

The Los Medanos College Library

SDS (Self-Directed Study) Resource Guide

The aim of this guide is to acquaint you with the function, location, and purpose of the services and materials, housed at the Library, of value in your SDS research. Library resources cover current and historic information in print, microform, and electronic formats. This guide will assist you in developing the knowledge and skills to use the resources at the Library and other libraries effectively and efficiently.

The Library

The Library is located in the center of campus and is composed of four levels that offer various Library materials and services.

- Level 1 -** A student computer lab is housed here providing Internet access.
- Level 2 -** Here you will find reserve materials, videotapes, audiocassettes, CDs, record albums, other non-print resources, and the equipment for viewing and/or listening to them.
- Level 3 -** Located on this level are the Loan and Reference Desks, the reference book collection, current periodicals, back issues of newspapers, periodicals on microfilm, the Vertical File, Internet stations for course-related research, a group study room, and a photocopy machine.
- Level 4 -** Books that can be borrowed are located on this level. Back issues of magazines and journals in print can also be found here.

Los Medanos College Library website <http://www.losmedanos.net/library.htm>

The Los Medanos College Library provides 24 hour research assistance on the Internet through its "Virtual Library Reference Desk". Links are provided to information about the Library and to a multitude of research resources. These linked resources include:

The Library's online catalog, periodical databases (some in full-text), the Library's periodical list, library handouts, Pros & Cons and other bibliographies, a variety of Internet search engines and subject indexes, and phone numbers and e-mail addresses of Library staff.

By clicking on "e-Reference Net", access is provided to online almanacs, dictionaries, encyclopedias, biographies, maps, government information, statistics, organizations, writing and style guides, Internet guides, and much more.

Choosing a Topic

There are several resources at the Library to assist you in selecting a controversial, interdisciplinary topic, which has ethical aspects, for your SDS.

The *Pros & Cons* bibliography, is a list of LMC Library books on various controversial topics. It is available from the Library's website at <http://www.losmedanos.net/library.htm>. The listed books offer opposing arguments on complex and sensitive issues. The essays provide a starting point for critical thinking and debate.

You may also find browsing through the bound issues of *CQ Researcher* (Ref. H35 .E34 Con) to be helpful. *CQ Researcher* is a weekly report covering a subject currently in the news. It provides an in-depth examination of the background, history, and controversial aspects of the topic, with an extensive bibliography.

The book, *10,000 Ideas for Term Papers, Projects, and Reports* (Ref. LB1047.3 .L35 1987), can also be consulted.

Located on Level 3, behind the Reference Desk, is the Vertical File. This valuable source of information includes pamphlets and other miscellaneous information covering a variety of topics.

Browsing through issues of *Congressional Digest*, an independently published periodical on topics currently being considered by the U.S. Congress, may provide topic inspiration.

Locating Books

The Online Catalog

The online catalog provides the record and loan status of each book in the LMC collection. In addition to catalog terminals located at the Library, you can access the catalog via the Los Medanos College Library website at <http://www.losmedanos.net/library.htm>

You can search the online catalog by AUTHOR, TITLE, exact SUBJECT Heading, or Key WORDS related to your topic. Usually a SUBJECT or a Key WORD search is most effective in locating books on a topic.

Call Numbers

The call number of each book in the Library is a collection of letters and numbers. It is a code for the main subject of the book. In addition to being listed in the online catalog with the record of the book, the call number appears on the spine of the book. The call number is your key to locating the book in the Library.

The Library and most academic libraries use the Library of Congress Classification System. The call numbers in this system are arranged alphabetically and numerically. Read call numbers from left to right and from top to bottom.

Letters in the first line of the call number are alphabetical:			
H 45 .E37 1984	HA 155 .A5 1944	HB 21 .A33 1982	HC 13 .S47 1990
Numbers in the second line of the call number are in numerical order:			
B 53 .D476 1990	B 785 .L44 M67 1991	B 1201 .B44 W64 1997	B 1246 .R66 1986
Letters in the third line are alphabetical:			
KF 240 B 265 1981	KF 240 C 538 1989	KF 240 S 795 1995	KF 240 T 38 1989
Numbers in the third line are in decimal order. It is important to remember that there is an "invisible" decimal point between the letter and the number:			
L 901 C33	L 901 C34 1971	L 901 C343 1976	L 901 C37 1996
There may be a fourth line of letters and numbers. These will also be in alphabetical and decimal number order. The last line of a call number may be a year. This indicates the publication date.			

