



University of Idaho
Library

3 Simple Tips for Expanding Your Literature Review

Jylisa Kenyon

Social Sciences Librarian

jylisadoney@uidaho.edu

What we're covering today

- Conducting citation chaining
- Mining author networks
- Saving searches and setting search alerts
- BONUS – Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

But first...Library fellowships!

- We offer numerous [Fellowships for graduate students](#):
 - Berry IJC Fellowship
 - CDIL/COGS Graduate Student Fellowship
 - Gary E. and Carolyn J. Strong Special Collections Fellowship
 - Julie and David Levine Data Hub Fellowship (New!)

Tip 1: Conducting citation chaining

- Citation chaining/searching is:
 - A strategy in which you use a single source to find related sources
- Citation chaining/searching helps you:
 - Trace the roots of important ideas
 - Discover how a topic has changed over time

Tip 1: Conducting citation chaining

- Two types of citation chaining/searching:
 - Backward citation chaining/searching
 - Finding additional sources in reference lists
 - Forward citation chaining/searching
 - Finding sources that cited your original source

Tip 2: Mining author networks

- Mining author networks
 - Who is publishing research on a particular topic?
 - Who are their co-authors on related papers?
- Two resources for mining author networks:
 - Web of Science Core Collection
 - Google Scholar

Tip 3: Saving searches and setting alerts

- Saved searches = Permalinks
- Types of alerts
 - Search alert
 - Citation alert
 - Journal alert

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- What is a literature review?
 - An up-to-date / current overview of research on a particular topic
- What is the purpose of a literature review?
 - Demonstrate that an author understands how their research fits within and expands the body of work on a topic
 - Establish facts or best practices within a body of literature
 - Identify gaps in the research

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- How do you determine the appropriate scope for a literature review?
 - A few questions you can ask yourself, include:
 - How comprehensive does it need to be?
 - Will it include relevant material regardless of date, or focus only on a specific time frame?
 - Will it include sources from other, related disciplines?
 - How have others in my discipline written their literature reviews?

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Still need ideas of ways to organize a literature review?
 - Consider...
 - Theme
 - Broad to specific
 - Methodology/method/theory
 - Trends based on time
 - Publication date

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Theme
 - Example: Youth substance use/abuse prevention
 - School-based programs
 - Family-based programs
 - Religious-based programs

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Broad to specific
 - Example: Grazing management practices in riparian areas
 - General grazing management practices across areas
 - Facilitating practices in riparian areas
 - Herding
 - Stock water development
 - Barrier / fencing

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Methodology/method/theory
 - Example: Workers' intention to leave their jobs before and after the Covid-19 pandemic
 - 3 types of research (for example):
 - Those that did an analysis of economic or labor statistics
 - Those that did original surveys of workers
 - Those that did interviews with workers

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Trends based on time
 - Example: Physical and outfit characteristics of female superheroes and villains
 - 1940 – 1959
 - 1960 – 1979
 - 1980 – 1999
 - 2000 – 2009
 - 2010 – Present

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Publication Date
 - Example: Climate change scenarios and guidance
 - 1980s
 - 1990s
 - 2000s
 - 2010s
 - 2020s

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- How can you make connections between the sources you find?
 - Summarizing vs. synthesizing
 - Step-by-step synthesis
 - Synthesis matrix

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Step-by-step synthesis
 1. Read your sources several times
 2. Take notes on every source
 3. Identify relevant concepts and supporting sources
 4. Restructure your notes by concept
 5. Organize your concepts into an outline

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- Synthesis matrix – can help you:
 - “...[R]ecord the main points of each source and document how sources relate to each other” (Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries, 2019)

After reading multiple articles, this writer has identified these three major themes.

A SAMPLE SYNTHESIS MATRIX

Topic: Anxiety in Graduate Students

| | Multiple Roles | Relationships | Classroom Environment |
|--|--|---|---|
| Fogg (2009) | | Students can be blackballed in departments because those within the department can be very critical | Classroom contests to debate arguments and reading assignments could lead to extreme anxiety |
| Offstein, Larson, McNeill, & Mwale (2004) | Graduate students, especially doctoral students, are also expected to teach | | |
| Austin, Cameron, Glass, Kosko, Marsh, Abdelmagid, & Burge (2009) | Graduate student socialization is unique in that not only does the student need to transition into the role as a student, but they must also be socialized into the profession | | |
| Wolniewicz (1996) | Graduate students report feeling pressure to prioritize academic roles over health, financial security, and personal relationships | