

## Library Resources for Political Science 155

American Political Institutions - Boris E. Ricks, Professor  
Library Instruction Session - Eric P. Garcia, Librarian



"For too long we've been told about "us" and "them." Each and every election we see a new slate of arguments and ads telling us that "they" are the problem, not "us." But there can be no "them" in America. There's only us."

## California State University, Northridge

**Oviatt Library** (<http://library.csun.edu>)

### Librarian

**Eric P. Garcia** (<http://library.csun.edu/egarcia>)

### Searching Tips and Tricks

When searching databases, the goal is to find a small number (e.g. 10-30) of articles relevant to your topic. Here are some tips for improving your search results:

- Most databases allow you to choose a date range, so you can limit the search to recently-published articles only.
- Most allow you to choose English articles only, which can further reduce your results.
- Many also allow you to limit your results to peer-reviewed journals, which contain high-quality scholarly articles.
- In keyword searching, a **truncation symbol** (usually \*) expands your search by including various forms of a root word, e.g. govern\*
  - retrieves:
    - governable
    - governableness
    - governal
    - governance
    - governance's
    - governante
    - governed
    - governess
    - governing
    - government
    - governmental
    - governmentally...etc.
- **Boolean operators** (AND, OR, NOT) serve to either narrow or expand your search: OR expands it by including synonyms or related terms (e.g. Homeless\* OR Shelter\*); AND narrows it by finding the subset of articles that contain both search terms you want (Homeless\* AND Veteran\*); NOT narrows your search by eliminating articles that contain a specific term you do not want (neglect NOT abuse). An easy way to remember the difference is the rhyme OR gives you MORE, while the other two operators give you less (although they may be better results).

### Internet sites

There are of course countless Web sites related to Political Science. Here are links to some recommended sites. Be cautious when using information you find on web sites that you located by searching Google, Yahoo, Ask Jeeves, Vivisimo, etc. Anyone can make a web page and the information may not be reliable or accurate.

#### Official Campaign Websites

**Obama Campaign Website** - (<http://www.barackobama.com/>)

**McCain Campaign Website** - (<http://www.johnmccain.com/>)

**McKinney Campaign Website** - (<http://votetruth08.com/>)

[Barr Campaign Website](http://www.bobbarr2008.com/) - (<http://www.bobbarr2008.com/>)

[Nader Campaign Website](http://www.votenader.org/) - (<http://www.votenader.org/>)

#### Official Political Party National Committee Websites

The [Democratic Party](http://www.democrats.org/) of the United States - (<http://www.democrats.org/>)

The [Green Party](http://www.gp.org/) of the United States - (<http://www.gp.org/>)

The [Libertarian Party](http://www.lp.org/) of the United States - (<http://www.lp.org/>)

The [Republican Party](http://www.rnc.org/) of the United States - (<http://www.rnc.org/>)

#### Related Websites to Political Science, Candidate Voting History & Fact Checking

[Congress.org](http://www.congress.org/congressorg/e4/) - (<http://www.congress.org/congressorg/e4/>)

Provides a comprehensive look at elections at all levels and provides key candidate positions. For current Congressional members, it provides legislative voting history. From Capitol Advantage and Knowledge's, LLC, two private non-partisan companies.

[League of Women Voters](http://www.lwvmn.org) - <http://www.lwvmn.org>

Covers national, state and local elections.

[ProCon.org](http://www.procon.org/) - <http://www.procon.org/>

Provides background information on pros and cons of issues as well as how the presidential candidates stand on these issues.

[Factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org) - <http://www.factcheck.org>

Monitors the accuracy of candidate television ads, news releases, and speeches. From the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

[Project Vote Smart](http://www.votesmart.org/) - (<http://www.votesmart.org/>)

Project Vote Smart is a citizen's organization whose Web site provides biographical information, issue positions, voting records, campaign finances, and interest group ratings for all candidates and elected officials. In addition to these basic categories, in the Issues and Legislation section the site tracks key Congressional and State votes, and allows you to search for issues, interest groups, and their ratings by state.

[Politifact.com Truth-o-meter](http://politifact.com/truth-o-meter/) - <http://politifact.com/truth-o-meter/>

Analyzes candidates' speeches, TV adds and interviews to determine whether their claims are accurate. From the St. Petersburg Times and Congressional Quarterly.

[Federal Election Commission](http://www.fec.gov) - <http://www.fec.gov>

Click on Campaign Finance Reports and Data to see candidates statements of income and information about campaign contributors.

[Open Secrets](http://www.opensecrets.org) - <http://www.opensecrets.org>

Follows the money through candidate contributions. From the Center for Responsive Politics

[Project VoteSmart](http://www.votesmart.org/) - <http://www.votesmart.org/>

Provides comprehensive information about candidates from issue statements to campaign financing.

[National Taxpayers Union](http://www.ntu.org/main/) - <http://www.ntu.org/main/>

[StateVote 2008](http://www.ncsl.org/statevote/StateVote2008.htm) - <http://www.ncsl.org/statevote/StateVote2008.htm>

From the National Conference of State Legislature

[California Campaign Finance Reform](http://www.cgs.org/) - (<http://www.cgs.org/>)

All state candidates must file with the Disclosure Board regarding sources of income.

[wcco.com - Reality Check](http://wcco.com/realitycheck) - (<http://wcco.com/realitycheck>)

Provicdes campaign fact checking with a local emphasis.

