

- At the Main campus, the Jonathan Edwards Library has computers set up with direct links to databases such as **EbscoHost**. When you access **EbscoHost**, **Lexis Nexis** or **Infotrac** from a computer outside of the Library you will be prompted for your name and password. The password is the barcode number found on the back of your BCC library card. You may apply for a library card anytime during the Library's normal business hours. Instructions for remote access are outlined below:

- After opening an Internet connection, type this URL: <http://www.berkshirecc.edu>
- Use your mouse to click on **Library**.
- Click on the phrase **Research Databases**, located on the right.
- This takes you to the access page. As you are on a computer off-campus, click on **Rmote Access Link For BCC Students, Faculty and Staff**.
- This takes you to the **Login Page**. Type in your last name and the barcode from the back of your library card.
- This takes you to an A-Z listing of our index databases. Below each database index is a brief description of that index along with the name of the index provider.
- You might also wish to search multiple databases together with **OneSearch**, our newest resource.

## 6 How to Search: A Few Tips

You can search databases by typing in your subject in the query box, or a keyword. In conducting a keyword search you type a single word or string of words separated with an *and*, *or*, or *not*.

**Example:** "Cats *and* Dogs *or* Beagles *not* Birds" This means you are interested in cats and either dogs or beagles but not birds. Using the *and*, *or* and/ or *not* with a string of words will produce a different result from typing in your string together .

**Example:** "Literary Criticism *and* Education" produces different results than "Literary *and* Criticism *and* Education."

The difference in results occurs because in **Keyword Searching** every field is searched including "Literary Criticism" Author, Title, Subject and Descriptive fields. "Literary Criticism" would be searched as one phrase in each field, where as the terms "Literary" and as one phrase in each field, where as the terms "Literary" and "Criticism" would be searched separately, producing more results.

## 7. Narrowing Searches

You can narrow your search by the following:

- Both **Infotrac** and **EbscoHost** databases allow you to refine your search by requesting articles from a certain date, that are scholarly or articles that are full text. Both now offer subject searching.
- Now the **EBSCOhost** databases allow you to search without adding the **Boolean** term *and*. Simply list your search terms separating each word or phrase with commas. For example, the Keyword search: cats, dogs will give you articles on dogs AND cats.

## 8. One Search and e-Journal Browsing

Our new database features **One Search**, which allow you to search many different databases, the Public Access Catalog, and selected websites simultaneously with one interface. Results will take a few seconds to load, after which you can look at items retrieved by "relevancy" listed on the right, or by source listed on the left. **e-Journal Browsing** will allow you to search for a particular journal or magazine in a particular database. This is a great way to see if we have a publication.

## 9. Searching The Web

Finding information on the Web can be confusing. Two types of tools that have been created to help are **Search Engines** and **Subject Directories**. **Search Engines** attempt to find and index as many sites as possible. **Subject Directories** classify resources into categories and subcategories.

You can get to a wide variety of Search Engines by going to the Library's Home page and clicking on **Search Engines**. Here you will find tutorials for using the Internet effectively. We suggest you apply the criteria provided here for judging websites. **Google** is the most popular search engine. Type your search term in the box provided. You don't need to use **Boolean** , but you might want to put any phrases in quotes. For instance, "Dept. of Redundancy" "SCA" 2007 will bring you 27 citations. Remove the quotes and you get 20.000.

## 9. Search Engines versus Databases

If you are looking for scholarly articles or case studies in journals, or free articles in popular magazines, the databases are your best resource. If you are looking for government data, statistical data such as census data, organizational or institutional information, the best resource are internet websites. Current news can be found through Lexis Nexis database or news websites such as CNN. (Note: AcademicOne and Lexis Nexis databases provide podcasts and transcripts.)

# Beginning Research at the Library

# The Basics

REVISED  
EDITION 5

Reference Department  
Jonathan Edwards Library  
Berkshire Community College

Reference Department  
(413) 236 2157

<http://berkshirecc.edu/library/index.html>

## Where Do You Begin?

You may have been assigned a subject by your professor, but where do you begin? Obviously, there are a lot of research materials in the Library, but knowing what resource to use and how to use it is daunting. Before you can begin to search for materials, you need to determine what type of materials you are looking for, the amount you need, and the depth and scope required. How long is your paper supposed to be? How many sources do you need to use? What type of sources have been suggested? (Periodicals, books, etc..) You need to address these questions first because their answers will provide the structure you'll need to write your paper.

