ENGR/RSCH 361: Scientific Research Communication

Assignment #1b - Standards of Your Field – Library Questions

Exercise 1: Using Databases to find journals for your research topic

Library home page: http://www.csulb.edu/university-library

Research guide: https://csulb.libguides.com/ENGR361

The following instructions are based on the *Web of Science* database but the same basic strategy applies for searching any database.

Step 1: Choosing a database (important first step)

- Start with the ENGR361 research guide https://csulb.libguides.com/ENGR361
- Go to the tab for "Find Articles." Find an appropriate database for your research topic. I have picked out the most important ones for STEM but you can also look for other ones at the "A-Z Databases" link or check out the research guides from other librarians (see links on the research guide).
- Which database did you pick? _____
- And why? _____

Step 2: Develop a search strategy and review preliminary results

- Enter your search terms into your chosen database.
    - Hints: do not use broad terms (e.g. psychology). If you get too few hits – adjust your search strategy or remove some terms (see example below). Always check you spelling and syntax.

  Examples:
    - head-up display and (seniors or elderly or old) and (driving or automobile* or car*) gets 12 hits. This would be a good start.
    - prosthetics and (3d printing or 3 dimensional printing or three dimensional printing)
- What is your search strategy (terms and Booleans)?

_____

- Did you have to make some adjustments?

_____

- How many hits did you get? _____

Step 3: Review your results

- Make sure that your search is **limited to peer-reviewed journal articles** (not Conference Papers or Reviews) (use Filters or limiters).
- If you have a targeted search but still too many hits, **you can limit by publication date** (last five years is the general rule of thumb in STEM)
- **Scan titles and abstracts of entries** – do you see some relevant articles? If so, then you are in the correct database and have an appropriate search strategy? (Hint: most databases are set to give you the most relevant articles at the top of the search results).

  What is the title of one of the articles? _____

You are now ready to find a journal for your research!

Step 5: Reviewing search results by journal title

- Change the search results from "Relevant" to Source Title (sometimes called Periodical Title or Journal title (means the same thing).
- Scan the journal titles this time
- Which journal has the most hits? Write down that title below.

_____

Step 6: Save your results in Endnote

- Before we leave our search, download your results in Endnote (did you sign up for an Endnote account? https://csulb.libguides.com/az.php?a=e)
- Now you can create a bibliography using an appropriate style for your discipline

Step 7:

- Do a search in Google to find the home page of the journal. Search on the journal title
- Look for "Aims and Scope" and Author Submission information

FINALLY, based on your research, is this a credible journal for your research?

_____

Exercise 2: Finding journals for your research topic

Library home page: http://www.csulb.edu/university-library
Research guide: https://csulb.libguides.com/ENGR361

Exercise 2: Another method to find journals in your research topic (Ulrichsweb)

- Go to" Databases" https://csulb.libguides.com/az.php (click on "U" to find link to Ulrichsweb).
- Enter a search term (your research topic). If you are too broad (e.g. Computer science) you will get too many hits or too narrow you will get zero hits. The example used in class was Prosthetics. In computer science (for example) cybersecurity would be a good topic.

Once you have some good hits – you will begin to evaluate your search looking for potential journals where you can submit your research.

You can either review each of the hits or use the "Filters" on the left-hand side of the screen (more efficient!) to focus your search and answer the questions below:

1. Click on "Publication Status" and limit by "Active." Click on "Filter."

2. Under "Key Features" select the category "Refereed/Peer Reviewed."
   Now you have found active, peer-reviewed journals in your topic.

   How many hits (journals) did you find on your topic with these criteria?

   _____

3. Select one of the Journal titles that looks like a good match for your research.

4. Is it indexed in any database(s)?

   To find out, scroll down and click on "Abstracting and Indexing." Do you recognize any of these databases? Check https://csulb.libguides.com/az.php to see if CSULB has any of these databases.

   List one or two of the databases: _____

   This is important because you want your potential article to be discovered by other researchers in your field.

5. Does CSULB subscribe to the journal?

   To find out: Start at the Library's home page http://www.csulb.edu/university-library Go to "Research" then in the drop-down menu you will see "Tools" and then "Journal Search" to search by title of the journal.. If we do not, how will you obtain articles from this journal?

   YES or NO? _____

   If YES – how far back do we have access? _____

6. Access the website of the journal – under "Website." If for some reason the URL does not work, you can always search on the Internet by title of the journal (if we have the journal, you would have also found it in Step 5).

7. On the journal's home page (from the step above) look for the "Aims and Scope" of the journal and "Author submission guidelines."

   What is the scope of the journal? _____

   _____

   Does it match the title of the journal or are you surprised? _____

   _____

Bonus question:

8. Are there any peer-reviewed "Open Access" journals in this topic? (HINT: it is under "Key Features."). "Open Access" means that readers can access freely.

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