Book Levels of the Library:

Books in the Circulating Collection (those that can be borrowed) are located on Level 4.

Books in the Reference Collection are located on Level 3.

Books that instructors have placed in the Reserve Collection are located on Level 2

Borrowing books from other Contra Costa Community College District campuses:

The LMC online catalog also allows you to search the book collections of Diablo Valley College (DVC) and Contra Costa College (CCC). LMC students can borrow circulating books from DVC and CCC, through Inter-Library Loan Service, by requesting the books at the Loan Desk on Level 3.

Borrowing books from the Contra Costa County Library and other libraries:

The online catalog can also be used to learn which books are located at the Contra Costa County Public Library. To borrow these books, you must have a Contra Costa County Public Library card. Book must be picked up from the appropriate public library location or have it transferred to a public library branch convenient for you. There are branches located throughout the county, including Pittsburg and Antioch.

To identify books located at the Contra Costa County Public Library using LMC's online catalog, select "Change to Out-of-District Libraries". Under Public Libraries, click on "Contra Costa County Library" and follow the directions provided.

Reference Books

The books in the Reference Collection, located on Level 3, are non-circulating materials that may be consulted on a broad survey of subjects as well as specific facts and information. Here you can consult general and specialized dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs, handbooks, statistical yearbooks, atlases, chronologies, and other books.

Encyclopedias

Encyclopedias are often a good place to start your research because they provide a broad overview of topics. Most encyclopedias have comprehensive indexes that can be helpful in locating all the information relevant to your topic contained in the set.

Encyclopedias can be general or specialized. General encyclopedias, such as *The World Book Encyclopedia*, *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, and *The Encyclopedia Americana*, cover almost all areas of knowledge. Examples of specialized encyclopedias are listed below to give you a sense of the wide array of subjects within this category of reference resource:

<i>African American Encyclopedia</i> (8 volumes)	Ref. E 185 .A253 1993
<i>Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare</i>	Ref. HV 4708 .E53 1998
<i>Encyclopedia of Bioethics</i> (5 volumes)	Ref. QH 332 .E52 1995
<i>Encyclopedia of Crime and Justice</i> (4 volumes)	Ref. HV 6017 .E52 1983
<i>Encyclopedia of Democracy</i> (2 volumes)	Ref. JC 423 .E53 1995
<i>Encyclopedia of Drugs and Alcohol</i> (4 volumes)	Ref. HV 5804 .E53 1995
<i>Encyclopedia of Ethics</i> (2 volumes)	Ref. BJ 63 .E45 1992
<i>Encyclopedia of Homosexuality</i> (2 volumes)	Ref. HQ 76.25 .E53 1990
<i>Encyclopedia of Multiculturalism</i> (6 volumes)	Ref. E 184 .A1 E58 1993
<i>Encyclopedia of Popular Music</i> (8 volumes)	Ref. ML 102 .P66 G84 1998
<i>Encyclopedia of Psychology</i> (4 volumes)	Ref. BF 31 .E52 1984
<i>Encyclopedia of Religion</i> (16 volumes)	Ref. BL 31 .E46 1986
<i>Encyclopedia of Special Education</i> (3 volumes)	Ref. LC 4007 .E53 1987
<i>Encyclopedia of the American Judicial System</i> (3 vols.)	Ref. KF 154 .E53 1987
<i>Encyclopedia of the Holocaust</i> (4 volumes)	Ref. D 804.3 .E53 1990
<i>Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War</i>	Ref. DS 557.7 .G35 1999
<i>Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East</i> (4 volumes)	Ref. DS 43 .E53 1996
<i>Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine</i> (5 volumes)	Ref. RC 41 .G35 1999

One specialized encyclopedia which may be of particular value in your SDS research is ***The Encyclopedia of Associations*** (Ref. HS 17 .G334). This encyclopedia is a comprehensive source of detailed information concerning nearly 23,000 nonprofit American membership organizations. Phone and fax numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses are provided to enable you to contact organizations to request information. Use the subject index (Vol. 3) to find the entry number for organizations involved in your research topic. Then locate those entry numbers in Vol. 1 or Vol. 2 for the organizations' informational listings.

