How to Get the Most Out of Your Research:
Q & A with Senior Reference Librarian Ann Cannon

Q How can students get the most out of their research?
A: First, they need to know which types of resources are required for their assignment. Can they use books, journal articles, newspapers, magazines and/or blog posts? Also, students need to know how to identify sources of information, how to locate resources using the catalog or how to locate journal articles in the databases.

Q: When a student gets an assignment to do a research paper, project, or presentation, where should they start their research?
A: Most students go to the web to start their research. The web is not the most effective research strategy. Using Google or Wikipedia is quick and easy, but usually you’ll get a lot of information (some of it true and some of it false) to review. First, students need to know something about their topic…they should get some background information from a general, or discipline specific, encyclopedia or dictionary. Then they can use the library’s online catalog, at http://library.nsu.edu, to run a keyword, subject, or author search to find books on their topic.

Q: What do they do after they’ve found out some background information on their topic?
A: They should identify key concepts, by stating their topic in the form of a question or statement. It’s important to identify main ideas or themes because those words and/or phrases can function as search terms in the library’s databases. It’s also essential for students to write down their search terms and try searching with words that have similar meanings or that are related to their original search terms. For example, if my topic question was “In what ways can a parent’s substance abuse impact their child or children?” I could run a search using the terms PARENTAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE and CHILDREN. If I didn’t get the results I wanted I could search again using PARENT ALCOHOL ABUSE and EFFECT ON STUDENTS.

Q: How can students quickly find the academic/scholarly/peer-reviewed sources they need for an assignment?
A: To find journal articles they can click on the Continued on back
E-Sources
Brought to You by the Lyman Beecher Brooks Library

Did you know that the library has thousands of books and journal articles available online? If you need to find a scholarly or peer-reviewed journal article for a research paper or need to find information on a hot topic, checkout the following databases to get started!

Mergent Online (Moody's Manuals Online)—has massive amounts of information on publicly traded companies (national and international) including company histories, stock prices, subsidiaries and much more. Users can also compile the information into customizable reports for easier reading.

PsychNet—covers thousands of scholarly articles and citations in the psychological, social, behavioral, and health sciences fields. Also, when you retrieve an article in full-text HTML the database underlines key words that link to APA's dictionary. So you can have the definitions of terms at your fingertips.

Global Issues in context—Don’t know where to start on your assignment topic? Need to know about a current event or “hot button” issue? Then begin your research process with Global Issues in Context. When you query this database it generates a seamless blend of results from academic journal articles, statistics, global viewpoints, news, and reference resources. This robust database also incorporates podcasts, images, and videos in its search outcomes.

New Library, New Employees
As the new building draws closer to completion, historic changes are reshaping each department in the library. A principal change has occurred in the library systems area with our two newest staff members. Read below for more information on each of them.

Name: John Liebhardt
Title: Systems Librarian
Mr. Liebhardt grew up outside of Madison Wisconsin. He recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee with a Master’s degree in Library and Information Sciences. Previously he worked at the United States Marine Corps Research Library in Quantico, VA. Before that he was a freelance journalist living in Burkina Faso, West Africa and Fiji in the South Pacific. As the system librarian he will manage and evaluate the library’s current and future technologies like the library’s website, catalog, and electronic resources.

Name: Ed Trotter
Title: System Technology Assistant
A Virginian, Mr. Trotter grew up in the Hampton Roads area. While attending NSU, as an undergraduate, he was a student athlete (football) and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Technology and a Master of Arts degree in Urban Affairs. Mr. Trotter’s position includes the maintenance and upkeep of all technologies on public and internal library computers. He also provides training to library staff on new software and hardware.

Have suggestions for the next issue of “Check It Out”? We want to hear from you!
E-mail: Libraryinfo@nsu.edu Phone: 757-823-8517
Newsletter Committee Members
Dr. Tommy Bogger, Interim Library Director, Ann Cannon, Lynne Harrison, John Liebhardt, Cyanna Rodney-Hill, Editor

Library Hours
Fall 2011
Monday—Thursday 8am—11pm
Friday 8am—5pm
Saturday 9am—5pm
Sunday 2pm—9pm

Remember to check the library’s website for special hours during holidays and semester breaks.