



Cornell University
Albert R. Mann Library

Library Research Guide
COMM 201

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Research Strategies

- Choose topic and discuss with instructor (e.g. illegal immigration)
- Narrow down your topic and determine aspect from which the topic is to be researched
 - topic: effect of increased border security with Mexico in stopping illegal immigration
- Break topic into concepts and think of related terms
- Think about what kind of material you need
 - Scholarly peer-reviewed articles or popular news?
 - Statistics? Legal and regulatory information?
 - Popular perceptions or opinion surveys? Pro/con vs. single point of view?
 - History and background?

The Web and Library Databases

- Google and other web resources can be good for locating government, association, and other freely available information; definitions and initial topic exploration; verifying citations, etc.
- But evaluate! For tips, see the library's Evaluating Web Resources Guide at http://www.library.cornell.edu/t/help/res_strategy/evaluating/evaluate.html.
- **Library Gateway:** <http://library.cornell.edu>
 - Portal to all of Cornell University Library's resources (on-campus or off-campus w/NetID); access to research tools and resources (such as Find it! (use this when you want to find articles in a subject area whether or not Cornell owns them), the Library Catalog and Find E-journals)

Quick Search for Articles (Find it! Articles)

- **Quick Search**
 - For a simple one or two word search for general articles, books, images (scholarly and non-scholarly)
 - View the abstracts or use Get it! Cornell to find the full text of articles
 - Click the checkboxes beside the results on each page to email, export or print them

In-Depth Search for Articles (Find it! Databases)

- **Choose database(s) to search**
 - "Select a Subject Area to Search" >Choose a subject category (e.g. Government Law and Public Policy) and search subject-specific databases. Search within databases that give you good results.
 - In Quick Search select databases and look for a database title (e.g. Proquest Research Library) or broad subject area (e.g. Agriculture)

- To choose databases from several areas use the “A-Z List of Databases”
- **Other ways to locate databases for your topic**
 - Ask a Librarian
 - **Subject Guides:** <http://www.library.cornell.edu/services/guides.html>
 - Also see Intro to Policy Analysis guide at <http://wiki.library.cornell.edu/wiki/x/z9s>

Finding Scholarly and Popular News Articles

- **Look at a general database**
 - **Lexis Nexis Academic:** (newspapers, magazines; see Lexis Nexis guide)
 - Easy Search: "illegal immigration"
 - Power or News Search for more precise results (choose US Newspapers)
 - **Proquest Research Library** (general social sciences, sciences, and humanities database, both scholarly and non-scholarly)
 - Illegal immigra* AND border AND Mexic*
 - Look at subject headings at the top
 - Immigration policy AND Aliens as Subjects and Mexic* in Citation and Abstract; Limit to Newspapers for last 12 months
- **Look at database in the subject area** (e.g. Government, Law and Public Policy)
 - **PAIS International** (public policy database):
 - Illegal immigra* AND border
 - Look for descriptors or subject headings in record and use these to search more precisely

How to get the full-text article if it's not in the database?

- Choose **Get it! Cornell** or **Search Cornell Library Catalog** links. These should automatically connect you to the article but it may take a few clicks.
- Or go to the **Library Catalog's Basic Search** and search by **Journal Title** or **Journal Title Abbreviation**

Finding Statistical Information

- **Lexis Nexis Statistical** (see Lexis Nexis guide)
 - Aliens AND immigration; Limit to US totals
- **Others:**
 - **FactSearch:** illegal immigra? AND border; Subject: Illegal Aliens-United States
 - In Find it! see **Statistical Information** link
 - Government agencies, statistical almanacs and handbooks

Finding Information on Regulatory and Legal Issues

- **legal: Lexis Nexis Congressional:**
 - **Search Legislative Histories, Bills and Laws** using bill tracking for illegal immigration from 109th Congress
 - **H.R. 4437**
- **regulatory: Lexis Nexis Congressional: Regulations** (search Code of Federal Regulations)

Finding Opinion and Pro/Con Arguments

- **Opinion polls:**
 - **Lexis Nexis Academic:** News>Roper Center for Public Opinion Research
 - **Public Agenda**
- **Pro/Con**
 - Do a **Title** search in the catalog for series like *Taking sides* or *Opposing viewpoints*;
 - In *CQ researcher* (part of CQ Electronic Library) look at pros/cons section of reports
 - Wikipedia's discussion page can give a sense of current arguments

Finding history and background information

- **Books, reference sources, and other supporting material in Catalog**
 - **Basic Search:** when you know what you are looking for
 - Ex. Title search for *Vital Speeches* (print and electronic access)
 - Red networked resource box means it's online; enter database to search for material
 - **Guided Keyword:** when you are exploring a subject and want to find what we have at Cornell
 - illegal immigra? (immigra? gets immigrant, immigrants, immigration) AND border
 - Find possible titles and look at **Subject Headings** under **Long View**
 - **Subject Headings:** Illegal aliens--United States, Border patrols--United States, War on Terrorism, 2001-, United States—Emigration and immigration-Government policy.

IV. Citing Your Sources

- Citation tools (MLA and APA citation style quickguides; EndNote and Refworks citation management programs): <http://www.library.cornell.edu/services/citing.html>
- The College of Arts & Sciences tutorial on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism <http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm>