

The following list of selected library, and computing, terms tend to be used frequently in library settings. These definitions have been created for the user generally unfamiliar with libraries.

- **Abstract:** a short summary of an article or book; abstracts are provided along with citation information in many periodical indexes or databases, and may be written by either the author or an indexer.
- **Access Point:** in a catalog or index, a heading that may be used to find information on an item. Common access points include author, title, and assigned subject headings.
- **Adobe Acrobat Reader:** a program for viewing PDF files, used in many full-text electronic journals. The program is free, and if you do not have it on your machine when it is needed to access an article, instructions for downloading it will usually appear on the screen.
- **Aggregated Databases:** a database that collects citations from a variety of sources on one specific topic, often some of the sources include full text articles while others will have just a citation.
- **Almanac:** a volume containing a collection of miscellaneous facts and statistics on many subjects (e.g., The World Almanac and Book of Facts).
- **Annotation:** a note in a publication record or bibliography, describing or evaluating the publication (e.g., "Bibliography: p. [454]-459. Includes index.>").
- **Annual:** a serial publication issued regularly once a year (e.g., The Statesman's Yearbook).
- **Article:** 1. a contribution, by one or more authors, published in a periodical. 2. a, an, the, and their equivalents in other languages (der, la, los...). In library practice, leading articles are dropped from titles in alphabetized lists.
- **Audio-visual:** non-book materials such as various formats of audio and video recordings (e.g., slides, videocassettes, CDs, etc).
- **Bibliographic Citation (or bibliographic reference):** identifying information about a publication, used in catalogs and indexes as well as in lists of "literature cited" or "references" in scholarly publications. Formats vary, but a book citation generally includes information on the author, title, publisher, and date of publication; an article citation includes author, title, date, and information on the periodical in which it was published.
- **Bibliographic Database:** an electronic version of a catalog or index. A bibliographic database allows the user to identify publications by author, subject, title, or other search terms. It generally provides at least a full citation to the item, and often other information such as abstracts and assigned subject headings.
- **Bibliography:** 1. a list of books or articles which are related in some way, for example, about a particular subject (such as Guide to English Literature) or written by a specific author (such as a Bibliographical Checklist and Index to the Published Writings of Albert Einstein); 2. the study of books as physical entities.
- **Call Number:** an alphanumeric code which identifies an item in the library collection and indicates its location on the shelves. Call numbers are listed in the catalog and marked on the book's spine label. Most items in Jeff State libraries have Library of Congress (LC) call numbers.
- **Circulation desk:** a customer service access point of the Jeff State Libraries where you can check-out and renew books and other materials, find out about overdue fines, and make changes to your library patron record, i.e. address changes or changes in student status. Note: many circulation functions (renewals, search requests, recalls, etc.) may be requested electronically from the [library's website](#).
- **Citation:** the pertinent information needed to find the full text of a publication. Citation of a book generally includes: author(s), title, publisher, date. Citation of an article in a periodical generally includes: author(s), article title, source journal title, volume, pages, and date.
- **Citation Index:** a bibliographic index which allows the user to trace research from an article by searching for subsequent articles that have cited that original article.

