Library Research

Chris Poehlmann, Bibliographer for Business & Economics
Learning Outcomes

• Overview of the information cycle.
• Investigating a research topic.
• Searching for and locating relevant information.
• Evaluating information.
• Using information
University Library

• Bibliographer (Subject Librarian)
  – A Bibliographer is a librarian who has in-depth knowledge and expertise in a subject.

• Library web page
  – http://library.albany.edu/

• Business page
  – http://library.albany.edu/subject/business
Library Assistance: Start here

University Library, First Floor

Ask research questions here
Useful Web pages

• Main library page: http://library.albany.edu/
• Business subject page: http://library.albany.edu/subject/business
  – Librarian contact information
  – Databases
  – Research guides
Chris Poehlmann

- (518) 442-3582
- University Library, LI-227
- cpoehlmann@albany.edu (preferred method)
  - Who you are (especially if you’re emailing from a non-UA account)
  - What information do you want?
  - What information will you settle for?
  - What format do you want (text, Excel, etc.)
  - How soon do you need it?
Information Cycle - Timeline

- An event occurs
- Days
- Weeks
- Scholarly research and analysis
- Minutes
- Hours
- Months
- Years
Minutes to Hours

• Minutes – News sources report event. Facts may not be accurate.
• Hours – Public opinion begins to form and circulate.
Days to Weeks

• Days – new information, including expert opinions added to news stories.
• Weeks – Analysis begins. Be aware that much of this is preliminary and biased.
Months to Years

• Months – academics and experts begin researching the event. Articles begin to be published in scholarly/peer reviewed journals.

• Years – academics begin to summarize their findings in books.

• Several years – overviews begin to appear in textbooks and encyclopedias.
Research Cycle

- Reference Material
  - Basic facts and overview of topic.

- Newspapers and Magazines
  - Interviews and details from time of event. Editorials or opinion based analysis.

- Books
  - Background and in-depth information.

- Academic Articles
  - Scholarly research and analysis.
Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Sources

• Primary Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Original documents created or experienced contemporaneously with the event being researched.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics</td>
<td>First-hand observations, contemporary accounts of event, viewpoints of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Interviews, reports, studies, creative works, speeches, news footage, diary entries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Sources

• Secondary

| Definition | Works that analyze, assess or interpret an historical event, era or phenomenon, generally utilizing primary sources to do so. |
| Characteristics | Interpretation of information, usually written well after the event; reviews or critiques |
| Examples | Journal articles, editorial articles, literary criticism, book reviews, biographies, textbooks |
## Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Sources

- **Tertiary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Sources that identify and locate primary and secondary sources</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics</td>
<td>Reference works, collections or lists of primary and secondary sources, finding tools for sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Encyclopedias, Indexes, Abstracts, Bibliographies, Library databases and catalogs</td>
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Investigating Step 1:
Analyzing the assignment

• Is it a report?
• Is it an analytical paper?
• Is it an argumentative essay?
Investigating Step 2: Identifying a topic

- Choose something that interests you!
Investigating Step 3: Writing a working thesis statement

- Using a good thesis statement for a paper allows you to skip over the sources that do not address your topic.
- A good working thesis statement saves you time and keeps you focused.
Investigating **Step 4**: Searching for Information

• Be flexible!
Searching for Information

• When you know:
  – What you want
  – What you need
Information Sources

- Encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs, atlases, and handbooks.
- Newspapers and magazines.
- Journals.
- Books.
- Web
Web Resources

• **Pro:**
  – Book and movie reviews
  – Directories
  – Statistics
  – Travel information
  – Government and non-profit web sites

• **Con:**

• **Bad for:**
  – Copyright/ownership can be unclear
  – Some content is edited on a minute-by-minute basis by non-experts
  – Scholarly sources seldom link to full text without the library's linking services.
Library Resources

• Efficiently link you to books, articles, newspapers, historical information, music, maps, videos, and full-text online resources.

• Selected to meet the varied research needs of college students.

• Librarians
Databases

• A container of information
Article Databases

[Image of a University Libraries website screen showing options for searching databases, with highlighted examples like "Research by Subject" and "Popular search examples: ACM Digital Library, EBSCO: Academic Search Complete, Lexis Nexis, Science Direct, JSTOR, Worldcat"]
Searching Databases

Most databases can be searched by keywords. You can also search databases in different fields:

- Author’s name
- Subjects
- Journal title
- Article title

Most databases will allow you to limit your search by:

- Date
- Type of publication (journal articles, scholarly articles, books, chapters, dissertations, etc.)
- Language
- Geographical area
Evaluating Resources

- Currency
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Relevance
- Purpose
Citing Sources - Why

- Reflect work you have put into locating and exploring your sources.
- Help readers understand the context of your paper & are a courtesy to the reader, who may share your interest in a particular area of study.
- Acknowledge those authors who contributed to your learning and your work.
- By illustrating your own learning process, also draw attention to the originality and legitimacy of your own ideas.
- You demonstrate your integrity and skill as a responsible student and participant in your field of study.
Citing Sources - When

- Direct quotes of more than one word.
- Paraphrasing or summarizing.
- Information which may be common knowledge but still unfamiliar to your reader.
- Any source that you use for information can and should be cited.
- If uncertain, err on the side of caution and cite sources.
Citation Fox

- [http://library.albany.edu/cfox](http://library.albany.edu/cfox)
Sources

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