Glossary

**Abstract:** A brief summary of an article or book.

**Almanac:** A publication, usually annual,* that contains useful facts and statistical information.

**Annotation:** A critical commentary on a literary work, such as a book or journal article

**Annual:** Published each year.

**Bibliography:** A list of books or other published writings on a subject or by a particular author.

**Biographical/Biography:** A biography is a written account of a person’s life. Biographical sources either contain these accounts or help to locate them.

**Boolean (Operators):** A connector that describes the logical relationships between search words (AND, OR, NOT, ADJ)

**Call Number:** A combination of letters, numbers, and symbols assigned to library materials. The call number is based on the classification system* used in a particular library. A commonly used system is Library of Congress classification*. Call numbers help to place materials on shelves with those of a similar nature or by the same author.

**Catalog:** A list that records, describes, and indexes the resources of a library or collection of materials. The list may be printed on cards (card catalog), or on-line (see OSCAR and OhioLINK).

**CD-ROM:** An abbreviation for “compact disc read only memory.” Compact discs contain coded information and are read by computers. The CD-ROM products in the Libraries are indexes* or other reference sources.* These can be searched to locate factual information or to find citations* to useful materials.

**Citation:** The written information about a book or article needed to locate the item. A citation usually includes author, title, pages, and date of publication.

**Classification system:** A system used to group items together by category. In most libraries, materials are grouped by subject. The Library of Congress classification system* is used in University Libraries.

**Database:** An organized collection of information, often stored on a computer. OSCAR* is a database of the libraries’ collection. Other databases may be available as CD-ROM* products or may be stored on computers in other cities and searched via telephone lines.

**Dictionary:** A reference source* that provides meanings of words and often supplies additional information such as pronunciation and usage. A large number of specialized dictionaries are available.

**E-Book:** Electronic book, a book in digital format.

**E-Journal:** Electronic journal, a journal published in electronic form.

**Encyclopedia:** A reference source* containing information on a variety of terms, persons, and events. This information may be supplied in short paragraphs or in lengthy articles that include citations* to other works on the same topic. Encyclopedias can be general, covering all topics, or specialized, focusing on a particular discipline such as art or philosophy.

**ERIC:** Educational Resources Information Center. A U.S. national education database covering the journal and research literature in the field of education and other education-related topics. Includes journal articles and documents such as reports, papers, guides and books.

**Full-text:** Usually refers to a database or document collection where the complete document (article, reports, etc.) can be read using a computer.

**Government Document:** Materials published by the U.S., state, city, or governments of other nations or international organizations (like the United Nations). Many U.S. and Ohio documents are available through the OSU Libraries. Some are listed in OSCAR* and some may be found by using
specialized indexes*.

Index: A systematically arranged list that refers users to other parts of a work or to other sources. An index at the end of a book refers the user to other parts of the book which provide information on the term indexed. A periodical index is a reference source* that lists articles in magazines,* in newspapers,* or in scholarly journals,* Entries or citations* are usually arranged by subject and by author and provide information needed to locate articles.

Internet: A network that connects computers worldwide and is referred to as the Information Highway.

Journal: A periodical,* often published by an institution or a professional society. Journals usually contain articles written by scholars or experts on a subject. These articles tend to focus on research and theory in a discipline.

Keyword searching: Looks for specific words or terms in titles, subjects and the text itself.

Library of Congress classification system: A system used by the Library of Congress and many other libraries, including OSU Libraries, to bring materials on a subject or works by an author together. The system uses letters and numbers in a code to specify subject area and author’s name. These codes are call numbers* and are placed on labels that are attached to library materials.

Library of Congress subject headings: A detailed list of subject terms* devised by the Library of Congress and used by many libraries, including The Ohio State University Libraries. Appropriate subject headings* from the list are used to describe materials in the library’s catalog.* These terms can be searched on OSCAR.*

LRN (Library Resources Network): A network maintained by the OSU libraries that provides access to a number of computerized indexes* and abstracts*.

Magazine: A periodical* published for the lay person containing articles on general subjects. Magazine articles are indexed by subject in periodical indexes*.

Microform: Printed items that have been photographed and reduced in size. Microform materials include microfilm ( reels of film) and microfiche (flat sheets of films). Special readers are needed to read and make copies from microforms.

Newspaper: A periodical* usually issued daily or weekly, that provides news for a city, an area, or an organization.

OhioLINK: A statewide library system which provides access to Central Catalog containing the holdings of all member libraries and shared access to a variety of other information sources.

OSCAR (Ohio State Catalog for Automated Retrieval): The computerized catalog* for The Ohio State University Libraries. OSCAR provides information about books, periodicals, government documents, audiovisuals, and microforms the OSU Libraries own. It also provides a connection to OhioLINK.

Peer-review: The process where specialists review and select the research of others in their field for publication in scholarly journals.

Periodical: A publication issued under a single title at regular intervals, often daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly. Publications will continue indefinitely, unlike books, which are published only once. Periodicals are also called serials.*

Primary Source: Original manuscripts, contemporary records, documents associated with an event.

Recall: To call back a book that is currently checked out to a patron.

Reference: Also called citation.* A reference or citation provides information about books or articles that helps users to locate these items.

Reference Source: A work that either provides information on a subject or leads to other works which provide information. Dictionaries,* encyclopedias,* and periodical indexes* are examples of reference sources. Reference sources may be printed or available on computers, including CD-ROM* products. Since they are not usually read completely and are used by
many people. Reference sources do not circulate or leave the library.

**Reference Librarian:** An individual with graduate level education and expertise in library and information science. Reference librarians can help find answers to virtually any question.

**Research Guide:** A reference source* that surveys the important reference works in a field or on a topic. Research guides help to locate the most appropriate information sources quickly.

**Review of research articles:** Articles where only the research of others is discussed. The authors did not do any research they are reporting on.

**Search Strategy:** A systematic process used to find the most relevant information on a topic. During this process, one considers all potentially useful reference sources* selects works appropriate for the research need, locates information, and evaluates the relevance of the information found.

**Serial:** A publication issued in successive parts, usually at regular intervals. Periodicals* and other recurring publications, such as annually issued works, are examples of serials.

**Statistics:** This term most often refers to numerical data. Statistics on various topics can be located by using reference sources.*

**Subject Headings (Subject Terms):** A word or phrase used to describe the content of a work. Subject headings, sometimes called subject terms, are used in many catalogs* and other reference sources.* Subject headings can be broad and general, such as “music,” or narrow and specific, like “American folk music.”

**U.S. Government Document:** Material published by a U.S. government agency or bureau.

**World Wide Web (The Web):** The most popular tool, for navigating the internet.*