- **Cited Article:** an article referenced in a scholarly publication; in a citation search, the article for which the user is searching for subsequent references.
- **Cited Author:** an author whose publication has been referenced in a scholarly work; in a citation search, the author the user is searching for, as referenced in subsequent works.
- **Course Reserves:** where you look at materials put on hold by your instructor for your course. These materials can't be taken from the library--you can only check them out and read and/or photocopy them.
- **Cumulative Index:** a compilation (usually annual) of previously separately published indexes.
- **Current Periodical:** the most recent issue or issues of a journal or magazine, not yet bound; current periodicals are non-circulating due to potential demand.
- **Database:** a structured collection of information in computerized format, searchable by various types of queries; in libraries, often refers to electronic catalogs and indexes.
- **Depository Library:** a library designated as a recipient and citizens' access point for government publications. The Jefferson campus library is a depository library.
- **Digital Library:** a digitized collection usually available online. It is also a series of activities that brings together collections, services, and people in support of the full life cycle of creation, dissemination, use, and preservation of data, information, and knowledge. The challenges and opportunities that motivate an advanced digital library research initiative are associated with this broad view of digital library environment.
- **Dissertation:** a treatise (thesis) written by a candidate for a doctoral degree.
- **E-Books:** books that can be accessed electronically via the Internet. Generally, these books have usage rules similar to a physical library and can be used online for a specific amount of time.
- **E-Journal Locator:** a service that allows you to search for full text journals by title.
- **E-Journals:** journals that can be accessed electronically via the Internet. FSU subscribes to thousands of scholarly, peer-reviewed journals that can be accessed from anywhere there is an Internet connection.
- **Edition:** 1. all copies of a bibliographic item produced from the same master copy. A citation will not usually indicate a first edition, but will note later editions (e.g., "revised edition," "fifth edition," etc.); 2. one of the various editions of a newspaper or magazine printed at different times of the day, etc. (e.g., "daily edition," "evening edition" or "special edition").
Entry: a single listing in a catalog or index. Generally, there are three types of entries: author, title, and subject.
- **FAQ:** Frequently Asked Questions; many Internet sites provide an FAQ section to familiarize visitors with answers to questions most commonly asked about the site or about the entity that is responsible for the site; newcomers are encouraged to read the FAQ.
- **Frequency:** the interval at which a serial is published; frequencies commonly encountered in libraries include:
- **Full Text:** the entire written content of an item, such as an article, book, or encyclopedia, that is available in electronic format. The Jeff State Libraries have access to a large number of full-text electronic journals via the Alabama Virtual Library, CINAHL, and Science Direct.
- **Gazetteer:** a geographical dictionary including place names, geographical features such as mountains, rivers, etc.; may also provide historical and statistical information about places.
Government Document: the division of this library that collects and makes available government publications, maps, and microform materials.
- **Hard Copy:** a printed copy of machine (usually computer) output, in human-readable form (Compare with: soft copy).

- **Heading:** the name, work, or phrase used as an access point to a bibliographic record, determined by a prescribed set of rules; the word or phrase by which one searches for an item in a catalog or index.
- **Hold:** a request that an item be kept for a patron until s/he can pick it up. A patron may place a hold on an item currently on loan to another patron, or on an item that is on order or being processed; s/he will then be in line to use the item as soon as it becomes available.
- **Holdings:** a library's collection of materials; a holdings record in a library catalog shows which volumes the library owns of a set or journal.
- **Home Page:** 1. the main web page for an individual or organization; 2. the World Wide Web document displayed first when one's browser starts up.
- **Host:** the central or controlling computer on a network; it provides services accessed by the other computers on the network.
- **HTTP:** Hyper Text Transfer Protocol; the World Wide Web protocol that performs the request and retrieve functions of a server; commonly seen as the first part of a website address.
- **Hyperlink:** a hypertext link; a graphic or text string, usually on a web page, which, when clicked, opens a new web page or jumps to a new location in the current page.
- **Hypertext:** electronic document(s) that make up the World Wide Web, in which one resource can be linked to another relevant resource elsewhere on the World Wide Web.
- **Ibid.:** abbreviation for Latin ibidem, "in the same place." Used in references and citations to refer to the last work cited, saving re-typing the author and title (e.g., in a bibliography, 1. Wessel, Janet A.. Fitness for the Modern Teenager. New York: The Ronald Press, 1963. p.70. 2. Ibid., p.87.).
- **Index:** a list or systematic guide to the contents of a set of data, such as a periodical index or an index in a book (See: periodical index).
- **InterLibrary Loan:** a service through which library materials at other campus libraries may be requested
- **ISBN:** International Standard Book Number; a numerical code given to a book that uniquely identifies it.
- **Journal:** a periodical publication in which researchers report the results of their work to their peer community. Articles are normally reviewed by an editorial board or by other scholars in the field prior to acceptance for publication (See: peer reviewed journal, refereed journal), and generally include an abstract and citations of previous related work. The writing style in journals is formal, and journals generally have little or no advertising or illustration.
- **Keyword:** a significant word in the title, abstract, or text of a work; some periodical indexes identify keywords in a separate data field, so that they can be searched without searching the full text of the document. Some indexes use keywords in place of assigning standard subject headings to items.
- **Keyword Search:** a search in an electronic catalog or index in which the program searches for terms (keywords) provided by the user.
- **Library Instruction:** a variety of courses and workshops offered by the library. Includes "short courses" on databases, indexes, and programs, as well as subject-specific sessions on request by faculty or students
- **Library of Congress Classification (LC):** a classification scheme devised for the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., now used by most research-level libraries in the United States. It is based on letters of the alphabet with subdivisions using letters, numerals and decimal points.
- **Loan Period:** the length of time for which a library patron may borrow an item.

