

The Library

resources and guidelines

for the composition student and instructor

Library Web Site

The library has a new web site. If instructors have assignments that include specific instructions on how to locate library resources such as databases, they may refer to the web site in order to adjust the instructions on their assignments according to any changes made. The databases of the PCC Library are now presented not only alphabetically but also by subject and type. There are also many new pages with reliable resources for your students

Visit the new library web site: www.pittcc.edu/library. The reference desk librarian welcomes comments and suggestions on the new site.

Library Instruction Sessions

An instruction session with a librarian can help your students locate quality information sources for their class assignments. The composition program encourages instructors to take advantage of these opportunities to provide students with skills in information-seeking that will carry over into other classes, work, and their everyday lives.

To schedule library instruction sessions for your entire class, go to the following web address to submit your request:

www.pittcc.edu/library/services/schedule-session.html

To schedule an individual instruction session with a librarian, go to the following web address to submit your request:

www.pittcc.edu/library/instruction/individualconsult.html

If you have any questions at all, please call the reference desk at 493-7360.

Library Instruction Lab

The PCC Library houses an instruction lab, large enough to accommodate approximately twenty-two students at computer terminals. This lab can be reserved for meeting classes and completing assignments requiring research, use of MyCompLab, or demonstrating specific skills.

The instruction lab (Room 228) is a popular meeting site for composition classes, and instructors should plan early for meeting times. Calling well in advance (more than three-day's notice is required) of the planned lab session will help to ensure your reservation to meet your course objectives. The library cannot guarantee space in the lab or in the open library seating if instructors bring or send their class without notice.

To schedule a session in this lab, the instructor should call the reference desk librarian (493-7366) or e-mail Angela Davis at adavis@email.pittcc.edu.

Help Prepare Library Staff for Library Assignments

Many composition assignments require the use of library resources. In an effort to better meet the needs of the student and prepare the library staff, please provide a copy of any library research assignment with pertinent answer keys or a general purpose of the activity to the head reference librarian (Angela Davis). Providing the context in which the assignment is given can help the staff assist all students appropriately.

Encouraging Student Responsibility in the Library

The PCC Library is one of our students' greatest resources on campus, and the librarians and staff are invaluable to what we do in our classrooms. To this end, we ask instructors to encourage self-reliance and responsibility on the part of our students who make use of the library and staff.

- ❑ Remind students that the library is not “in charge” of their e-mail accounts.
PCC provides e-mail and other instructional services through Campus Cruiser for students. Students learn how to use this tool through ACA 111 and through information they receive from the College.
- ❑ Instructors who require students to use MyCompLab should provide adequate instruction in the classroom for this tool. MyCompLab is considered a third party vendor, and the Student Help Desk, Office of Information Technology Services Department, or the PCC Library is not equipped nor manned to assist students in its set up or operation.

Incorporating Library Research into Composition Courses

ENG 111 will:

- stress the basics of MLA documentation: quoting, paraphrasing, citing sources, doing a “works cited” page, etc.
- provide guidance and practice in using the Library of Congress Classification system, which enables library patrons to find specific items and items on related topics on the library shelves.
- provide guidance and practice in using the online databases and electronic resources provided by the Library, such as Infotrac, Onefile, and Academic Search Premier.

Suggested activities to help students master the above skills include but are not limited to:

- a synthesis paper assignment requiring direct references to multiple sources using MLA format
- a writing assignment requiring direct reference (with appropriate citation and works cited information) to a book found in the PCC Library by use of the online library catalog
- a writing assignment requiring direct reference (with appropriate citation and works cited information) to an article found in an electronic database

ENG 112, 113, and 114 will provide guidance and practice in the use of reference materials and electronic databases in the library. All students are required to demonstrate their mastery of the use of these tools by writing a research paper in the current MLA format.

Suggested activities to help students master research skills include but are not limited to:

- an annotated bibliography on possible sources to use for the student’s research paper, including a varied collection of the types of resources requested by the instructor
- a technical assignment geared toward business and professional writing, such as a formal report or set of instructions on how to use one of the Library’s electronic databases
- a literature-based assignment requiring students to find critical articles on a poem, play, short story, or author, in several different reference materials or databases
- a library instruction session and related research assignment developed in conjunction with the library reference staff. Contact: Angela Davis, Reference Librarian (adavis@email.pittcc.edu or 493-7366)

All composition instructors should:

- become familiar with the library's resources, including the online library catalog, the library's web pages, and the electronic databases
- notify the library at least 3-5 days in advance of bringing classes to work in the library, especially if it will put an increased demand on the librarian on duty
- contact the library ***at least*** 3-5 days before the desired date in order to reserve the instruction lab (Room 228) NOTE: *Librarian-led instruction sessions take priority over non librarian-led sessions.*
- give the reference librarian a copy of any major library research assignments and pertinent answer keys at least one week before the assignment is given out in class

Instructors may notify the library as requested above by contacting the reference librarian or by calling or emailing the library's reference desk (pittref@email.pittcc.edu or 493-7360). In addition, instructors are welcome to make an appointment with a librarian for a guided tour of the library and/or a session to learn more about its electronic resources.

Library Databases

What is a Library Database?

A library database is an online resource that contains articles and information from print sources such as magazines, newspapers, journals, and reference books. There are three main types of library databases:

1. Article Databases

Article databases enable a researcher to search through thousands (sometimes millions) of different magazines, journals, and newspapers to find articles on a particular topic. Some of the databases contain articles in **full text**, which means the entire article is right there online, to read, save, e-mail, or print out. Other times the database may only provide an **abstract** (a short summary of the article) or a **citation** (the article's title, author, and source information).

2. Reference Databases

Reference databases provide facts, statistics, and general information from reliable sources, many of which also exist in print. For example, the Gale Virtual Reference Library contains online versions of almanacs and encyclopedias. Reference databases are usually more subject-specific than article databases, so that each one covers a topic like art, music, law, literature, or science & technology.

3. Index Databases

Index databases operate like an index in a book. Rather than directly providing information, they describe **where to look** to find it by providing citation information. These databases are usually searched or organized by subject. Sometimes, an index database will provide links to the articles it cites, but the articles “live” in other databases.

Databases are not "Internet" sources from the World Wide Web.

Although the “Internet” is used to access our databases, it is a delivery method only. Our databases are not part of the *World Wide Web*. Most of the information they contain cannot be found by using *Google* or *Yahoo*. The databases are subscription services that are paid for by the college or the state; their content is copyrighted and proprietary. They contain information from reliable, scholarly publishers and peer-reviewed sources. Web evaluation techniques and activities can be covered in a library instruction session if desired by the instructor.

One must log on when using these databases from off-campus.

These databases are only accessible to subscribers. Pitt Community College and the State of North Carolina have paid for access, so PCC students, faculty, and staff can use these databases. They can be used from any on-campus computer **without** a login or password. To access the databases from an off-campus computer requires a login and/or password to prove an association with Pitt Community College. The Library supplies password packets each semester with the necessary logins and passwords for off-campus access. Ask for the packet at the Library Circulation desk or by emailing pittlrc@email.pittcc.edu.