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Information is Power : The Pace University Library

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Information is Power: The Pace University Library

Introduction

At some point in your time at Pace you may be asked to complete a research paper, a debate, a speech, or a group project which will require you to do research. The mission of the Pace University Library is to provide you with the ability to find, access, and evaluate the information resources you'll need, whether those items are books, articles, websites, statistics, or some other form of information. Our goal is not only to help you complete your course assignments, but to help you develop information-seeking skills which you will be able to use after you graduate from Pace.

The skills you develop in the library may help you select a graduate school, a health plan at your new job, or a candidate in an upcoming election. Whether you are seeking information for personal reasons or for a class assignment, you will need to know what resources are available to assist you in locating information, how to access or obtain a piece of information once you know it exists, and how to evaluate whether the information you have located is valuable to you.

The Pace University Library

The Pace University Library is in fact four libraries. The Henry Birnbaum Library is located at Pace University's downtown campus in New York City. The Edward and Doris Mortola Library is located on the Pleasantville campus. Its satellite operation, the Graduate Center Library is located on the fourth floor of the Evelyn and Joseph I. Lubin Graduate Center at One Martine Avenue in White Plains. The Pace Law Library is located on Pace's North Broadway campus, also in White Plains.

 "The Pace University Library" is used to promote the concept of a single library, in which the individual Pace libraries see themselves as integral parts of a larger whole. While the individual libraries maintain separate collections built to support the academic programs on their respective campuses, the resources in one Pace location are available to students at the other locations as well. Using your library barcode in the online library catalog, you can request that library materials, books and articles, be transferred between campuses. This is called "intracampus loan" and normally takes a matter of days. If you are feeling adventurous, you can go to any one of the Pace libraries, show your Pace University I.D. and borrow materials in person. With the combined book collections of the individual libraries, you have access to almost one million volumes.

Computers in Libraries

When you first walk in to any one of the Pace libraries, you can't go very far before you see computer workstations. The amount of information stored in electronic formats has made it necessary for libraries to "get wired." This does not mean that the computers are the end-all and be-all of the research process! The Pace University Library continues to build strong Reference book collections and circulating collections so that you have access to not only the best electronic resources, but the best print resources as well.

Computers have literally and figuratively opened up a world of information to you. Keep in mind, though, that while they often provide more efficient ways for you to access information, technology has not intrinsically changed what you need. Computers facilitate the research process, but the questions you have to ask yourself when approaching library research remain fundamentally the same: "What is my topic? What kind of information do I need? How much time

do I have to get my information? Where should I go to find it? Once I find some information, how do I know if it is good?"

Resources and Services

There are a number of resources and services available to you in the Pace University Library. Which resources you use will depend on many things including the type of information you are seeking, the format of the information you need, and how soon you need the information. In most cases you will use a combination of resources and services.

The Pace Library Catalog

The Pace Library Catalog is the online catalog for the Pace University Library system. The Pace Library Catalog is available at computer workstations in any of the Pace Libraries, and via the Library home page at http://library.pace.edu. With the online Pace Library Catalog you can search for items held in all the Pace libraries simultaneously.

The Pace Library Catalog consists of bibliographic records for books and journals held in and available from the Pace Library system. The bibliographic record provides specific information about each item, such as when and where it was published. For books, the record will tell you in which Pace library the item is located, where on the shelf you can find it, and if it is checked out. Books located in the Stacks, on the second floor of the Mortola and Birnbaum libraries, can be checked out, while books available for in-library use only are shelved in Reference or maintained on Reserve. For journals the record will tell you if the issue you need is in current periodicals, on microfilm, bound, or available in full text from one of the databases.

The Pace Library Catalog can be searched in a variety of ways including searches by author, title, keyword and subject heading. Library users also have access to a number of special features in the Pace Library Catalog. Each user can view his/her own circulation record, renew items online, place holds and intracampus loan requests, and locate reserve materials by either professor or course name.

You are welcome to recommend titles for purchase by the library. Suggestions may be submitted in writing to the Collection Development Librarian, or by filling out the online form in the library catalog. Pace University librarians are continuously working to keep the collection up-to-date and responsive to your needs.

Databases

In addition to providing you with access to the books you need, the library also provides you with access to magazine and journal articles. Databases, sometimes referred to as "electronic periodical indexes," provide citations and abstracts to magazine and journal articles, and in some cases the full-text of articles. When searching the databases, keep in mind that they include citations to articles published in journals to which the Pace University Library may not have access. To determine if Pace has a particular journal article, either in print or in full-text, search the Pace Library Catalog for the journal or magazine title. The Library Catalog will tell you if the journal is available, and which dates the library may have in current periodicals, microfilm, bound or full-text from a database.