- **Magazine:** a periodical, generally with a more popular style and presentation than a research journal. Usually, magazine articles are authored by staff writers for an audience of the general public or interested amateurs in a given field (rather than by researchers for their peers), and edited by a magazine employee rather than a board of scholars. Style tends to be engaging and eye-catching, and magazines often include substantial advertising.
- **Manuscript:** 1. a work written by hand (not printed on a press). 2. in archives, archival material arranged and preserved intact.
- **Microfiche:** a small sheet (4" x 6") containing microphotographed images of pages, read with a microfilm reader/printer (in Strozier, located in the basement, in the Documents area); also called simply "fiche." Many pages of text fit onto a single fiche, which saves shelf space. Many government documents are issued in microfiche format.
- **Microfilm:** microphotographs of printed material, on a reel of cellulose film, viewed using a microfilm reader/printer (in Strozier, located in the basement, in the Documents area). Items in awkward or frail formats (such as newsprint) and popular magazines subject to damage from heavy use are often purchased in microfilm format rather than being bound between hard covers.
- **Microforms:** all forms of micro-reproduction, e.g., microfilm, microfiche, microprint, etc.
- **Monograph:** a non-serial work, complete in one part or set, usually on a narrowly defined single topic. For example, a book or pamphlet (as opposed to a periodical).
- **Monographic Series:** monographs issued as part of a titled series, at either regular or irregular intervals. Each item in the series is separately titled, but is also identified by the series title and often a number within the series.
- **Multimedia:** a document or program that integrates text, graphics, audio and video.
- **Non-circulating:** refers to library materials that may not be checked out by patrons. Non-circulating items include archival material, rare books, reference material, current periodicals, and other items that must remain accessible within the library at all times.
- **Off Campus Access:** Refers to the library user in regards to access to electronic materials.
- **Online Catalog:** a library catalog in the form of an electronic database.
- **Online Searching:** in general, searching on a computerized database or on the Internet.
- **OPAC:** Online Public Access Catalog; a computerized library catalog, or the portion of the catalog available for patron use.
- **Overdue:** an item still charged to a patron after the due date (end of the loan period). Fines are assessed at \$0.10 per day on overdue items from the regular collection; certain items are assessed special fees.
- **Oversized Books:** books too large to fit in the regular shelving.
- **PDF:** Portable Document Format; a document-encoding process developed by Adobe that maintains page layout, fonts, and graphics and can include many other features such as hyperlinks.
- **Peer Reviewed Journal:** a journal in which articles have been evaluated by an independent expert or experts in the field of research before acceptance for publication (see: refereed journal).
- **Periodical:** a serial (journal, magazine) that is published at regular intervals, is numbered, contains separate articles, and has no pre-determined end date. Does not include newspapers or conference proceedings.
- **Periodical Index:** a work which lists, by subject (and often author), the articles which appear in a prescribed group of periodicals.