[On-Line List of Candidate](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_e.htm) - ([http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_e.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_e.htm))

Certified List of Candidates for each state election from 1996 to the present available on-line.

## Comprehensive Election News Sources

[AllPolitics](http://www.cnn.com/POLITICS/) [Time/CNN] - (http://www.cnn.com/POLITICS/)

[MSNBC Political News & Updates](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3032553) - (http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3032553)

[FOXNews.com Elections](http://elections.foxnews.com/) - (http://elections.foxnews.com/)

[Campaigns and Elections](http://www.campaignline.com/home/) [Congressional Quarterly] - (http://www.campaignline.com/home/)

## Comprehensive Election News Sources

### Declare Yourself

This is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit campaign to empower and encourage every eligible 18-year-old in America to register and vote in the presidential primaries and 2008 presidential election. This site is specifically targeted towards college students, so if you haven't already registered to vote, you can go here to find out how and to find answers to other FAQs college students have about voting.

### Vote411.org

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan organization that strives to impact government and public policy through citizen education and advocacy, this site provides general and state-specific election information for voters: absentee ballot information, election dates, voter qualifications and registration forms, etc. An important and much used aspect of the site is the polling place locator in which users can type in their address and find the nearest polling location.

### USA.gov--Voting and Elections

The official information and services from the U.S. Government, this site provides information about registering to vote and voting, for example voter requirements. Also includes links to other government sites pertaining to voting and the election process.

## Books

Library Catalog - for books, videos, and archival materials that will help you identify informative and persuasive topics. Use the KEYWORD search if you aren't sure of the official Subject Headings for your topic.

[Barack Obama : this improbable quest](#) by Wilson, John K., 1969-

[Barack Obama, the new face of American politics](#) by Dupuis, Martin, 1961-

[Obama : from promise to power](#) by Mendell, David.

[The audacity of hope : thoughts on reclaiming the American dream](#) by Obama, Barack.

[Dreams from my father : a story of race and inheritance](#) by Obama, Barack.

[Worth the fighting for : a memoir](#) by McCain, John, 1936-

[John McCain](#) by Aaron Boyd

[Citizen McCain](#) by Elizabeth Drew

[John McCain : an American odyssey](#) by Robert Timberg

[My dad, John McCain](#) by Meghan McCain; Dan Andreasen

[Political profiles : John McCain](#) by Catherine Wells

Subject Headings - examples that may work for topics in this class:

- Political campaigns
- Voter behavior
- Presidential elections
- Political leadership

## Journal Articles

Databases A-Z - the Oviatt Library has over 100 databases. To look for articles in journals, newspapers, or magazines, you will need to start with a research database. The following databases provide abstracts and full-text articles from thousands of journals and other sources.

### Academic Search Elite (EbscoHost)

index of articles from the contents pages of over 22,000 journals, 1990-

### America: History & Life (EBSCO)

Indexes 1,700 journals as well as dissertations on the history and culture of the United States and Canada. 1964-

### RAND California

California economic and public policy issues, including over 80 statistical databases with data at various geographic levels, some covering the entire nation.

### JSTOR Political Science

Comprehensive archive of back issues of core scholarly journals in political science.

### CQ Researcher

Explores a single "hot" issue in the news in depth each week. Topics range from social and teen issues to environment, health, education, and science and technology.

### CQ Weekly

Reports on the U. S. Congress completely and accurately every week.

### GPO Access

Provides access to official Federal Government information. Offers a collection of full-text databases and the text of federal bills, Congressional Record, the Federal Register, and other legal sources.

### U.S. Congressional Serial Set

Reports, documents, and journals of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, originally published in approximately 13,800 bound volumes for the period 1817-1980.

### LexisNexis Academic

full text news, medical, legal & business sources; dates vary.

### Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center

Features viewpoint articles, topic overviews, full-text magazine, academic journal and newspaper articles, primary source documents, statistics, images and podcasts, and links to Websites. Updated daily.

### LexisNexis Academic

Full-text database containing news, legal, business, and medical information. Dates vary.

### ProQuest Newspapers

Full text access to over 600 US and international newspapers, hundreds of other news wires and news sources. Dates vary.

## Plagiarism and APA/MLA citation style

Remember to cite not only direct quotes, but also other people's ideas. If you paraphrase something, changing a few words to make it sound less like a direct quote, you still have to cite it. If you are uncertain, it is better to cite a source than to be accused of plagiarism for not citing something you should have.

APA (American Psychological Association)

- **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.** Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2001.  
Reference Room BF76.7 .P83 2001  
Reserve Desk BF76.7 .P83 2001  
Floor2 BF76.7 .P83 2001
- **APA Formatting and Style Guide** by Eric P. Garcia at California State University, Northridge.

MLA (Modern Language Association)

- [MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers](http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b1867635) (http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b1867635) by Joseph Gibaldi  
LB2369 .G53 2003
- [The world's easiest guide to using the MLA: a user-friendly manual for formatting research papers according to the Modern Language Association style guide](http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b1768874) (http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b1768874) by Carol J. Amato  
LB2369 .A488 1999
- [Citing References In Your Paper \(MLA Documentation\)](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLA.html) (http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLA.html) by The Writing Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
- [MLA Formatting and Style Guide](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/) (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/) by The OWL at Purdue and Purdue University

## Contact Information

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<http://library.csun.edu/egarcia/POLS155ricks.html>