



NATIONAL AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

ONLINE LIBRARY

## **Conducting A Literature Review**

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## Technical Info: Accessing the library, passwords, etc.

CCLP Library Resources can be found here:

<https://national.libguides.com/edd>

To log into the NAU Online Library, you will use your student portal user ID and password.

\*\*\*THIS IS DIFFERENT THAN YOUR CANVAS LOGIN\*\*\*

Example format: `firstname.lastname@national.edu`

If you don't remember your student portal credentials, [reset them here](#) (look for the "Forgot your password link"). If you are still having problems, contact <https://support.national.edu/support/home>, 1-800-548-0602.

## Getting Started: Setting up a search strategy

Your literature review should be comprehensive in scope – you want to give your readers an understanding of the evolution of your topic as well as an overview of the current scholarly literature as it relates to your topic. Your literature review will be broader in scope than your actual research question – this will help you understand the issues contributing/surrounding your (more focused) research question.

### *Example*

Let's say you've decided upon the following research question:

*How have US community colleges used succession planning strategies to cultivate leaders from within and which strategies are most effective?*

Before you start searching for information on your topic, you want to think about the concepts and ideas that are contained within your research question as well as those that are broadly related. Your literature review needs to demonstrate an understanding of all facets of your topic.

Someone researching our example might want to examine the following topics in support of a literature review (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Leadership development theory
- Succession planning theory
- Community college leadership roles
- Community college leadership history/current state of affairs
- Succession planning strategies
- Succession planning assessment

In addition to identifying the major facets broadly related to your research topic, you need to look closely at your research question and brainstorm keywords to search in the library.

## Getting Started: Setting up a search strategy (cont.)

If we look at our example question, we can break it down into potential keywords that we might use to search the library databases. Remember – the library databases don't work well when you type questions or long strings of words into them like you might do with Google. We need to search for only the most critical terms of our research question.

*How have US community colleges used succession planning strategies to cultivate leaders from within and which strategies are most effective?*

US	community colleges	succession planning	leaders	effective
United States	junior college	leadership development	community college presidents	rates of advancement
America	two-year college	succession leadership	administrators	success

The table above shows you just some of the synonyms that might be helpful to search in the library's databases as keywords. It is important to remember that one person might write about a topic using one term (like "community college" but another author might write about the same topic using "two-year college." To be thorough, you need to be exhaustive with your searches and synonyms. After an initial search you might become confident that the literature is using one term over another – but start out by being thorough.

Once you have thought about keywords and synonyms, it's time to start searching in the library.

## Using the Library Databases

CCLP Library Resources can be found here:

<https://national.libguides.com/edd/articles>

To be a thorough researcher, you will need to use multiple library databases and outside tools. The CCLP Library page contains a list of our education-related databases. We have tools you can use to search the databases simultaneously. If you search the databases simultaneously, you can lose some unique features of those individual databases. Focusing on one database at a time can give you greater control over your searches.

*Tip: Keep a list of which databases you search and what search terms you use so that you don't have to keep reinventing the wheel each time you go into the library to work on your literature review.*

Don't forget the broader concepts related to your topic when it comes time to searching. If we think about our simple research question about succession planning, for instance, we are looking at that from an education perspective. But succession planning started out as a business concept so searching the business databases for our literature review would also be necessary. [You can view a comprehensive list of all databases by subject here.](#)

## Using the Library Databases (cont.)

*Education-focused databases to begin with:*

ERIC

ProQuest Education Journals

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses

*Multidisciplinary databases that include education-related materials:*

ProQuest Central

Academic Search Premier

Business databases like ABI/Inform and Business Source Premier can also contain information relevant to many education-related research topics.

Spend some time looking closely at the database interfaces. They include options for finding peer-reviewed articles, limiting by dates, and more. Each database is different and may have different limiters, depending on its content.

