

POS 497Z: Conflicts and Development – Selected Sources of Information

Getting Started - The University at Albany libraries provides access to quality information on a vast range of political science topics. To find library information on a particular topic researchers generally begin with a search of a database providing references, and in some instances the full text, of documents pertinent to the topic. These documents include journal articles, books, research reports, government documents, etc. Many of the search techniques students apply in using an Internet search engine can be adapted to searching these databases. The major difference is that the databases have some additional search features which allow the researcher to obtain a more topically relevant set of results, and the information referenced in the databases has been selected to make sure that it meets general academic standards.

Researchers should search both the University Libraries' online catalog, *Minerva*, and the subject specific databases for political science. The latter can be accessed by clicking "Database & Indexes" from the libraries home page; selecting "political science" from the window at the bottom left; selecting "Indexes/Databases" from the window at the bottom right. Below are descriptions and some search tips for using *Minerva* and a couple of the key political science databases.

Books

Minerva – In addition to keyword searching try browsing subject headings. For example, click the "subject begins" option and type in the name of a country (Angola) party to the conflict. Then scroll thru the subject headings until you find one relevant to your issue (Angola—History—Civil War, 1975-). Click the subject heading and obtain a list of documents assigned that subject heading.

Scholarly and Public International Journals

If you click on "Databases & Indexes" from the libraries home page, <http://library.albany.edu/>, you will be able to access databases providing references to journal articles. Listed below are some of the databases which should be useful for this project. Depending on the conflict, there could be several other relevant databases to check.

CSA Worldwide Political Science Abstracts

Provides bibliographic information and abstracts to articles in over 1000 journals related to political science. Also provides references and links to quality Internet sites and some books.

Search Tips:

Use the "Advanced Search" option

Consult the "Help" feature

Use the wildcard * to retrieve references to documents containing your search term with all its end variations

Change "Anywhere" to "Keyword" to get more precise results

Consider using “Search History” to combine your search results
Click a “Descriptor” assigned to a relevant document to retrieve every reference in the database with that descriptor
Use the “Find It” link to check for availability in the university libraries
Create a bibliography from the “save, print, email” option

PAIS

PAIS International provides references to books, journal articles, government documents, and privately published research reports on almost any topic that has a public affairs dimension. It is international in coverage. Coverage begins with 1972 but the PAIS Archive extends coverage back to 1915. Uses the same interface as ***CSA Worldwide Political Science Abstracts***.

Social Sciences Abstracts

International, English-language periodicals in sociology, anthropology, geography, economics, political science, and law, 1983-.

Consult the “help” feature.

Use the truncation * to retrieve references to documents containing your search term with all its end variations

Consider using “Search History” to combine your search results.

Click a subject term from the sidebar in the search results to **narrow** the results to documents having that specific subject descriptor.

Click the peer reviewed box to restrict the results to scholarly articles.

Use the “Find It” link to check for availability in the university libraries

Store items in Folder and then create a bibliography

Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO)

Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO) provides the full-text of working papers, occasional papers, conference proceedings, etc., produced by prominent research organizations in the field of international affairs. It also includes the table of contents of major international affairs journals.

Historical Abstracts and American History and Life

Historical Abstracts - Covers the history of the world except for the United States and Canada from 1450 to the present. Includes all branches of history: political, diplomatic, military, economic, social, cultural, religious, and intellectual history and the history of science, technology and medicine. Also includes materials relating to the profession of history. Approximately 50% of the articles are from English-language journals. A good source for finding scholarly sources on international issues, 1955-. ***American History and Life*** - Covers the history and culture of the United States and Canada from prehistoric times to the present. Over 90% of the articles are from English-language journals. The database also includes citations to dissertations, book reviews, and media reviews, 1954-.

JSTOR

Full text of major academic journals. In most cases coverage begins with the 1st vol. of the journal but the most current 3-4 years is not included. Excellent source for historical research.

Military and Government

OK source for military information although much of what is included is more news than a thorough analysis of a topic.

News Services

LexisNexis Academic – Provides access to some wire services, full text of some newspapers including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Transcripts of television news programs and congressional documents.

News <http://library.albany.edu/reference/news.html>

UN

Internet Resources – United Nations <http://library.albany.edu/divs/gov/un.html>

Official Web Site Locator for the United Nations System of Organizations

<http://www.unsystem.org/>

International Peace Operations

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/ops.htm>

US Government

Catalog of US Government Publication

<http://catalog.gpo.gov/F>

The Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) is the finding tool for electronic and print publications from the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the U.S. government. The CGP contains descriptive records for historical and current publications and provides direct links to those that are available online. More than 500,000 records generated since July 1976 are contained in the CGP and it is updated daily. Use the Advanced Search mode and then search for documents in *Minerva* by title.

USA.gov <http://www.usa.gov/index.shtml>

Formerly Firstgov - this searchable government database of online U.S. government information indexes over 20,000 federal government websites.

Foreign Governments

Countries of the World <http://library.albany.edu/reference/countries.html>

Political handbook of the world