficient coverage

C. Summarize your topic in 1 or 2 sentences.

1. Use your summary as a starting point for the information you want to present.
2. Be specific as possible when formulating your summary.

D. Locate basic information

1. Make a list of possible keywords to search by.
 - a) Good source for keywords for the online catalog is the Library of Congress Subject Headings books located on long table near Macs.
2. Use the online catalog to find books on your topic.
 - a) Remember, though, unless the book is entirely on your specific topic, you may not find any information.
 - b) Try alternative keywords
3. Use periodical indexes if searching for materials more than 10 years old.
 - a) Periodical indexes are located near the periodical stacks at the back of the library.
4. Use online databases to find current articles in periodicals and newspapers.
 - a) Online databases are not the same as Internet sources; these are indexes the library subscribes to.
5. Use Internet search engines to find Web pages that may contain pertinent information.

E. Locate more specific information. Use Reference collection or online sources to find supporting information as needed. Supporting Information: Statistics, Definitions, Demographic Data, Brief biographies/histories, Literary criticism or reviews.

F. Use the bibliographies of relevant articles to help identify other resources and keywords.