Follow-up FAQ: Additional Questions from EGR 110 Library Sessions

I. Writing and Citing

Q. How much preparation is generally needed for writing technical papers? (Time-wise)

A. It really depends on the individual, so there is no standard length of time. Try the Writing Assignment Calculator to layout the steps involved and a timeline to ensure you are on track.

Q. How many sources should be used in a typical paper.

A. It depends on the purpose of the paper and the topic. If your professor doesn’t specify a minimum number of sources to be used, aim to use enough sources to support your key points. If it is short paper with only a few points, then 3-5 sources might be enough. The UP Writing Center can also help you.

Q. Can we get our sources reviewed by you?

A. Librarians and library assistants at the Research Desk can help if you are unsure about what type of source you have and whether to use it, or if you are stuck on citing a source. You can contact us in a variety of ways to ask your questions. However, we don’t proofread papers or lists of references. Contact the UP Writing Center for help with writing and formatting papers.

Q. Where is the APA citation support site on the library website?

A. The EGR 110 course guide has a Cite Sources tab with links to APA info. Your Pocket Cengage Handbook also has a section on formatting papers in APA style.

Q. Does the school have an online citation maker?

A. Yes. You may have used EasyBib or NoodleBib in the past. We use a similar product called RefWorks which automatically formats your sources in the style you need (APA, MLA, etc.). It also has a tool to connect Word or Google Docs to your RefWorks account, which is very helpful when writing papers.

Q. How do you print papers?

A. You can print from campus computers or your own. The Clark Library computers send print jobs to printers that are to the left of the Research Desk. If you want to print wirelessly from your device, go to http://webprint.up.edu. Information Services has more details on printing.

II. Finding and Getting Sources

Q. What do I do if I cannot find a source that matches exactly what I need?

A. Contact the library Research Desk. We can give you tips on where to search, as well as strategies for improving your search.

Q. What other "wild card" symbols are there other than asterisks?

A. Most library databases use * to find the different endings, but there are a few other wild card symbols. Since there is no standardization across database vendors, I recommend that you look for a
help link when you are in a database to find out what their wild cards are and what they do. Here are more tips for the library catalog (aka UP Library Search).

Q. How long would sources from other libraries take to arrive at UP?
A. Books, CDs, or DVDs from a Summit library take an average of 5 days to arrive. Articles requested through the UP ILLiad system take an average of 3 days to arrive.

Q. How many books are we allowed to checkout?
A. There is no limit on number of books, CDs, or DVDs you can borrow from the Clark Library collection. Loan periods vary depending on the type of item. We send courtesy emails to remind you of due dates.

Q. Can you reserve the book online first and then pick it up at the library?
A. When you find an available book in the library using UP Library Search, follow the link to sign into your library account and you will see an option to Request UP’s copy. Library staff will retrieve it and put it on the hold shelf for you to pick up at the main desk.

Q. How do we download PDFs of books we find?
A. We get eBooks from different vendors, so it varies. Visit the Using UP’s eBooks guide to get tips.

III. Getting Help and Library Logistics

Q. Where can I get help if I forget about the information that we learned here today? If we have more specific questions, do you have office hours or something like that?
A. You can contact me, Diane Sotak, or the library Research Desk if you want an answer right away. You can also make an appointment with me. My schedule varies from week to week, so the online scheduler is the easiest way to see when I’m available and book me.

Q. When is the library open?
A. Visit the library website for the most accurate library hours.

Q. How do I reserve a study room?
A. The Clark Library has 20 group study rooms that can be reserved online. The rooms are for group use, so groups always have priority over individuals.