DEFINING THE LIBRARY

This glossary is designed to introduce you to terminology commonly used in APUS' Trefry Library to describe services, parts of the collection, academic writing, and research.
DEFINING THE LIBRARY
20 terms to help you use APUS’ Trefry Library

Select a word from the left to get started
A-Z List

Alphabetical list of all the libraries databases

Click the images below to see where to access the A-Z List

related term: Database
Abstract

A brief summary that gives the essential points of a book, pamphlet or article. Abstracts can help give you an idea of what the document is about without reading the whole document.

Many articles include the abstract just before the full text of the document as shown here.
There are many methods available for you to contact librarians for library and research help. Librarians are available to answer questions 365 days a year via email, text, chat, and consultations.

Get more information and see the schedule.
Authoritative source

An official source or work. Deemed reliable by experts in the field based on authenticity and integrity.

Examples of authoritative sources:

- scholarly journal articles
- government documents
- textbooks from reputable publishers
- reference books

related terms: Peer-review, Reference Book
Bibliography

A list of sources (books, journals, Web sites, periodicals, etc.) you have used for researching a topic. Bibliographies are sometimes called "References" or "Works Cited" depending on the style format you are using.
Boolean Operators

Terms such as "and," "or," and "not" used to express the relationship of one term to another when searching databases. Using boolean operators allows you to search library databases with more precision.

Example search terms using Boolean Operators:

- politics AND youth
- death penalty OR capital punishment
- sex education NOT abstinence-only

Tip: If you need to use multiple Boolean operators try nesting or grouping them with parentheses.
example: learning environment AND (elementary OR middle OR high) AND school
Citation

A brief description of a specific work (book, article, video, or webpage) that has been quoted or used as a source. Most citations will include author(s), publication date and title(s), with additional information (like volume, issue and page numbers), depending on the source type. The exact arrangement and formatting of a citation is dictated by a style manual.

Find citation examples in Writing@APUS.

Tip: Use a citation manager to organize, store, and format your citations.
Database

A collection of published sources like scholarly journals, popular magazines, ebooks, conference proceedings, reports etc., that are organized in a manner that allow for easy search and retrieval.

A few examples from our library:

- Armed Conflict Database
- Research Library
- Academic Search Premier
- Sports Business News
- Nexis Uni
- JSTOR

related terms: A-Z List
eReserves

An online resource that provides access to course related readings or other materials required by the instructor.

eReserves can be accessed [here](#) and can be searched by course number, course name or instructor’s last name.
Interlibrary Loan

A service in which the library seeks to borrow books or articles, that are not included in our own collection, from other libraries.

Click [here](#) for more information on this service.
Keyword Searching

A search strategy that allows you to search using terms that describe the key concepts of your research topic.

This kind of searching looks for your keywords anywhere in the document -- the title, the subject headings, the detailed record, the full text, etc.
Limiting

A feature of many library databases that allows you to limit your search, letting you target the kinds of sources you really need and filtering out the stuff that you don't.

Limiters vary from database to database but typical limiters include:

- Date range
- Peer-review/scholarly
- popular
- Exclude book reviews
- Full text only
- Language
Open Access

A term designating material (scholarly journal articles, books, images etc.) as freely and immediately available online, without a fee or database subscription requirement.
Peer-Review

An academic term for quality control. Peer-reviewed journal articles undergo a process of evaluation by a panel of expert reviewers prior to their publication.

Get more information on peer-review.
Periodical

A publication that issues articles, etc. periodically throughout the year. The frequency that content is issued varies by the type of publication. Each issue of a periodical is numbered, and all of the issues in a year are part of a volume.

Types of periodicals:

- journals - Journal of American History, Policing & Society
- magazines - Newsweek, Time
- newspapers - Washington Post, Wall Street Journal
Phrase Searching

A search strategy that allows a user to make use of quotation marks to search for exact phrases, sentences, or titles.

Enclosing your phrase in quotation marks lets the database know you want it to find the words exactly as you’ve typed them. Without the quotation marks, the database will look for each work separately.

Example searches:

- "colony collapse disorder"
- "Protection of Assets Manual"
Primary Source

A source which provides first-hand knowledge gathered by the author(s).

Primary sources include:

- Correspondence
- Diaries
- Autobiographies
- Photographs
- Interviews and transcripts
- Government documents
- Historical records
- Newspaper reports
- Conference proceedings
Reference Book

A resource to consult for quick facts and basic authoritative information on a specific subject or topic.

Some examples:

- Dictionaries
- Encyclopedias
- Handbooks
- Atlases
- Almanacs
- Yearbooks
- Manuals
Research Guide

Librarian created guides, tailored to aid research in specific disciplines.

Research guides are organized by program.
Writing@APUS

A writing resource providing guidance and strategies to help with the writing process. Serving to sharpen writing skills from brainstorming to citing and everything in between.

This vast resource offers tips for the following and much more:

- Locating available reference tools
- Getting organized
- Developing a thesis statement
- Taking notes
- Paraphrasing
- Using style guides
- Proofreading

Here’s where to find Writing@APUS.