• RESEARCH is front and center

• Two ways to search library holdings

• COURSE approach to readings and resources
Choosing a Research Topic

**Start EARLY.**
Choosing and researching a topic are iterative processes. Give yourself plenty of time to refine or redefine your topic.

**Read the assignment carefully.**
Are you choosing a topic for a two page paper or a twenty page paper? Are you being asked to present both sides of an issue or to take a position? Will you be presenting pure research or sharing your personal reflections?

**Brainstorm ideas.**
Have any of the class lectures or readings particularly interested you? Can ideas from others courses be integrated here? Is there anything in your personal experience you’d like to explore? Did you enroll in this class hoping to learn something specific?

**Identify your interests and passions.**
You might be working on this topic for an entire semester. Choose something that you’re curious or excited about.
Find general background information on a broad SUBJECT.
See what aspects of this subject are being written about. Do any of these incorporate your interests/passions?

Some ways to do this:

- Use ENCORE to search St. Lawrence University Libraries’ holdings.
- Refine your search to include only sources found in the Reference Area and peruse encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs... Identify topics that interest you.
- Use TAGS to refine your search.
- Follow the same process in Google Scholar (www.scholar.google.com).

Turn your SUBJECT into a more specific TOPIC.
Choose an aspect of the broad SUBJECT that you’re interested in exploring. TOPICS that are too narrow or too broad are difficult to research.

Identify keywords, specialized vocabulary, and synonyms for later research.
Keep track of terms for keyword searching. Determine how these need to be combined to find the best information.

The computer doesn’t “understand” synonyms or other relationships among words. Be sure to search all keywords that apply.

Research and read more about your TOPIC.
Use the keywords you’ve identified to find information on your TOPIC. Can you find enough information on the TOPIC, or do you need to modify it? (This is where the “iterative process” comes in).

Turn your TOPIC into a THESIS STATEMENT.
Formulate one or two sentences that state precisely what you will be informing your audience about. What will you prove or answer?
Encore – Search for books, videos, digital collections...

- Enter a keyword search in Encore to find books, videos and digital collections
- Use the asterisk for search for all keywords beginning with the root: Mexico/Mexican literature/literatura
- Input keywords in Spanish for books in Spanish
You can refine your results by format, location, language, date...

And, you can use Tags to refine your results by subject

Clicking on a tag gives you a subset of your original results
• This book is AVAILABLE in the ODY Upper Level, under the Library of Congress Call Number PQ 7237.E5 B67 2006

• We often include Tables of Contents to enrich keyword searching.

• If this book had been checked-out, you could use ConnectNY to request a copy from another college in New York.

• Add the citation for this book to your RefWorks account so you can include it in your research and bibliography later.
Finding Journals

- Use the **Journal Titles** tab when you want to find out if SLU has a subscription to a specific magazine or journal.

**Hispanic Review** (0018-2176)
from 01/01/1933 to 10/31/2007 in [JSTOR Arts & Sciences III Archive Collection](https://www.jstor.org/collection/artsandsciences-iii)
from 01/01/1990 to present in [Academic Search Complete](https://www.ebscohost.com/academic-search-complete) and [Art & Architecture Complete](https://www.ebscohost.com/art-architecture-complete)
from 01/01/1994 to 10/31/2008 in [ProQuest Central](https://www.proquest.com/central)
from Winter 2005 to present in [Project MUSE - Premium Collection](https://www.jhupbooks.com/projectmuse)

- This tells you that we have Hispanic Review online in 5 collections.

