

Your Literature Review Plan

As part of your pre-work for this session, you should have completed the **Literature Review Tutorial:**

Finding Resources for Your Literature Review:
Leaving No Stone Unturned

Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners

Top Three Reasons to Do Your Literature Review FIRST

1. Let your question emerge from your study of the literature.

You may have a good idea of what your question is; however, you will have a better idea once you have studied the literature. You may even make some surprising discoveries.

2. You will need evidence to support your assertions in Chapter 1.

The sections in Chapter 1, such as justification for your research and its significance, why the problem is important, and how your research contributes to the field of knowledge will all require evidence.

3. You will have to justify the methodology you are using in Chapter 3.

Part of providing the evidence as to why your methodology is appropriate for your research problem will come from reviewing methodologies used in past studies on your topic.

Five Research Techniques You Should Already Have

To review these techniques – See the Library's LibGuides page

- Keyword Searching (including Controlled Vocabulary and Searching by Author)
- Bibliographic Mining and Cited Reference Searching (including Google Scholar)
- Searching by Methodology
- Using Dissertations
- Finding Tests and Measures

1. Literature Search Process



2. Organizational Systems

RefWorks

Library Home → RefWorks

- Set up a RefWorks Account to store articles

Database Research Log

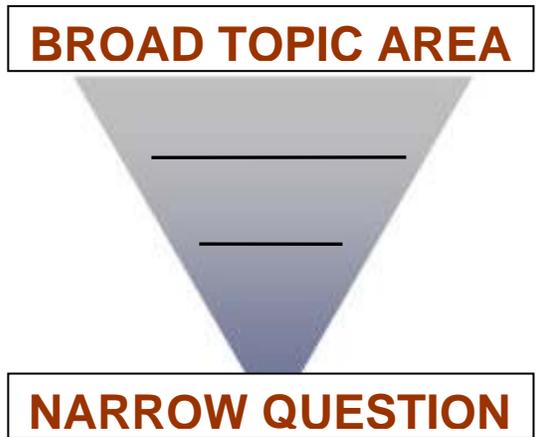
Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners

- Start keeping a careful **Search Log** of your literature exploration

3. Preliminary Literature Review Plan

Preliminary Research Idea:

Where does your current research question sit?



Preliminary Outline of Literature Review:

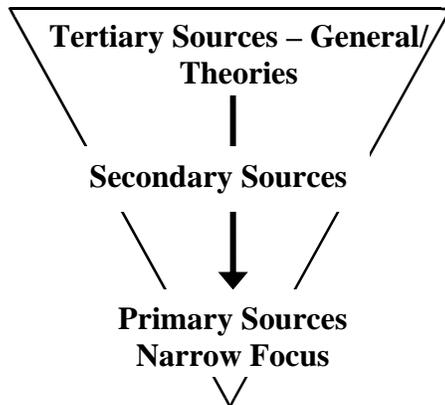
Think subsections and broader focus areas of your research idea

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

- Review the types of resources and their role in the dissertation lit. review:**

Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Resources

Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners → Finding Resources for Your Literature Review → Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Resources



Do you know how your field developed surrounding your research question?

If not, review tertiary and secondary sources. They will point you to important research articles.

A Comprehensive Literature Review includes searching for mostly primary resources in:

- Multiple Journal Databases
- Book Databases
- Dissertation Databases
- Sources outside the Library



Formulate a Search Strategy

Take one of your subsections from above:

Break your topic or subsections down into individual aspects or keywords:

Brainstorm additional synonyms and related keywords for each aspect:

- Read article abstracts for the keywords and discipline-specific jargon that authors and scholars are using in their publications.
- Continue adding words that come up frequently in your searching to your **Search Log**. Include the dates that you discovered and used these search terms.



The key is to conduct separate searches using as many alternative words as possible. This is one way to document and assure yourself you have conducted a thorough review of the literature.

- Check the **Thesaurus** or **Subject Terms** link in each database you are searching to find appropriate search terms. Add these, with dates, to your **Search Log**.

List Subjects and Descriptors you find in the database Thesaurus:

<u>Exact Phrase</u>	<u>Database</u>		
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Search for Articles

Create an initial list of databases that seem appropriate for your research topic:

Core Databases (in your field)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Databases in other/related subjects

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



For a refresher on conducting keyword searches in the article databases, review the [Keyword Searching for the Literature Review](#) tutorial.
Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners

Search for Dissertations

Find dissertations in the *Dissertations & Theses Full Text* database.

Using Dissertations as Resources:

Ch. 2 - The Literature Review and Reference List

Ch. 3 - Methodology

Ch. 5 - Considerations for Future Research

Organization - Find dissertations on your topic and review the headings they have chosen for different parts of their literature review.



To learn more about finding and using dissertations in your research, please review the [Finding and Using Dissertations in Research](#) tutorial.
Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners → Finding Resources for Your Literature Review → Search Beyond Journal Articles (tab)

Search for Books

On the Web

Websites that provide a good overview of all the books that may be available on a particular subject.

WorldCat - <http://worldcat.org>

Use WorldCat to find print books in local university and public libraries.

Google Books - <http://books.google.com>

Use Google Books to view a book's table of contents or retrieve a limited preview.

