Library
North Seattle Community College

INFORMATION LITERACY CURRICULUM PLAN
Course # HIST 140
March 5, 2012 – pm - pm - Library Lab - #? students
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HANDOUTS, RESOURCES & WEBSITES:

- Handout 1: research plan worksheet (front); search tips (back)
- Handout 2 (optional): reading call numbers?
- Library website
- Libguide

TOPIC IDEAS: (50 MIN TOTAL)

- Intro/assess level; agenda
- Planning your research – keywords
- Using the library catalog
  - advanced search (AND/OR, phrases, limiting—i.e., by collection)
- Books: choosing & skimming
  - reference vs. circulating books
  - catalog record: subject terms, ToC, full-text search (Google Books)
  - using the index
- Databases: choosing & searching
  - Libguide (mention MLA resources)
  - advanced search, full text
  - subject terms, abstracts

LEARNING OUTCOMES: *What should the students be able to do?*

- Students should be able to use the AND/OR functions on advanced search in the library catalog and databases
- Students should be able to use subject terms to find additional resources
- Students should be able to formulate a search, combine and adapt combinations of terms
- Students should be able to evaluate a book or article's relevance to their search

KNOWLEDGE BASE: *What do the students need to know to do it well?*

- Where on the library site to access the catalog and databases
- How to break down a topic into its component ideas and keywords
- What parts of a catalog or database record to pay attention to
- How to use an index or skim a table of contents

ACTIVITY: *How will the students learn?*

- Intro (me)
- Agenda (on board); what you should know at the end
- Questions (throughout lecture)
- Whole-group exercise: brainstorm keywords for sample topic [**history of lesbian women of color**]
- Example searches/lecture on how to search for books in catalog and articles in databases
- Searching exercise: alone or in groups, locate 1-2 useful resources each for your presentation
- Check-in (if time): each group shares one good resource and why they chose it; and one searching challenge

[OPTIONAL] FINDINGS/CHANGES *(for example, what you learned, what you might change, notes, etc.)*

Agenda: (total 40 min. lecture, 10 min. group research)

- Introductions [(me, agenda, previous library experience - 3 min.]

ReSEARCH is an ongoing process: - prepare - ask - think - connect

- Research is a process [1-2 min.]
- Getting started: keywords [+ brainstorming exercise – total 6 min.]
- Searching the catalog [15 min.]
    - Reference and circulating books
    - Standard search, advanced search [(AND/OR, phrases, limiting by collection)]
    - Choosing & using results: subject terms, ToC, indexes
- Searching databases [5 min.]
    - Choosing databases [libguide]
    - Advanced search, full text
    - Choosing results: titles, subjects, abstracts
- Research activity [do own research in groups, assisted by Rachel & Aryana - 10 min.]

B. What is Research? [2 min]

The fact is, research is not just a straight line from A to B; it's a process that builds on itself, is never the same twice, and will often throw you unexpected challenges. The basic approach is to start with a big idea [DRAW CIRCLE ON BOARD], and find some general information [DRAW ARROWS COMING IN FROM OUTSIDE] that will help you narrow your focus and locate more resources [DRAW SMALLER CIRCLE INSIDE]. It's a back-and-forth between doing research and adjusting your focus [DRAW LINES IN & OUT]. This means it's difficult to know at the beginning what you will end up with, but it also means you'll find useful things you never expected!

C. Getting Started: keywords [1 min]

The most useful thing I ever learned about doing research is that the best thing to do once you think you have a topic—before you even open up the catalog, a web page or a book—is to stop and think about how you would describe that idea. Try to break it down into basic ideas, and write down a list of names, organizations, events and dates, ideas, places, or any other keywords you think are related. If you can, list several different ways of describing the same things—not every resource will use the same words for the same ideas, so having a few to choose from will make your searches more flexible.

