

Library Jargon

A

- **Abstract**
A short, non-evaluative description of the contents of a book, an article, or another library resource. Abstracts often appear with citations in online indexes and databases.
- **Acquisitions**
The department of the library where book and journal orders are processed and new materials are received.
- **Annotated Bibliography**
A list of citations with accompanying notes that summarize and/or evaluate the subject matter or content of each work.
- **Archives**
A special collection of non-circulating historical materials related to a library or institution.

B

- **Bibliography**
 - a) A list of citations to works used by an author to write his or her paper, article, or book.
 - b) A list of books, articles, and other sources on a particular subject, about a particular person, or published in a specific region or time period.
- **Boolean Operator**

Boolean Operators are named after the British mathematician George Frederick Boole (1815-1864), who developed a system of logic to show the relationship among terms or concepts. There are three primary Boolean operators, AND, OR, and NOT, and they can be used to group search terms. They are primarily used in keyword searches.

C

- **Call Number**

AN alphanumeric code that identifies a specific book or other item in the library and also indicates its location within the library. Call numbers can also indicate the general subject content of the book. The Dakota College at Bottineau library uses the Dewey Decimal System for most materials.
- **Catalog**

A list or inventory of all the materials within a specific collection or at a particular location. The library catalog at Dakota College at Bottineau

includes information about the books, journals, magazines, newspapers, musical recordings, maps, videos/DVDs, and other materials in the library.

- **Circulation**
The department of the library that handles book check-outs and returns as well as reserves and holds.
- **Citation**
Information about a book, journal article, or other source that you refer to or quote from in a paper. The citation includes all of the information needed to identify this source, such as author, title, publication information, date, and page numbers.
Different disciplines can use different citation styles; be sure to check with the style manual that is appropriate for your course.
- **Controlled Vocabulary**
A set of terms that have been carefully selected in order to avoid having multiple terms for the same subject. Indexers often use a controlled vocabulary when they assign subject headings or descriptors to articles or books. A controlled vocabulary “controls” synonyms and is thus a powerful tool to use when searching databases.
- **Course Reserves**
Books, articles, videos, sound recordings, and other materials selected by your professor for use by your class. Some reserves are in electronic form and are accessible through the library’s website. Other materials, such as books and videos, are kept in the Reserves section of the Circulation Desk.
- **Cross-Reference**
A direction in a catalog or index that leads a user from one subject heading to another related one.

D

- **Database**
A system that organizes and arranges data into fields and provides the means to sort, group, and retrieve information from those fields. The library catalog is a type of database. Many of our other indexes and databases are electronic versions of print indexes.
- **Descriptor**
See the entry for Subject Heading.

E

- **E-Reserves or Electronic Reserves**
See the entry for Course Reserves.

F

- Field

A defined category of information in a record, such as author (AU), title (TI), or keyword (KW). Users can search for terms in an online catalog or database using specified fields. Field names and the information contained within them can vary in databases. Always check the “Help” screens or ask a librarian.

- Full Text

The complete text of an article, book, or other item. The full text may be in Microsoft Word, HTML, or pdf format.

G

- Government Documents/Government Information

Documents and other information issued by the United States Government, state governments, and foreign governments. Government documents may include books and serials.

H

- Hold

A service offered at the Circulation Desk. When a book you want is checked out, you can request a hold, and staff will contact you and reserve the book for you when the other user returns it.

- Holdings

Information about the books, journals, newspapers, and magazine issues owned by the library.

I

- ILL

See InterLibrary Loan.

- Index

A list of the major topics, places, and people discussed in a book or other source. The index often appears at the end of a book and usually directs readers to relevant page numbers.

- Information Literacy

The competencies and skills that students need to locate, retrieve, evaluate, analyze, and use information. These competencies are developed over time and are essential for lifelong learning.

- InterLibrary Loan

A library service that allows you to borrow or obtain copies of materials from other libraries. If our library doesn't have the book or the article that you

need, simply request the item using ODIN, our interlibrary loan system. We'll get the material for you – at no charge to you – and will let you know when it is available. Just be sure to allow 3-5 days for the material to arrive.

- ISBN

International Standard Book Number, a unique ten or thirteen-digit number assigned to each book published.