Dictionaries

Dictionaries can include information far beyond word definitions of the English language and other languages. Some dictionaries are closely related to encyclopedias, providing extensive coverage of subjects. Examples of non-language dictionaries in the LMC Reference Collection are:

<i>Dictionary of Art</i> (34 volumes)	Ref. N 31 .D5 1996
<i>Dictionary of Black African Civilization</i>	Ref. DT 352.4 .D5213
<i>Dictionary of Indian Tribes</i> (3 volumes)	Ref. E 54.5 .D53 1993
<i>Dictionary of Native American Mythology</i>	Ref. E 98 .R3 G46 1992
<i>Dictionary of the Battles</i>	Ref. D 25 .A2 D53 1998
<i>Dictionary of the History of Ideas</i> (4 volumes)	Ref. B5 .D52
<i>New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians</i> (20 vols.)	Ref. ML 100 .N48 1980

Almanacs, Guides, "Reference Libraries", Atlases, and Handbooks

Like encyclopedias and dictionaries, these types of reference works provide substantial information on various subject areas. Examples included in the collection are:

<i>American Immigrant Cultures</i>	Ref. E 184 .A1 A63446 1997
<i>The Asian American Almanac</i>	Ref. E 184 .O6 A824 1995
<i>Atlas of American Migration</i>	Ref. G 1201 .E27 F5 1998
<i>Guide to the U.S. Supreme Court</i>	Ref. JK 1571 .C65 1979
<i>Reference Library of Asian America</i>	Ref. E 184 .O6 R45 1995
<i>Reference Library of Black America</i>	Ref. E 185 .R44 1997
<i>Reference Library of European America</i>	Ref. E 184 .E95 R45
<i>Reference Library of Hispanic America</i>	Ref. E 184 .S75 R44 1993
<i>Reference Library of Native North America</i>	Ref. E 77 .N37 1994
<i>We the People: An Atlas of America's Ethnic Diversity</i>	Ref. E 184 .A1 A479

Browsing

You may find browsing through the reference books and circulating books in the Library in your topic area to be worthwhile. A chart of the call numbers for broad subject areas is provided at the following website: <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/subjects.html> You can use it to determine in which area of the stacks or the Reference book collection to browse.

Information in Magazines, Journals, and Newspapers

The Library has several online computer databases that allow you to find magazine, journal, and newspaper articles. Computer workstations are available for searching these databases on Level 1 and Level 3. LMC students and staff can also access these databases from off campus over the Internet.

From the LMC Library website, located at <http://www.losmedanos.net/library.htm>, select Electronic Databases. The following databases are provided:

Infotrac-Expanded Academic ASAP

Infotrac-Expanded Academic ASAP (1980 - current) provides online access to articles from more than 1,900 scholarly and general-interest publications.

Searching for articles by subject in this database can be of particular value to your SDS research because broad subjects can be narrowed into subtopics. These subtopics may reveal the multidisciplinary nature of your topic. Articles included in the subtopics may cover moral and ethical, economic, religious, demographic, health, social, legal, international, physiological, psychological, and/or political aspects, demographics, or case studies, etc. of your subject.

ProQuest Direct

ProQuest Direct provides full-text, online, comprehensive coverage of five major national newspapers - *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Dialog@CARL

Dialog@CARL provides full-text access to seven daily Northern California newspapers: *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Sacramento Bee*, *The Contra Costa Times*, *The West County Times*, *The Valley Times*, and *The San Ramon Valley Times*. Several local weekly newspapers are also a part of the database.

SIRS Researcher

SIRS Researcher provides thousands of full-text articles on social, scientific, health, historic, business, economic, political, and global issues. Articles are taken from approximately 1,500 newspaper, magazine, journal, and government publications. Graphics, including charts, maps, diagrams, and drawings, are included in many of the articles.

A Matter of Fact

A Matter of Fact is a database which provides statistics on social, economic, political, health, environmental, and public policy issues. Approximately 25% of the abstracts are derived from Congressional hearings, 15% from the Congressional Record, and the remainder from general interest and specialized magazines, newsletters, and newspapers.

Print Indexes

In addition to the previously listed online computer databases, the Library has print indexes. These include:

<i>The New York Times Index</i>	(1971 - 1994)
<i>Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature</i>	(March 1969 - current)
<i>The San Francisco Chronicle Index</i>	(1977 - 1994)

Citations to recent articles included in the print indexes may also be found in the online computer databases. However, citation coverage of articles that were published more than a few years ago is more complete in the print indexes. Therefore, the print indexes are very valuable in research focussed on historic information.

