



Tips for Technical Writing Research in Prescott Library (especially on the webpage)

1. First, think about the **type** of material you would like to include:
books, government information, journal & magazine articles, newspaper articles, technical reports, standards, statistics, patents, pictures/graphics
2. Next, determine the best place to locate this material:
 - a. The **Tech Library Catalog** is the best overall place for finding books and government documents owned by the library or accessed through its homepage. Another good place for government material is the link **Government Info**. Useful federal websites linked here include USA.gov, Science.gov, GrayLit, and NTIS.
 - b. **Articles in Journals** is your best starting point for locating journal articles. Then, clicking on **Search by Subjects** will enable you to choose the most appropriate indexes from the lists provided.

The best index to use will depend on your topic. Currently, the *best all purpose* index with many fulltext articles is **Academic Search Complete**. However, it is always a good idea to use a variety of indexes.

News articles can be found under the link **Newspapers**. At present, **Lexis-Nexis Academic** provides the most complete access to free, fulltext newspaper articles.

Your teacher may require you to use scholarly (or peer reviewed) journals, such as The Journal of Psychology, rather than magazines, such as Psychology Today. The good news is that most indexes will enable you to limit your search to scholarly journals only. Other indexes such as Engineering Village will automatically search scholarly journals.

- c. Statistics can be found in many places. One excellent source is the Statistical Abstract of the United States, a government publication located in paper in the Ref Dept and also available online under the link Reference Materials > Facts & Statistics. Another very useful online source is **Fed Stats** located under the **Government Info** link.

- d. Patents can be found under **Government Information > Federal Websites > Patent and Trademark Office (U.S.)**.
A separate handout **Patents** can be picked up at the Information Desk.

3. Now, beginning your search:

- a. When conducting a search, use a variety of words for the same term or concept. For example, if you are researching alcohol and its effects upon children, use synonyms for the word *children*: youth, adolescents, teens or teenagers, etc. Also, use Boolean search operators (*and, or, not*). For example, the search phrase “alcohol and schools” might bring up more results than simply “alcohol in schools.” Try it both ways.

4. Finally, locating your material:

- a. The library contains material in many formats: paper, online, microfilm. Sometimes the item you need can be found in more than one media. If you cannot locate an item on the shelf, check and see if it may have a URL or be available on microfiche.
- b. Remember, if the item is:
 - A. a **reference book**, it will be located on the main floor in the Ref Dept.
 - B. a **hard copy federal government document**, it will be in the basement, unless it is marked reference, in which case see Part A.
 - C. a **docmicro**, it will be in the microfiche file cabinets in the back on the main floor. Copies can be made on the third floor behind the Info Desk.
 - D. a **Louisiana state document**, it will be located on the blue bookshelves at the very back of the main floor (just past the Curriculum Library).
 - E. an **electronic book or document**, click on the URL. You can choose to print out just those pages you need.
 - F. a **fulltext electronic journal article**, simply print it out. If it is in pdf format, you must click on the Adobe printer symbol to print.

Notes: *This journal is available at the Prescott Library* indicates that the library has a paper copy of this journal on the 3rd floor. Click on [Search the Tech Library Catalog](#) to obtain the call number. Be aware that some subscriptions may have been cancelled or transferred to an online version.

LS Check LinkSource for more information indicates the **possibility** for fulltext access elsewhere outside that index.

Request this item through ILLiad indicates this article can only be obtained through interlibrary loan. Click on **InterLibrary Services** for more information.

- c. Information of local interest, such as Ruston or Louisiana in general, is often harder to locate. On the library homepage be sure and check these sources: **Government Information > Louisiana Websites**; the **Bayou State Periodical Index**; under **Newspapers** try these state publications: the Advocate (Baton Rouge), the Ruston Daily Leader, the Shreveport Times, the Tech Talk (La Tech), and the Times Picayune (New Orleans); also search **Regional Business News** and **Lexis-Nexis Academic**.

Information on Louisiana Tech University can be found in many places, including the Ref Dept, the library's Archives department on the 4th floor, or in sources such as the school yearbook, *The Lagniappe*, and the school newspaper, *The Tech Talk*, with back issues and an index located on the 3rd floor.

Moreover, did you know that an index to the *Ruston Daily Leader* is maintained on the 3rd floor of the library?

Also, contact these groups: the Ruston Chamber of Commerce, the City of Ruston and its departments, La Tech's Enterprise Center, 257-3537, and La Tech's CEnIT, Center for Entrepreneurship and Information Technology, 257-2938.

5. Other libraries:

Check the resources at other university libraries throughout Louisiana under **Catalogs > Louisiana Libraries Union Catalog** (where material can be borrowed directly using your free LaLINC card). Also, search the Lincoln Parish Library at www.mylpl.org and Ouachita Parish Library at www.ouachita.lib.la.us.

Interlibrary Loan (**ILLiad**) is available to all students on a limited basis for items you need but cannot locate otherwise. Click on **InterLibrary Services** for more information.