"succession planning" AND "community college"

Full text Peer reviewed

Modify search Recent searches Save search/alert

Related searches Succession planning Succession planning AND Leadership Succession planning AND Chief executive officers View all >

1,895 Results Search within Cite Email Print More

Relevance Sort Select 1-20 0 Selected items Brief view Detailed view

Narrow results

Full text

Peer reviewed

Source type

- Dissertations & Theses (1,132)
- Newspapers (375)
- Trade Journals (165)
- Scholarly Journals (71)
- Wire Feeds (66)
- More options...

Publication date

1976 - 2016 (decades)

Enter a date range Update

1 An examination of Maryland community college trustees' intentions to promote succession planning  
Snowden, Daphne Renee. Morgan State University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2012. 3516888.  
...examine Maryland community college trustees ...to promote succession planning. This study focused on community college trustees ...to promote succession planning in Maryland  
Cited by (1) References (146)  
Abstract/Details Preview - PDF (653 KB) Full text - PDF (6 MB) Order a copy

2 Community college succession planning: Preparing the next generation of women for leadership roles  
Luzebetak, Angela Kaysen. National-Louis University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2010. 3403861.  
...roles through succession planning. According ...of future community college leaders is ...the lack of succession planning to fill upcoming  
Cited by (15) References (75)  
Abstract/Details Preview - PDF (979 KB) Full text - PDF (2 MB) Order a copy

3 Community college leadership crisis: Identifying and preparing future leaders through succession planning in selected North Carolina community colleges  
Smith, Evangeline Ferguson. Capella University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2011. 3487235.  
...recommendations to improve the community college purpose and the role of ...not specifically through succession planning for leadership positions ...leaders understood what succession planning and succession leadership  
Cited by (4) References (119)  
Abstract/Details Preview - PDF (2 MB) Full text - PDF (3 MB) Order a copy

4 A Phenomenological Study of the Knowledge Transfer and Succession Planning Experiences of Senior Leaders Retired from the California Community College System  
Coleman, Jennifer L. L. Drexel University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2013. 3587836.

**Using the Library Databases (cont.)**

ProQuest

Basic Search **Advanced Search** Publications Browse Databases (5)

Advanced Search Thesaurus Field codes Search tips

"succession planning" or "leadership development" Anywhere

AND "community colleges" OR "junior college" in Anywhere

AND presidents OR administrators in Anywhere

+ Add a row - Remove a row

Limit to: Full text Peer reviewed

Publication date: All dates

Search

The advanced search options in our databases give you more flexibility for creating complex searches or searching different parts of the database. For instance, this database defaults to searching 'Anywhere' in the text of an article. You can change that drop down to search within article titles, or you can search for an individual author, or search within an abstract.

As you can see in the above example, I combined some of my example's keywords using the words "AND" and "OR." These are called boolean operators. Boolean operators ("and," "or," and "not") are the tools we use to combine keywords in a database. [This handout](#) gives you more information about boolean operators and how to use them effectively.

Take advantage of the databases' email and save functions – if you find an article that is relevant, email it to yourself immediately or save it to your desk top. Our databases also contain tools that you can use to [create individual accounts that can save your searches and files for you](#). Zotero or other citation management tools can also help you save information you find.

## Finding Additional References: Where to look

When you find an article that is interesting, make note of any vocabulary it is using that might be related to your search. Look in the text of the article but also look at the details about the article within the database.

Databases assign what is called a subject term to each article included within the database. The subject terms and additional linked terms work like hashtags – if you click on a subject term in a database, you'll be taken to every article that has been assigned that same subject term. This can help you discover similar articles. These terms can also be helpful if you're having trouble brainstorming alternative keywords to search.



