Research on the Library Website

Steps to find Dr. Searles’ EN 110 course research guide

1. Go to the MVCC Library website (mvcc.edu/library)
   - From the MVCC homepage hover over “Current Students” and then click the Libraries button with two books.

2. Once on the MVCC Library website, click on Research Guides.

3. From Research Guides, click the drop-down arrow under Fall 2018 Course Guides to choose a course. Select English Courses. Click Go.

4. Hover your mouse over EN 110 and click G. Searles. Here you will find a collection of databases, a catalog search box to find books, resources to cite sources, and my contact information.
Databases

Databases hold thousands of digital articles that the library pays to access. Articles can be from multiple sources including newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, or scholarly journals. MVCC Libraries currently subscribes to over a hundred databases, and it can be challenging to choose the right database for your topic. The course guide will direct you to databases best suited for your assignment. However, given the wide variety of topic options, a link to all MVCC library databases is available on the course guide.

Search Almost Everything – Discovery Search

A good place to start your research is Search Almost Everything located within the Electronic Resources (Databases) section. Select the Search Almost Everything tab to reveal a search box. This search option will simultaneously search multiple databases at once pulling a variety of sources. Just remember, it doesn’t search everything so be sure to diversify your search strategy by searching in multiple places.

Search tip! Only enter keywords into the search box. Don’t enter a sentence. For example, if you are interested in researching renewable energy, don’t type in the search box, What are the advantages and disadvantages of using renewable energy? Instead, start simply with the keywords renewable energy. You can add more search terms to narrow down your search later.

Expanding your search

There are a lot of different words you can use to describe the same subject. It is a good strategy to use different keywords that mean basically the same thing to have the greatest chance of finding relevant material. For example, some writers may use the phrase renewable energy while others use alternate or alternative energy. Another example is, some people say muscle cars while others may say high-performance cars or vehicles.

You can use one search string to search for multiple synonyms at once.

For example:

(high-performance OR muscle) AND (cars OR vehicles)

Notice how parentheses can be used to group synonyms separated by the word OR. The word AND helps add keywords and narrow your search to relevant results.

Tip! Don’t just focus on one database. Different databases are going to provide access to different journals. If you use only one database, you are missing out on a lot of good information that will help your research.
Using the **Academic Search Complete** database

**Academic Search Complete** is a good database covering a variety of topics. It is located in the Electronic Resources (Databases) section under the General Databases tab. Select the blue link to enter the database.

**Search Tip!** You can search multiple EBSCO databases at once, which is helpful to save time and expand your search. Once you are in **Academic Search Complete**, select the blue “Choose databases” link. Here you can select different databases to search at the same time. Check off any database you would like to search. Notice not every database MVCC subscribes to is available; only ones owned by EBSCO.

- Type your keywords in the search box. Connect synonyms with the word OR.
  
  Example:

  ![Search Box Example](image)

  - Option: Under “Limit your results”, check off Full Text and Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals to limit your results to full articles readily available and ones published in peer-reviewed, scholarly journals. This will filter out newspaper and magazine articles. You can also narrow your search by a publication date range. For example, choose a date range of 2013-2018 for articles published in the last five years.
  - Click the Search button.
  - A list of articles will appear. If no results appear, check your spelling or change your search terms.
Scholarly articles often start with an abstract which is a summary.

To view the full article, click on the “PDF Full Text” link.

Tip! If the article fits well with your research questions, write down the keywords and subjects assigned to the article. These will be useful to find other articles like it. Also, look at the References cited at the end of the article. The author did a lot of research to write this article. These are sources you can look up too! A librarian can help you track down the articles if needed.

Sometimes the full article isn’t available in the database, but it will try to direct you to another place to retrieve the full article. The full-text finder can be tricky so don’t hesitate to ask a librarian for assistance.