- **Primary Sources:** the original research or writings on a subject. Includes technical reports, conference literature, patents, theses, and journals (the main medium for the dissemination of new knowledge) (Compare with: secondary sources).
- **Proprietary Databases:** databases that the university subscribes to, access is usually limited to faculty, students, and staff of the university.
- **Publication Date:** 1. in a book--the date appears at the bottom of the title page (as opposed to the copyright date which is on the verso of the title page). 2. in a periodical--the month or day of the month, on which it was issued.
- **Publisher:** the person, company or organization responsible for placing a book, journal, or other publication on the market (as opposed to the printer or bookseller).
- **Refereed Journal:** a journal in which articles have been evaluated by an independent expert or experts in the field of research before acceptance for publication (see: peer reviewed journal).
- **Reference Collection:** materials such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, directories, etc., kept in a separate collection (usually near a reference desk) and not allowed to circulate, so that they will always be on hand when needed.
- **Reference Desk:** a service point in the library, generally staffed by reference librarians, where patrons can obtain assistance with research and with finding materials and information.
- **Renewal:** an extension of the loan period on an item, granted to the current borrower. Renewals of Jeff State Libraries materials can be done online at http://jeffstatelibraries.sirsi.net/rooms/portal/page/Sirsi_MyAccount
- **Reserves Counter:** a service point in the library where patrons can obtain course materials that have been placed on reserve; located at or near the Circulation Desk in each library.
- **Search:** a systematic examination of data or materials made in order to locate specific information; can be done manually or on a computer.
- **Search Engine:** the software used to retrieve information from a database or from the Internet. A search engine generally includes features such as Boolean operators, search fields, display format, etc.
- **Secondary Sources:** material published about primary sources (collections, reviews, popularizations, monographs, etc.), and tools which point the user to primary sources (abstracts, indexes, bibliographies). Secondary sources are created by someone who was either not present when an event occurred or removed from it in time.
- **Serials:** any publication issued in successive parts, usually (though not always) at regular intervals, and intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials include: periodicals, newspapers, magazines, annuals, yearbooks, journals, memoirs, proceedings, transactions, and numbered monographic series.
- **Series:** group of separate items issued under a collective title, as well as under individual titles.
- **Statistical Abstracts:** a compilation summarizing social, political, economic or other statistics for a given geographic, political, or other entity (e.g., Statistical Abstract of the United States).
- **Streaming:** on a computer, audio/video that plays as it arrives, rather than waiting until the whole file has downloaded.
- **Style Guide:** a publication which specifies details of writing style required by a particular publishing house or professional organization, including such matters as punctuation, capitalization, and rules for citing references (e.g., Modern Language Association Handbook, Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association).
- **Subject Heading:** a term, name, or phrase used as an access point in a catalog or index which is arranged by topic. Generally, any particular index will use a standardized set of subject headings, which improves search precision once the user determines the "approved" headings being used for their topic.

- **Subject Search:** to seek information by topic (as opposed to author or title). In many indexes and catalogs, a "subject" search implies searching by the use of standardized subject headings assigned by the indexers, as opposed to keyword searching, where the user essentially guesses at words included in titles or abstracts of relevant items.
- **Subtitle:** an explanatory phrase following a main title (e.g., Volcanoes of North America: a reading lesson for students of geography and geology).
- **Title Search:** a search for an item by its title, generally in an alphabetical listing.
- **Topographic Map:** a map showing physical or natural features of an area, generally including altitude contours.
- **Unbound:** refers to the current, single issues of a periodical, before they have been bound together to form physical volumes. Usually, unbound journals do not circulate.
- **URL:** Uniform Resource Locator; an address that specifies the location of a file on the Internet (e.g., <http://www.lib.fsu.edu>).
- **Volume:** 1. a unit in a set or series. 2. a single bibliographic unit, i.e., a book. 3. a bound periodical containing several issues.
- **Web Page:** a single electronic hypertext document (file); a web "page" may be many screens long when viewed, or many pages long when printed out.
- **Web Search:** the use of the hierarchical subject guides or search engines available from a Web browser to identify and retrieve information housed on the World Wide Web. A variety of search engines are available by clicking the browser's "Search" button; note that the search syntax used, the set of data being searched, and the retrieval parameters are different for each search engine.
Web Site: a collection of interlinked documents on a web server.
- **World Wide Web (WWW):** the set of information resources that exist on hypertext Internet servers.