In addition to citations, abstracts and full text article databases, the Library has many other electronic resources that contain statistics, reports, reviews and more. The scope of the

databases offered by the Library is vast. The subject areas include, but are not limited to, Business, Computers, Education, Health and Nursing, History, Literature, Science and the Social Sciences. There are almost 100 sources listed in the databases list on the Pace Library home page. As a Pace student, you can access these resources at designated workstations in any of the Pace Libraries. A number of the resources offered are also accessible from the Pace Computer Resource Centers, from your dorm room and from your computer at home through remote access.

Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery

Even with intracampus loan and access to full-text databases, you may find that you are in need of books and articles that are not available through the Pace Library system or via databases at the library workstations. The Pace Library depends on a network of area libraries, as well as others throughout the country, to help us get these resources for you. This is called "interlibrary loan." All you have to do is fill out an interlibrary loan request form (found in the Pace Library Catalog) and library staff will get the requested books or articles for you from another library or source. Remember to start your research early in order to give yourself (and library staff!) enough time to get materials for you that are not in the Pace collection. While some articles are retrievable within twenty-four hours, other materials may realistically take ten to fourteen days to arrive.

Interlibrary Loan represents just one form of document delivery, the process of obtaining materials that are not held in the Library's collection. The library also uses what are called "commercial document suppliers" to get copies of magazine and journal articles for you. These companies fax or mail articles to the library for a fee. In the past students were often discouraged by the ten to fourteen day delay in getting an article from another library. Now the library can often obtain articles in one to seven days.

Access to Other Libraries

In addition to the services outlined above, you can get access to specific materials and collections of many New York City area libraries by requesting a METRO card at the Information desk in the library. The college and university libraries in Westchester County and selective libraries in New York City, all part of a consortium known as WALDO, are also open to Pace students. You may be asked to present your ID. This on-site privilege is restricted to use of materials in those libraries, and does not extend to borrowing of materials. Restrictions may also apply to use of computers and electronic resources at the other libraries.

Pace University students at the Pleasantville and White Plains campuses are eligible for borrowing privileges at all of the public libraries in the Westchester Library System. Students in New York City can obtain a New York Public Library card for access to the research and branch libraries of the New York Public Library System.

The Internet

No discussion of libraries today would be complete without mention of the Internet. In simple terms, the Internet is a worldwide network of computers able to share files and data. The Pace University Library uses the Internet as a means to access a number of library resources, and to make a variety of library services available to remote users. The library home page (http://library.pace.edu) serves as a gateway to library information and resources for you when you have access to a computer connected to the Internet. This includes computers in the libraries, in the Computer Resource Centers, in dorm rooms, and remote computers connected to the Internet through a Pace University dial-up account, or through a private Internet Service Provider. On the

library home page you can check the library hours, send e-mail to a librarian, or find online help. As previously mentioned, the Pace Library Catalog is available from the library home page, as are many periodical indexes and databases. When connecting to the Internet through an Internet Service Provider other than Pace, you must enter your Pace Library barcode, located on the back of your student I.D., in order to access many of these databases. Instructions for remote access are available on the Library home page.

In addition to library information, the library home page provides access to Internet Resources organized by subject category. These Internet sites have been recommended by faculty, staff and students, have been evaluated and annotated by a librarian, and serve as starting points when searching the Internet. Some of the subject areas for which Internet sites have been provided are business, career, education, environmental studies, nursing, literature, government resources, news and transitional advising.

Remember that when you perform research, it is important to evaluate the source of the information. The Internet in particular has become a free publishing house for anyone who would like to create a site on a particular topic, issue, person or product – you name it and there is probably a home page dedicated to it. Evaluation of resources needs to take into account many elements, including who published the information, their purpose, and the quality, accuracy and currency of the information on the page. To learn more about evaluating Internet resources, you can refer to the library's Instructional Services web page at http://library.pace.edu/instruct. There you will find links to checklists and guides for evaluating Internet resources.

Note that you may access the Internet from the computers in any of the Pace libraries, but you must restrict your use according to the Policy Statement posted on each computer. Priority use of the computers is for users conducting library research in support of Pace University's academic curriculum.

Getting Help

So how do you begin to find the information you need? Ask a librarian! Each of the Pace University library locations has an Information desk - a.k.a. the Reference desk - at which librarians are available to assist you with your research strategies.