- Be sure to check the **from/ to** dates that accompany each option.
Scholarly vs. Popular Sources

Scholarly Sources:

- Articles are published in JOURNALS
- Authors are experts in a field, provide credentials
- Contain original research or analysis of original research
- Purpose is to share knowledge
- Written in scholarly or technical language for professors, scholars
- Are PEER REVIEWED – evaluated and approved by experts in a field
- Contain extensive footnotes and/or bibliographies
- Are generally longer than MAGAZINE articles

Popular Sources:

- Articles are published in MAGAZINES
- Authors are journalists or professional writers, not subject experts; sometimes no author cited
- Contain general interest stories or opinions
- Purpose is to entertain, inform (news)
- Written in non-technical, easily understood language for the general public
- Are NOT PEER REVIEWED
- Do not contain footnotes or bibliographies
- Are generally shorter than JOURNAL articles
Finding Journal Articles

• All of the disciplines taught at St. Lawrence are displayed on the library homepage.

• GENERAL SOURCES is an excellent starting place for many researchers.

• There’s no one, single “right” index. Use a combination if indexes to do comprehensive research.

• Academic Search Complete provides broad, multi-disciplinary coverage and supports “Federated Searching”.

Before you enter search terms, click on **Choose Databases** to search multiple indexes at the same time.

Check off all of the indexes that pertain to your research topic and search them simultaneously (this is called Federated Searching).
• Enter appropriate keywords.

• You can restrict your results to **Scholarly /Peer Reviewed Journals** only if you wish.

• The FULL TEXT of many articles is available online.

• HTML Full Text – words only, prints quickly.

• PDF Full Text – words, graphics, and charts are included; might take awhile to download and print.

• Linked Full Text – takes you to a PDF in another database.
• Use **FIND@SLU** to locate journal articles that are not FULL TEXT.

• As you find useful citations, click on **Add to Folder** for eventual export to RefWorks.

• If we don’t have a subscription to the journal you need, you can request the article via Interlibrary Loan
Alternative Sources

Alt-Press Watch:
• “an alternative to corporate controlled, mainstream media coverage”
• “showcases independent voices from grassroots newspapers, magazines and journals”

Ethic NewsWatch:
• “often overlooked perspectives of the ethnic and minority press”
• covers “the most important issues concerning ethnicities and minorities in the U.S. and Canada”

GenderWatch:
• “provides authoritative historical and current perspectives on the evolution of gender roles as they affect both men and women”
Finding and Evaluating Websites

• Use the Google Advanced Search to find websites with domains of .org, .edu, .gov...

Ipl2 – Information you can Trust

• Ipl2.org provides access to “authoritative, high-quality, trustworthy” websites
Web Pages Evaluation Criteria

AUTHORITY

- Who wrote the page?
  Look for the author's name, a copyright credit (©), contact information or link to an organization.
  Look for biographical information or the author's affiliations (university department, organization, corporate title, etc.). Can these be verified?
  Has the author published books or journal articles?

- Whose web site is this?
  Look at the domain (.com, .edu, .org, .gov etc.).
  Look for an "about this site" link.
  Be careful of a web page that has a tilde (~) in the URL, as this usually identifies a personal directory on a web site.

CURRENCY

- Is the information up-to-date?
  Is there a date at the top or bottom of the page?
  Don’t confuse currency of content with last update of the page.
  Compare the information on the web page to information available through other sources.
  Broken links are one measure of an out-of-date page.

OBJECTIVITY

- Is the author being objective or biased?
  Biased information is not necessarily "bad", but take the bias into account when interpreting or using the information given.
  Are the facts accurately and completely cited?
  Is the author fair, balanced, and moderate in his/her views, or is the author overly emotional or extreme?
• Click on **Interlibrary Loan**, found under My Accounts on the Library Homepage.

![Interlibrary Loan Login Screen]

- **ILLiad Username:**
- **ILLiad Password:**
- **Logon to ILLiad**

**First Time Users**

![First Time Users Section]

- Click on **First Time Users** on the first screen, then **First Time Users Click Here** at the bottom of the next screen, to open up a new account.

- **Choose a Username** *(required, case sensitive)*
- **Choose a Password** *(required, case sensitive)*
- **Re-enter password** *(required, case sensitive)*

• Although you don’t have to, use your SLU network id and password, so you won’t forget it.
• Choose the appropriate Request Type.

• If you click on the Illiad link above, the request will be filled in for you.
Thanks for attending!
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