

Wellehan Library
Saint Joseph's College
Using *ERIC* and *Academic Search Complete* Databases

The purpose of this document is to provide various approaches for using *ERIC* and *Academic Search Complete* databases and to offer sample searches that can be adapted to other search queries.

ERIC, the Educational Resource Information Center, provides access to education literature and resources through more than 1,194,000 records and links to more than 100,000 full-text documents.

Academic Search Complete (ASC) provides access to more than 7,900 full-text periodicals, including more than 6,800 peer-reviewed journals. The database features PDF content going back as far as 1887, with the majority of full-text titles in PDF format.

Because *ERIC* and *ASC* are both provided by EBSCO, a company that creates and sells information resources like databases, they can be searched simultaneously. To do this from the A-Z database list, click on the link for *Academic Search Complete*. From the EBSCOHost page, select both databases by clicking in the box beside the title. Now click "Continue."

Basic Search combining *ERIC* and *ASC*

A basic keyword search is a good way to begin using these databases; however, in most instances this type of search will yield too many results if limiters are not used. Try this approach with any basic search.

- In the search field, enter your search term.
- If search options are not displayed, click the "Search Options" link just below the search field. Select appropriate options in "Limit your results."

For example:

- Select "Title Owned by Wellehan" to be prompted when Wellehan Library owns a journal that is not available in full text in a database.
- Select "Full Text" to retrieve only full text results.
- Select "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals" to limit results to those publications.
- If currency is important, assign a date range using "Published Date from."

Since you are searching both databases simultaneously, you will also see special limiters specific to each database. Use any of these that are appropriate to your search.

Advanced Search combining *ERIC* and *ASC*

The "Advanced Search" option provides an expanded list of limiters found in "Limit your results." Also, it allows for joining words and phrases using and or or not, which are referred to as Boolean operators. The drop-down options available from "Select a Field (optional)" allow for searching within specific fields.

Advanced Search looking for article by a particular author:

- Enter the author's name in the first search field.
- Select "AU Author" from the "Select a Field" menu.
- Click "Search."

Contact the Reference and Information Literacy Librarian for more assistance.

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Advanced Search using Boolean Operators:

My tentative research question focuses on how teaching methods and class activities affect active learning.

- Enter each of the search terms in separate search fields joined by and.
- Select appropriate limiters, such as “Full Text” and “Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals.”
- Click “Search.”

Publications Search in *Academic Search Complete*

Many EBSCO databases will allow you to search within a specific journal. ERIC, however, does not offer this feature. Use the “Publications” tab at the top left of the screen when you know the title of a journal in which you wish to search.

For example:

- Click on the “Publications” link.
- Enter Educational Leadership in the Browse field and click “Browse.”
- Click on the title from the results list.
- Record includes thorough journal information and a date listing.
- Click on the “2007” date link.
- Click on the “Vol. 65 Issue 2” link.
- Results list includes 21 entries found in that volume and issue of the journal.

Thesaurus Search in *ERIC*

Many databases rely on controlled vocabulary to ensure consistency of subject terms. ERIC provides a Thesaurus option in order to search subject terms. This is one of the most effective ways to use ERIC because it allows you to use exact ERIC subject headings.

For example:

- Click on the “Thesaurus” tab.
- In the search field, enter school consolidation and Click “Browse.”
- Results list identifies “Consolidated Schools” as the subject heading used by ERIC to identify “school consolidation.”
- Click on the “Consolidated Schools” link.
- Click on the link again to see the broader and related terms along with other terms that “Consolidated Schools” is used for.
- From this page, you can actually build a search by clicking in the box beside any hyperlinked term, selecting the appropriate Boolean operator, and clicking “Search.”

Understanding the Results List

Left-hand column (“Narrow Results by”):

“Subject” lists the top 10 subjects found in your results. By clicking on any of these, you can limit your results.

“Publication Type” allows you to limit results. Use the drop-down arrow to see and select specific pub. types.

“Database” will be included in this listing if you have selected more than one database to be searched. This feature allows you to see results by selected database.

Right-hand column (“Limit your results”):

Date slide allows you to limit results to a date range by years. After adjusting the slide, click “Update Results.”

“Search Options” link allows you to modify any selected options. Click “Search” after changing options.

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