In Capella Library's E-book Databases

Available on the Library's Articles, Books, and More page, search by subject to find full-text books for online viewing:

NetLibrary

Ebrary

PsycBooks

Search for an Instrument

Capella Library has two instrument databases (available on the Library's **Articles, Books, and More** page) where you can find the titles, reviews, validity and reliability information, and publication information of published tests and surveys. (**Note:** you will NOT find a full-text copy of an instrument in these databases.)

Published Instruments

Mental Measurements Yearbook

Health & Psychosocial Instruments

Unpublished Instruments

If you cannot locate a published instrument, search **Dissertations and Theses Full Text** for your topic to see the types of instruments others have used.



*You can find full-text copies of instruments by searching the title of the instrument in **Dissertations and Theses Full Text**. If available, a copy of the instrument will be in the appendix of the dissertation.*

Other Search Techniques

Searching by methodology for articles and books on my topic:

Review the [Searching by Methodology](#) tutorial.

Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners → Finding Resources for Your Literature Review → Searching Techniques (tab)

Tracing key or seminal articles backwards and forwards in time:

Review the [Bibliographic Mining and Cited Reference Searching](#) tutorial.

Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners → Finding Resources for Your Literature Review → Searching Techniques (tab)

Review the [Google Scholar and the Capella Library](#) tutorial.

Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners

3. Analyze your Resources for Themes and People

Scholarly Research Log

Library Home → Guides and Tutorials → Resources for Doctoral Learners

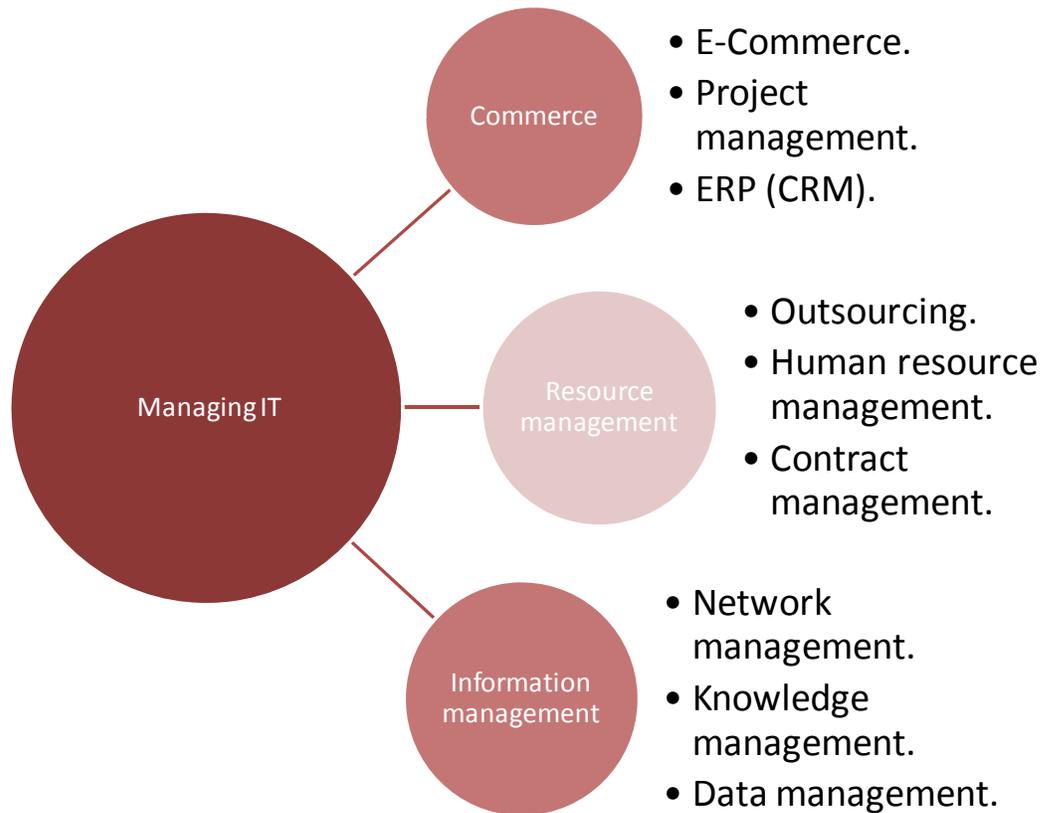
Use the Excel spreadsheet to record the theories, methods, findings, etc. of articles you have read. Sort the spreadsheet in several ways to find themes and authors.

RefWorks Search

Library Home → RefWorks → RefWorks Advanced Features

Once you have gathered many articles. Use RefWorks search feature as a tool for identifying recurring authors, themes, and publications.

Mapping the Literature



Comprehensive Exams

Many times you will use the literature review approach in answering your comprehensive exam questions. All of the research techniques covered in this session and your previous Library colloquium sessions will be helpful in searching for information for your exams.

As a reminder you are allowed to contact the Library during your exam to get help with keywords, databases, and search techniques and suggestions to find information on a particular topic.

Mastery Checklist –

Is your Literature Review comprehensive?

- Found all alternative terms
- Searched in all appropriate article databases with journals that cover my topic
- Reviewed dissertation research
- Looked for review information if I am using a instrument
- Found information regarding my chosen methodology
- Traced key articles back and forwards in time