The reference librarians can help you identify appropriate library resources, use those resources most efficiently, and locate information and materials in the library. The librarians can help you choose an appropriate database for a question (e.g.- I am looking for financial information on a company, which database should I use?), and help you use the database and its search screen (e.g.-How do I find an article written by a specific author in this database?). The reference librarians are happy to assist you in anything from a quick factual question to in-depth research. If you find you need in-depth research assistance for an ongoing project or term paper or you are having trouble finding information, you can make an appointment with a librarian for research consultation.

The librarians have also developed a number of orientations, tours, workshops and instruction sessions covering how to use the library and its resources. You will most likely participate in at least one of these during your time at Pace. Pace librarians have also produced a number of handouts to assist you in your research and in using a number of the library's databases. These are available in the Reference areas, and many are available in the "Research Assistance" section of the library home page.

Please remember that the librarians at Pace are here to assist you in completing your course assignment, and in developing the search strategies and skills that will be beneficial to you after you graduate. Take advantage of the help and services available to you in the library, and most importantly, ask for help when you need it – that's what we are here for!

Discussion Questions
1. What kind of information might you need to bring with you when you come into the library to develop a research strategy or begin a project?
2. Look at the library home page (http://library.pace.edu) and read the section descriptions. Which area might be a good place to start your research, and why?
3. A few years ago, a local library organization held a conference titled "Reference Librarians, Do They Still Need Us?" What do you think? Take a look at the resources available to you on the library home page. Are Reference librarians still necessary? Why? Or, Why Not?

Vocabulary
Abstract (Verb) – To provide a summary of an article or a book, combined with the bibliographic citation to that work.

Annotation - A descriptive and *critical* summary that evaluates the relevancy of an item.

Bibliographic record - A collection of data about a specific library item arranged in fields. The data for each article in a CD-ROM or online database makes up a bibliographic record. The complete information for each item in the Pace Library Catalog is also a bibliographic record.

Circulating items - Items a current Pace student, faculty or staff can checkout of the library.

Circulation record – A user's record in the Pace Library Catalog system which contains information such as which items the user has checked out, their status, any fines the user owes.

Citation - Information which fully identifies a publication; a complete citation usually includes author, title, name of journal (if the citation is to an article) or publisher (if to a book), and date. Often pages, volumes and other information will be included in a citation.

Databases – Sometimes used interchangeably with Electronic Periodical Indexes. Usually indexes provide only citations to materials, while databases may contain the full text of articles.

Dial-up account – Allows the user to use a modem to access the Pace mainframe and World Wide Web from home or office, 24-hours a day. Pace identification required.

Full Text – Containing all of the words of a document, often in a different form from the original. full text articles in electronic or on-line databases may or may not include graphics.

Holds - A library user may place a hold on a book charged out to another person; this ensures that the person placing the hold will be next in line to receive the book when the book is returned.

Internet Service Provider – A company which provides a "gateway" to the Internet. There are many ISP's offering a range of services and prices. The user usually pays a monthly fee and the cost of the phone call. ISP's can be local, regional or national**.**

Index (Verb) – To systematically organize and categorize information about documents to help users identify and access those documents.

Intracampus loan – The lending and borrowing of items between Pace campus libraries.

Interlibrary Loan - Interlibrary lending and borrowing services provide access to materials – both books and journal articles - that cannot be found in the Pace Library system but are held by another library. To borrow such materials, check with a reference librarian.

METRO Card – A signed card, obtained at the Information desk in your library, that signifies that a librarian has obtained approval for your use of specific materials, on a given date, at the designated library. You must have a METRO card to gain access to many of the libraries in New York City.

Network – A group of two or more computer systems physically connected that are capable of sharing data and information.

On-line – Connected to or served by a computer or telecommunications system.

Pace Network – The computer network used at Pace University.

Periodicals - Publications which are issued at least twice a year, including journals, magazines and newspapers.

Periodical Index – A finding tool, often arranged by subject and author, used to identify articles.

Reference – Service provided to help library users identify and locate materials for their assignments or research.

Remote Access - The ability to access restricted library resources, such as periodical databases, from a computer connected to the Internet through an Internet Service Provider other than Pace. See the Remote Access instructions off the Library home page at http://library.pace.edu/remote

Renew - An extension of the loan period for library materials a user has checked out. Renewals may be handled in person at the circulation desk, by phone, or online via the Pace Library Catalog.

Reserve materials - Specific books, periodical articles and other materials which faculty members have indicated students must read for a particular course. These materials are kept together at the Circulation Desk and circulate for a short period of time only.

WALDO – Stands for Westchester Academic Libraries Directors Organization, but includes selective affiliated libraries outside of Westchester County as well.