"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."
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*
  - governable
  - governableness
  - governal
  - governance
  - governance's
  - governante
  - governed
  - governness
  - 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/)
Official Political Party National Committee Websites

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

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

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

The Republican Party 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/)
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
Covers national, state and local elections.

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
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/)
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.

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

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

Open Secrets - http://www.opensecrets.org
Follows the money through candidate contributions. From the Center for Responsive Politics

Project VoteSmart - http://www.votesmart.org/
Provides comprehensive information about candidates from issue statements to campaign financing.

National Taxpayers Union - http://www.ntu.org/main/

From the National Conference of State Legislature

California Campaign Finance Reform - (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)
Provides campaign fact checking with a local emphasis.

On-Line List of Candidate - (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 [Time/CNN] - (http://www.cnn.com/POLITICS/)

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

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

Campaigns and Elections [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

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)
- Reference Room BF76.7 .P83 2001
- Reserve Desk BF76.7 .P83 2001
- Floor2 BF76.7 .P83 2001

MLA (Modern Language Association)
- APA Formatting and Style Guide by Eric P. Garcia at California State University, Northridge.
MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (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) by Carol J. Amato
LB2369 .A488 1999

Citing References In Your Paper (MLA Documentation) (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/) by The OWL at Purdue and Perdue University

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