Videotapes

To learn which videotapes are in the Library's collection, use the online video catalog. The catalog can be searched by subject, author, and title. Videotapes are located and may be viewed on Level 2.

Pamphlets

The Vertical File, located in the file cabinets behind the Reference Desk on Level 3, contains pamphlets and other miscellaneous information covering a variety of topics. Vertical File materials cannot be checked out, but they may be photocopies.

Information on the Internet

The Library has computers with Internet access that you can use to research your topic. Computer workstations are located on Levels 1 and 3. The Internet can be a valuable source of information, however it is important that you learn to apply evaluation criteria to what you find on the Internet. One website that will help you assess the value of Internet information is "The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly: or Why It's a Good Idea to Evaluate WebSources" located at <http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/eval.html>

Search Engines

A search engine assists you in locating websites through the use of key words related to a subject. One excellent search engine is Google (<http://www.google.com>). If your initial search results are unsatisfactory, you may have better success by refining your search. To refine a search using Google, click on Advanced Search. Many search engines include Advanced Search and Help.

Subject Indexes

The Librarians' Index to the Internet (<http://www.ii.org>), as well as Google.com, AltaVista.com, Yahoo.com, Infoseek.com, Deja.com, HotBot.lycos.com, and many other search engine web sites, provides a Directory or Subject Index to assist you in finding information relevant to your research topic. These alphabetical listings of broad subject areas can be explored. The topics narrow as you browse through layers of subcategories.

Critical Thinking

Analysis of information found in your research, and writing your SDS paper, will require critical thinking. The following are some Library books to help sharpen your critical thinking skills:

<i>Beyond Feelings: A Guide to Critical Thinking</i>	BF 455 .R83
<i>Critical Reasoning: Understanding and Criticizing Arguments and Theories</i>	BC 177 .C4
<i>Elements of Reasoning</i>	BC 177 .C68 Reserve
<i>Thinking for Yourself: Developing Critical Thinking Skills Through Writing</i>	PE 1408 .M3933 1987

How to Write a Research Paper

The Writing the Papers section of your Humanistic Studies 2LS syllabus provides you with the required format for your research paper. The Library has books on writing well in general and some that focus specifically on writing research papers. They may be

consulted for information on refining your writing style or if questions on the writing process arise which are not addressed in the syllabus. Some of the books on the subject of writing well and on writing a research paper are:

<i>A Guide to Writing Research Papers</i>	LB 2369 .B36
<i>The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers</i>	Ref. LB 2369 .G53 1995
<i>New Oxford Guide to Writing</i>	PE 1408 .K2728 1988
<i>Rinehart Handbook for Writers</i>	PE 1408 .C36 1988
<i>Writing Smart: Your Guide to Great Writing</i>	PE 1478 .L38 1994
<i>Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide</i>	LB 2369 .L4
<i>Writing Research Papers: A Student Guide for Use with <u>Opposing Viewpoints</u></i>	LB 2369 .H32 1998
<i>Writing Well</i>	PE 1408 .H312 1988

Internet sites that can be consulted for help with writing are provided at the LMC Library website located at <http://www.losmedanos.net/library.htm>. Click on "e-Reference Net", then select "Writing and Style Guides".

Preparing a List of Works Cited

Sources that have contributed information to your research paper are to be listed at the end of the paper. This List of Works Cited is also known as a Bibliography. It is used to document the ideas and information given in your research paper and to give credit to those whose ideas or facts you are using in your paper. The variety of sources you used to gather information and ideas is indicated by the list. And, it provides the reader of your paper with leads to further writings on your research topic.

Books at the library to help you compile a List of Works Cited in MLA style include:

<i>The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers</i>	LB 2369 .G53
<i>The MLA Style Manual</i>	Ref. PN 147 .A28

You can pick up a library guide, *Preparing a List of Works Cited*, from the handout stand on Level 3. It can also be accessed over the Internet from the LMC Library Web page at <http://www.losmedanos.net/library.htm>. Click on Library Handouts, then select the "List of Works Cited" Guide. You can get additional help via the LMC Library Web page by clicking on "e-Reference Net", then select "Writing and Style Guides".