Library Resources and Research Techniques for MUHL 151A

Learning Outcomes: By the end of your library class you will be able to locate books and articles on your topic using the library catalog and periodical databases. You will also be familiar with subject-related encyclopedias.

Tips to Make Your Research Go Faster, Easier . . . and Better

- Start with the Library’s research guides
  - Go to the Library’s home page: http://libraries.umw.edu
  - Under “Research” click on “Subject Guides”
  - Click on “Music” from the menu in the left column

- Remember that you can combine terms in the Library’s catalog while looking for books

- Use the databases in the subject guides to find magazine and journal articles
  - Consult the Journal Finder for online full-text holdings of periodicals
    - From the Library’s home page, click on “Journal Finder” under “Research”

- Analyze the bibliographies and end / footnotes that authors consider significant to their research

- Take advantage of the UMW help guide on Citing Resources
  - Go to the Library’s home page: http://libraries.umw.edu
  - Under “Research” click on “Subject Guides”
  - Click on “Citing Resources” from the menu in the right column

Subject Encyclopedias and Other Reference Works

- Define and narrow your topic; provide background material.
- Provide lists of other significant resources (that is, bibliographies).
- See UMW Libraries Music subject guide for a list of some useful titles.
- See also the Oxford Reference database
  - Provides full-text access to more than 300 specialized dictionaries, subject encyclopedias, and other scholarly works published by Oxford University Press.
  - An advanced search allows for precise database searching.
    - 1) Click on “Advance Search” in upper right. 2) Type your search terms in search box; try limiting your search to “entry title” in the drop-down menu. Click “search.” 3) Click on “show full text results only” in upper left. 4) If you wish, you can limit your results by subject at left (some links may have the image of a lock beside them, showing that you do not have access to the items). 5) Note that results are sorted by relevance. You can also sort them by “length—longest to shortest.”

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Online Periodical Databases

Here are just a few of the many databases to which the libraries subscribe. Links to them and other resources that provide abstracts of articles (summaries) and full-text articles are available in the “Locating Articles” section of the UMW Libraries Music subject guide (http://libguides.umw.edu/muhl). For an alphabetical list of databases, go to the UMW Libraries homepage (http://libraries.umw.edu) and click on “Databases A – Z” under “Research.” If you need discipline-specific resources, click on “Subject Guides.”

**Academic Search Complete** (coverage varies; as far back as the 1880s to date)
- Includes thousands of full-text academic journals, periodicals, books, and reports in a wide variety of disciplines.
- Can click on “Choose Databases” to add additional databases, such as America: History and Life, Historical Abstracts, Humanities International Complete, Humanities Full Text, Humanities and Social Sciences Retrospective, MasterFILE Premier, and OmniFile.
- Click on “Locate Journal Article” to see if a periodical article not full text is available in another database or is in the library’s collection.

**Oxford Music Online** (coverage varies)

**RILM Abstracts of Music Literature** (1967 to date)
- A comprehensive index to writings on music, including works of criticism, musicology, ethnomusicology, instruments, pop and jazz, theory, and performance.
- Covers books, journals, conference proceedings, catalogues, dissertations, recordings, & reviews.
- Click on “Locate Article” to see if a periodical cited in RILM Abstracts is available full-text in another database or is in the library’s collection.

**Database Search Tips**

- Use subject headings to focus your search.
- If a thesaurus is available, use it to find subject headings (as well as synonyms, which you can use in an OR search).
- Use quotation marks to search for an exact phrase (e.g., “American hard-boiled detective fiction”).
- Use AND to narrow your search (e.g., Shakespeare and Hamlet).
- Use OR to broaden your search (e.g., crime fiction or detective fiction).
- Use truncation (*) to obtain all words beginning with your keyword (e.g., philosoph* will retrieve works with philosophy or philosophical in them).
- Click on the full-text link (such as “Locate Journal Article”) to see if a periodical article not full text is available in another database or is in the Library’s collection.

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