Details	
Subject	<a href="#">Community college education</a> ; <a href="#">Higher Education Administration</a> ; <a href="#">Educational leadership</a>
Classification	<a href="#">0275: Community college education</a> <a href="#">0446: Higher Education Administration</a> <a href="#">0449: Educational leadership</a>
Identifier / keyword	<a href="#">Education</a> , <a href="#">Community college</a> , <a href="#">Leadership</a> , <a href="#">Leadership development</a> , <a href="#">Succession planning</a> , <a href="#">Trustees</a> , <a href="#">Maryland</a>
Title	An examination of Maryland community college trustees' intentions to promote succession planning
Author	<a href="#">Snowden, Daphne Renee</a>

Always, always, always examine the reference lists of articles and books that you want to use in your literature review. The reference lists can point you to articles and books that can be highly relevant to your own search.

## Locating Specific Types of Studies

If you conduct a search in the library databases and get an overwhelming number of results, or you want to focus on a particular research methodology, you can narrow your search by adding additional terms.

### *Qualitative Research Studies*

Terms that you can use to help narrow your research down to a qualitative method include:

Qualitative research

Qualitative study

“case study”

“focus group”

(or, search for a specific qualitative methodology you are interested in...like ‘interview’ or ‘ethnography’)

### *Quantitative Research Studies*

Terms that you can use to help narrow your research down to a quantitative method include:

Quantitative research

Statistical

Correlation

T-Test

Chi Squared test

(or, search for a specific quantitative methodology you are interested in)

## Locating Tests and Instruments

In our ProQuest databases, you can add the following subject term to a search:

SU.EXACT("Educational tests & measurements")

HOWEVER – this subject term isn't always added to a record so isn't a comprehensive way to search.

In our ERIC database, you can add the following subject term:

SU "Measurement Instruments"

If those subject terms are too specific (and you aren't finding results), try searching for the following keywords:

Assessment, instrument, measurement, scaling, testing.

### Other resources to use to find tests and instruments:

[Helen Hough's Test & Measures website](#)

[ETS Testing database](#)

**Mental Measures Yearbook**

**Google (if you know the specific test name)**

Don't forget – if you find a test, you need to get permission to use it from the creator or publisher (unless permission is expressly given up-front).

## Citation Analysis

When you analyze the citation of an article, you look at how often that item has been cited by others. Looking at the number of times an article has been cited by others can help you begin to gauge the importance of what you are looking at, the impact it has had on the discipline.

There are a number of ways to get information about how often an article has been cited. The library's databases can usually give you some initial information about how often an article has been cited.

If you look below you can see that the database shows that the first article has been cited by 310 while the second has been cited by 2.

1 **Scholars Before Researchers: On the Centrality of the Dissertation Literature Review in Research Preparation** Preview  
Boote, David N; Beile, Penny. *Educational Researcher* 34.6 (Aug/Sep 2005): 3-15.  
...dissertation literature review. This article  
...quality of dissertation literature  
...that examined dissertations at three universities

Images (1)

**Cited by (310)** References (70)  
Abstract/Details Full text Full text - PDF

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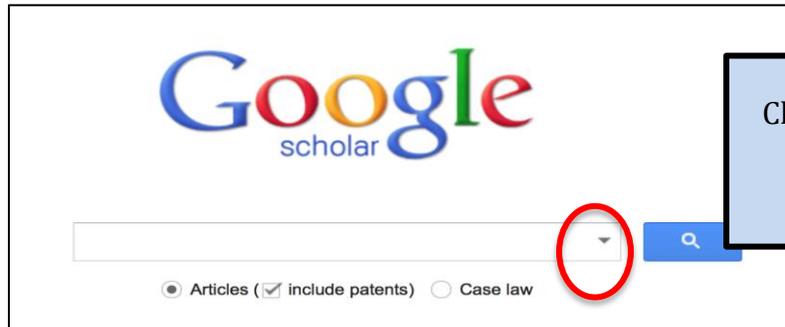
2 **Approximating the Practice of Writing the Dissertation Literature Review** Preview  
Kucan, Linda. *Literacy Research and Instruction* 50.3 (2011): 229-240.  
...dissertation literature review as comprehensive  
...Perspectives on the Dissertation  
...publish their dissertations before they

**Cited by (2)** References (40)  
Abstract/Details Full text Full text - PDF

The library's databases can be a good place to start to see how many times an article has been cited. You should also look at Google Scholar (<https://scholar.google.com/>) to see how many times an item has been cited as it will report more information than the databases. Keep in mind that very recent publications will have been cited less times.

