

# Glendale College Library Information Competency Workshops

## Searching Online Catalogs—Outline

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### Core Competencies:

- Develop and implement an effective search strategy appropriate for an information need by:
    - Differentiating various types of information sources (specialized encyclopedias, article databases, library catalogs, search engines, etc.) and the purpose of each.
    - Identifying search terms appropriate to the research tool and the topic.
    - Transferring previously learned research skills to new projects.
  - Locate and retrieve information by:
    - Using the library's print and online resources effectively.
    - Interpreting citations accurately.
    - Recognizing key elements of call numbers and URLs, and using them to locate library materials and Web sites.
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### **Preparation:**

- Pass out copies of the two exercises to students.
- Open up **Net Support** if you plan to use it. [Our control software can be used to great advantage in this workshop, allowing students to demonstrate their searches while projecting them on the screen. Alternatively, you can have students use the Gyro Remote and remote keyboard to demo their searches, or even have students step up to the instructor's computer to demo their searches. See the **Instructor Info** section of your workshop binder for a review of how to use the Gyro Remote and the Net Support classroom control software.]

### **Workshop Outline:**

1. Briefly define (or ask students to help you define) "online library catalog".
  - ✓ An index to contents of a specific library
  - ✓ Mostly books
  - ✓ Some electronic
  - ✓ Give an idea of how different they can be: Library of Congress has over 130,000,000 volumes [counting books (29 million), recordings, photographs, maps and manuscripts]; GCC Library has just over 130,498 volumes (if you count electronic books).

**(5 minutes)**
2. Exercise I. Show students where to find our catalog, then allow them to explore the catalog on their own with Exercise I. Move around the room to consult with students who might need a jump start.

**(10-15 minutes)**
3. Discussion of Exercise I. Ask students to explain how they did each of the three searches. Allow several of them to demonstrate a search (this is where the classroom control software comes in). Let them drive the discussion, BUT if they don't come up with the important points, make sure they get covered. For instance:
  - #1 Discuss the difference results you get with different terminology and how both terms can be useful. Cover the differing results between **subject** searches and **keyword** searches
  - #2 Discuss the use of specific terms (i.e. history, criticism, art, literature) that when added to a search narrow the focus to more relevant results. Whether or not one uses the advanced or basic search seems to be more of a moot point.
  - #3 is your basic title search. Discuss library location, call numbers

Also try to mention electronic books, search tips, Reserve search, etc. **(15 minutes)**

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4. Exercise II. This exercise gives students time to do the searches they did in the GCC catalog in other library catalogs, and compare the search process and results. Divide the students into three groups; one for each of the library catalogs in Exercise II. Show students where to find the links to area libraries from the GCC Library home page: under Research, it is the **Find Books in Other Libraries** link. From there they can select any of the libraries for this workshop. Invite students to try all the catalogs if they have time after searching the one assigned. Also, make these points:
  - ✓ GCC is a great library, but we don't have everything; sometimes you'll have to go to another library. Bigger institutions (e.g. LAPL, CSULA) have bigger collections, more books. Public libraries have different collection strengths than academic libraries
  - ✓ GCC students have borrowing privileges at CSULA and PCC.
  - ✓ Anyone can use the LAPL—it's FREE!  
**(13 min.)**
  
5. Discussion of Exercise II. Again, let students drive the discussion. Have them demonstrate their searches. Make sure they come up with the following:
  - ✓ All online catalogs have the same basic functions
  - ✓ CSULA and LAPL have much bigger collections than we do
  - ✓ PCC's catalog uses the same software as GCC's **(13 min.)**