D. Brainstorming Terms [7 min]

Let's try this together with a sample topic—***lesbian women of color*** [WRITE ON BOARD].
  i. Let's take a minute to break this down. [QUESTION] What are the basic ideas?
      a. Anticipated:
            i. Lesbian
            ii. Women of color [WRITE ON BOARD].
  ii. Nice! Now, the next step is to think of other ways we might describe these. Try to think in terms of words or phrases that are *broader*—that is, include the topics we listed; *narrower*—are included in the topics; or *related*—similar to the topics [INDICATE SHEET].
      a. Anticipated:
            i. gay (BT), homosexual (BT), sexual orientation (BT), sexual identity (BT), queer (BT)

ii.   people of color (BT), African-American women (NT), Chicanas (NT), Native American women (NT), Black women (NT), ethnic minorities (BT)

iii. This is a good starting list. Any time you get stuck or aren't finding what you need, you can come back to your keywords and think about whether you need more results, fewer results, or different results to help you focus your search.

iv.   Now I'm going to give you a few minutes by yourselves or in your groups to think of words for your own topics, ok? Just brainstorm and write down anything you can think of, and we'll use these a little later. Use the handouts I gave you.

E. Searching: in general, and in the catalog [15 min]

Now we're ready to try a search. *Basic* search [NAVIGATE ON SITE] can be useful if you know exactly what title or author you're looking for, or have a key term you want to search, but today I'm going to show you a few tricks in *Advanced* search [NAVIGATE].

Now, I mentioned that we want to start by finding general information on our topic. I'm going to start with only one of our keywords—*lesbian*—to begin with. We'll search it as a "keyword anywhere," because it might show up in a title or subject listing.

Another way you can limit your search is by collection, down here. One good source of general information tends to be reference books.

i.   [QUESTION] Does anyone know what makes a reference book different from a regular book?

ii.   Basically, reference books contain a lot of introductory information on a topic, or different topics—for example, encyclopedias are reference works. [QUESTION] Does anyone know where the reference books are in the library here? At NSCC, all the official "reference" books are on this floor, right out there. You can't check them out of the library, but you shouldn't need to.

The first thing to check is how many results did we get? If there are too many, we might need to narrow the search by adding another idea or limit; if there are too few, we might need to expand it. We'll look at some ways to do that in a minute. This looks manageable, though. [QUESTION] Which of these, if any, look most useful?
This is a good starting list. Any time you get stuck or aren't finding what you need, you can come back to your keywords and think about whether you need more results, fewer results, or different results to help you focus your search.

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10 results found
Keyword Anywhere(lesbian)(LOCA=North Reference)
[Edit Search] [Save Search]

[Print] [E-mail] [Add to List] → Select☐ Page☐ All

☐ 1 A to Z of lesbian literature / Meredith Miller.
Miller, Meredith, 1965-
2010
PN491.3.M55 2010
✓available, North Campus Reference Collection (first floor)

☐ 2 Consumer behavior 2010 / by Kelli Washington [and] Richard K. Miller.
Washington, Kelli D.
2009
HC110.C6M5 2010
✓available, North Campus Reference Collection (first floor)

☐ 3 Talk the talk : the slang of 65 American subcultures / Luc Reid.
Reid, Luc.
2006
PE2846.R43 2006
✓available, North Campus Reference Collection (first floor)

☐ 4 Encyclopedia of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender history in America / [Marc Stein, editor in chief].
2004
multiple holdings available

☐ 5 Summaries of leading cases on the Constitution / Joseph F. Menez and John R. Vile.
Menez, Joseph Francis, 1917-
2004
KF4547.8.B3 2004
✓available, North Campus Reference Collection (first floor)

☐ 6 Encyclopedia of lesbian and gay histories and cultures / edited by Bonnie Zimmerman and George Haggerty.

Either of these look like they might be useful; since you can't read every word of every book, once we get the actual book we can use the keywords for our other idea to look up the sections that might be most helpful—"African-American women," for instance, or perhaps "lesbians of color." [QUESTION] Do you all know how to read these catalog numbers to find a book? If not, I have an extra handout here.

Now let's go back to the catalog once more and search for a non-reference book. Because we want this to be a little more specific, I'll use both of our topics. The "AND" here means that the catalog will only suggest books that include both of these ideas—this is one way to narrow the search. ("OR" broadens the search, because it will return any book that has either of those terms or phrases).

Because we want to search *African American* as one idea, not two separate words, I'm going to select "search as a phrase." This is also often available in databases or even on Google, by using quotation marks. Be careful, though—sometimes it makes a difference whether you use African American or African-American.

[QUESTION] Do any of these look particularly useful?

Library Catalog: Seattle Community Colleges
7 results found
Keyword Anywhere(lesbian) AND Keyword Anywhere(African American)(LOCA=All North)
Edit Search   Save Search

Print   E-mail   Add to List   →   Select☐ Page☐ All

☐ 1   Consumer behavior 2010 / by Kelli Washington [and] Richard K. Miller.
Washington, Kelli D.
2009
HC110.C6M5 2010
✔ available, North Campus Reference Collection (first floor)

☐ 2   Sister outsider : essays and speeches / by Audre Lorde ; [new foreword by Cheryl Clarke].
Lorde, Audre.
2007
PS3562.O75S5 2007
✘ not available, North New Books Collection

☐ 3   Gay religion / edited by Scott Thumma and Edward R. Gray.

2005
BL625.9.G39G39 2005
✔ available, North Campus Circulating Collection (second floor)

☐ 4   Gender talk : the struggle for women's equality in African American communities / Johnnetta Betsch Cole, Beverly Guy-Sheftall.
Cole, Johnnetta B.
2004
multiple holdings available

How can we tell if it will be useful? Well, first of all we have the title—it deals with both women and African Americans, but doesn't tell us if it deals with lesbianism. Let's look at the record for this book. Aha! Here we see, in red, that it does have one chapter dealing with being gay or lesbian. The Table of Contents is often a good place to look for some extra information about a book. And in fact if, as this one indicates, there's a link to Google Books, you can often search the full text of the book online. Even if you can't read it on the site, the number of results you get (use your keywords, remember?) can help suggest whether it would be useful to get this book.

One other trick I'll mention is using subject terms—once you've found one useful resource, it can sometimes lead you to others.

F. Searching: databases [5 min.]

Now, what about databases? Many of the same techniques apply here, although the interface is different. Databases can be useful because they often cover very recent research, but like books, each database only covers some topics, so choosing one can be the first challenge.

The best starting place, if your class has one, is to look at the libguide [NAVIGATE—point out that it's an MLA resource, too, and that we're on there]—even if it doesn't, you'll see the library recommends databases based on subject. Academic Search Complete is often a good place to start, because it covers a lot of topics.

Let's do an example from one of your topics. [QUESTION] Who can give me your group's focus, and some of the keywords you came up with?

I always like to select "full text" when possible; this keeps the database from showing you articles that you can't actually read. Notice that this database makes suggestions based on the words it uses to describe things. In addition, often you can use some sort of symbol to search for any words that begin with what you search—for example, wom* [WRITE ON BOARD] would search for "woman" and also "women," "womanly," etc. The way this works is different in different databases (but also works on Google).z

Now, looking at our results, there are a few last things I'd like to point out. Like books, articles often have subject terms. In addition, the abstract can be very useful—it's basically a summary of the main points the article makes.

G. Research Exercise [10 min.]

Now it's your turn. Using what we've just learned, and the keywords you came up with earlier, I'd like you to work on your own or in your groups. Each person find one or two resources you think will be useful for your presentation; make sure at least one person in your group is looking in the catalog, and one is looking at databases. [After 15 minutes we'll come back; please be ready to share with the class the best resource you found, and why you chose it; and one challenge you had with searching, and how/if you were able to overcome it. –we didn't end up having time for that]

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