## Citation Analysis (cont.)

If you want to use Google Scholar to see how many times an article has been cited, you can do a search for the title in the search box or you can use the advanced search option to search using additional criteria:



Click the arrow to access the advanced search option.

Then enter your search criteria.

Google Scholar shows 586 citations for the article – more than the library database showed us.

## Other Resources to Consult: Books and Google Scholar

### **Books**

To find books related to your topic, you can [use WorldCat \(aka World Catalog\)](#). WorldCat searches the holdings of libraries across the world so that you can see what books have been published on your topic. The same search strategies you use to find articles can be used to locate books. Within WorldCat, you can narrow your search down to only books in your area. If there is a book you'd like that's not available near you, [submit an interlibrary loan request](#).

We also have [several electronic book databases that you can search](#) – just remember that their holdings are not as encompassing as WorldCat. If you are looking for titles you can view immediately, though, they are great.

### **Google Scholar**

Google Scholar is another option you can use to locate scholarly publications on your topic. You can set NAU or your home library to work in conjunction with Google Scholar so that you can be connected to the full text of an article from Google if the library subscribes to it. To set up your library in Google Scholar, go to the “Settings” option at the top of the main <https://scholar.google.com> page. Choose “Library Links” on the left side of the settings page and choose your library affiliations ([this handout provides a visual](#)). Remember that you can request items that you find in Google Scholar that aren't available in our collections via Interlibrary Loan.

## Qualitative & Quantitative Research eBooks

Hogan, J., Dolan, P., & Donnelly, P. (Eds.). (2011). *Approaches to qualitative research : Theory and its practical application - a guide for dissertation students*. Cork, IRL: Oak Tree Press. Retrieved from <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/national/detail.action?docID=10813694&p00=qualitative+research>

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2009). *Craft of research* (3rd Edition). Chicago, IL, USA: University of Chicago Press. Retrieved from <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/national/detail.action?docID=10288700>

Chen, H. X. (2012). *Approaches to quantitative research : A guide for dissertation students*. Cork, IRL: Oak Tree Press. Retrieved from <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/national/detail.action?docID=10810216&p00=quantitative+research>

## **Additional Tips**

### ***Individual Research Consultations***

You can get assistance with your literature review! If you need help brainstorming keywords, identifying relevant resources to consult, or other assistance with your research, contact the Graduate Support Librarian to set up an individual research consultation via ZOOM:

Askalibrarian: [askalibrarian@national.libanswers.com](mailto:askalibrarian@national.libanswers.com)

### ***Interlibrary Loan***

ILL services are available should you need access to an article or book that is unavailable via the NAU Online Library.

For books:

<http://library.national.edu/find-books/interlibrary-loan-books/>

For articles:

<http://library.national.edu/find-articles/interlibrary-loan/>

### ***Database Alerts***

Literature reviews and other long-term research projects that span a significant length of time mean that new research might be added to our databases while you are in the process of writing your review or working on your dissertation. Our major database vendors, Ebsco and ProQuest, both provide options for you to create individual accounts within their platforms so that you can save your searches, set up alerts to have new articles that meet your search criteria automatically emailed to you, and more. [This handout gives you an overview of how to set up accounts within each of those interfaces.](#)

## **Additional Tips (cont.)**

**Zotero**

When you are working with large amounts of articles and need to keep track of them in an organized way, citation management tools can help you do that. Zotero is an excellent (and free) citation management tool that can assist you with keeping track of your citations and organizing them in a manner that fits your project. [More information can be found here.](#)