- ISSN

International Standard Serial Number, a unique eight-digit number assigned to each magazine, journal, newspaper, and serial publication. The standard format for the ISSN is two sets of four digits, separated by a hyphen (1234-5678).

J

- Journal

A type of periodical usually published several times a year.

K

- Keyword

a) A word describing a topic or subject. Unlike a subject heading, a keyword is not a form of controlled vocabulary.

b) A word that may form part of a title, author's name, subject heading, or other part of a citation. A keyword search in a database searches across all fields of a record.

L

- Limits/Limiters

An option in many databases that allows users to restrict search results by criteria not related to the subject. Common limiters include language, date, and format. Since limit options vary by database, check the "Help" screen or ask a librarian.

M

- Microfiche

A micrographic reproduction stored on a film card. The card is approximately the size of an index card. A microfiche is a type of microfilm.

- Microfilm

A micrographic reproduction stored on a reel of film. Microfilm is a type of microform.

- Microform

A micrographic reproduction of a book, journal, or other type of information source. You must use a special piece of equipment, called a microform

reader, to view the text. There are several types of microforms, including microfilm and microfiche.

- **Monograph**
 - a) A treatise on one subject or about one person.
 - b) A type of publication distinct from serials (i.e. a book).
- **Moodle**

An online course management system that your professors can use to post assignments, announcements, syllabi, and other course documents; the software also provides tools for communication and collaboration, such as chat and a digital whiteboard.

N

O

P

- **PDF**

The Portable Document Format (pdf), created by Adobe, retains the original formatting and appearance of an article or book. A pdf document is an accurate copy of the original, unlike HTML and some other full-text versions, which, because they are often re-keyed versions of the original text, can contain textual errors. You need Adobe Reader to view pdf files.
- **Peer Review**

The process by which scholarly articles and books are published. The editors of peer-reviewed publications require authors to submit drafts of their work for consideration. These drafts are then reviewed by experts in the field who evaluate them. In considering articles for publication, reviewers assess the quality of authors' research as well as their contribution to scholarship.
- **Periodical**

A type of publication that is issued at regular intervals (e.g. monthly, weekly, daily). Journals, magazines, and newspapers are all periodicals.
- **Phrase searching**

A type of search syntax that allows you to search for phrases in a database.

Q

R

- **Record**

The collection of information about an item listed in a database. For example, a record for a journal article will contain citation information (author, title, journal title, publication information, volume number, date, page numbers) as well as subject headings, an abstract and other information. A record in the

library catalog contains citation information as well as subject headings, a call number, and information about the item's status.

- Reference
 - a) A library service. Reference librarians assist students and faculty with research and information needs.
 - b) An area of the library where books in the reference collection are kept.
 - c) A note or citation to a book, article, or other information source.
- Refereed

See the entry for Peer Review.
- Reserves

See the entry for Course Reserves.

S

- Scholarly

See the entry for Peer Review.
- Serials

Publications issued at intervals. Serials usually have the same title over time. Periodicals are types of serials.
- Stacks

The area in the library containing most of the bookshelves. Generally, “the stacks” are the bookshelves containing the books that can be checked out. The “reference stacks” are the bookshelves that hold the materials in the reference collection.
- Subject Heading

A word, phrase, or group of words that describes the subject content of a book or other item. In most databases, subject headings, which can also be called “descriptors,” are a form of controlled vocabulary. A given item may have more than one subject heading.

T

- Thesaurus
 - a) A list of the subject headings or descriptors used in a database, with information about their use and their relationships to each other.
 - b) A lexicon or classification of synonyms and related terms.
- Truncation

A symbol that stands for one or more letters at the end of a word. In an online index or database, you can use truncation to search for the root of a word and all variant endings. For example, in the library catalog the symbol is \$, (advertis\$ retrieves “advertiser,” “advertisers,” “advertising,” “advertisements,”). In Academic Search Premier, you could search for human* to retrieve records with the words humans, humanity, humanities, and

so forth. Truncation symbols vary by database, always check the “Help” screen or ask a librarian.

U

V

W

- Wildcard

A symbol that replaces one character. In some databases, the wildcard may also represent more than one letter or no letters. In the library catalog, the symbol is ?, and it stands for one character (wom?n will retrieve both woman and women). Wildcard symbols vary by database, always check the “Help” screen or ask a librarian.

X

Y

Z