Searching the library catalog: a demonstration of information literacy

Welcome to the UNO Library.

This tutorial is designed to give you an understanding of searching the online catalog and how this fits with information literacy.

Searching the online catalog requires the use of the first three steps to information literacy as outlined in the textbook focus on college success by Constance Staley.

These steps are step 1. define, step 2. locate, and step 3. select.

A student at UNO has been asked to write a paper in his introduction to business class.

Determining what he needs to answer this “question” is step 1 in information literacy.

Let’s say that upon consultation with his professor he decides to investigate hotel management. His professor asks him to use a print book and an electronic book as his sources for this paper.

He has now defined his information need. What now?

The next step is: Step 2. Locate as in locate resources to answer his defined information need.

The library online catalog is a good place to begin his search to find material that experts have written on this topic.

He types the terms that best fit his information need into the keyword search box on the Library’s homepage.

He starts with “hotel management”

This search retrieves 176 titles, which means that he has located a lot of possible information sources for his paper.

This leads him to step 3 – Select

He remembers that his professor asked him to use both a print book and an electronic book so he clicks on “limit search”

And selects material type “book”

This doesn’t eliminate too many titles, but the first print book on the list looks very promising.

He will be able to find this book in the library by its call number TX911.3 .F75 T49 2009

He then goes back to his original results and chooses material type electronic book.

From this listing of 9 titles, he selects the first title

He will use his student ID to check out the print book. He can read the electronic book online from anywhere there is an internet connection. He can even download this title to an e-reader.

The remaining steps, 4 Organize, 5 Present, and 6 Reflect, deal with using the information that he has retrieved from using the online catalog.

If you should run into difficulty in your information quest, the reference librarians and staff at the Earl K. Long Library are available to assist you with your research and in locating materials in the library. Please don’t hesitate to ask for help.