### 1. Begin by Getting to Know Your Subject

Once you know what subject to write about, you might want to read an overview of your topic. Reading about your topic will help you get to know the subject you've chosen better. It will also help you organize your topic by narrowing the subject. The best place to begin to research your subject is the Reference Section of the Library. Reference sources such as subject specific encyclopedias, dictionaries and handbooks, general biographies and guides, and general histories can be very helpful.

### 2. How to Use Access Tools: Index, Abstracts & Bibliographies

Knowing where materials are located is not enough. You can't read all the books on your topic, nor can you scan all the periodicals. You need to be able to pick the material you need from a variety of sources, and you must be able to determine what those sources are and where they are located before you even open a book or a journal.

In the Reference area you will find a variety of useful resources including **Indexes**, **Abstracts**, and **Bibliographies** and the computers housing the online **Public Access Catalog** or **PAC**. They will provide you with one or more access points

to information. (subject, author, title). These access points form the citation of a work.

- An **Index** lists the **Citation** of an article or a book. The **Citation** includes the author, title, place of origin, publisher, type of information (periodical, journal, book), year of publication, and in the case of periodicals and journals, volume number and date.
- An **Abstract** gives you a brief synopsis of the work in addition to the **Citation**.
- A **Bibliography** is a list of sources. Bibliographies are provided in print and on our web site as **Subject Guides**. The list includes a **Citation** for each resource arranged alphabetically. To view an online bibliography check out the Sociology Subject Guide at [http://berkshirecc.edu/library/sciences\\_sociologysubj.html](http://berkshirecc.edu/library/sciences_sociologysubj.html)
- **Bibliographies** are also included in many reference and non-reference texts, usually in the back of the book. Here the author lists the works s/he consulted when writing the work. **Bibliographies** are very useful, as they provide a map or plan for your research. You can examine the list to find additional books worth investigating. If the book is in the Library you can check the index in the back of the book and look up the specific area of the subject you are interested in. This way you don't need to read the whole book, just those pages that pertain to your paper.

### 3. The PAC – Our On-line Catalog

Another resource for finding information is the Jonathan Edwards Library **PAC**. The **PAC** is the on-line card catalog for the library. Our catalog is part of the **CW-MARS** system, which is used statewide. Therefore, not only are our holdings listed, but the whole State's are on the system as well. If you are searching the catalog from the Library, the **PAC** defaults to our catalog. If you are searching from outside of the library you can reach the **PAC** from the BCC homepage. by clicking: <http://www.berkshirecc.edu> From the BCC homepage click on the entry for Library listed on the left hand side. This takes you to the library homepage. On the right hand side of this page you will find the link to our **Online Catalog**. Click on **Online Catalog**.

Once on the online catalog page, click the phrase **Electronic Catalog** to go to Berkshire Community College's Jonathan Edwards Library.

### 4. Searching the PAC:

Note the tabs on the top of the page. These are labeled Keyword, Title, Author, Subject, Author/Title and Journal. These are the different types of searches you can conduct. Click on the tab that represents the type of search you would like to conduct. **Journal Search tab** will NOT take you to an article. Rather it will inform you whether our library. If you are looking for articles from magazines or journals, you will have to go to the Periodical Online Database Index link on our website.

If you know the topic or main idea but not the formal Subject Heading you can Search by **Keyword**. You can check the subject heading by entering the record and scrolling down to see what the subject of the work is. This saves you time as you can determine if a book is about the subject you want BEFORE you go to retrieve it, and open it up.

You can now order books from other libraries as far away as Boston using your Library Card and the **PAC**. Ordering can be done from home, and books usually are delivered to the Library in a week. When they arrive we will call you. You'll need your library card and easy to set-up pin number to place your order. See our **PAC brochure** for more details on this great program.

### 5. On-line Databases

The Jonathan Edwards Library has over 50 Databases accessible from the BCC Campus, South County Center, or from your home computer with an Internet connection. Most are provided by one of two companies. These are Ebsco, which provides **EbscoHost** and Gale, which provides **Infotrac**.

Both product lines include general databases of journal and periodical articles that in many cases provide abstracts and full-text along with the citation. These general databases cover subjects as varied as the Humanities, the Social Sciences, Business, the Arts, Medicine and the Sciences.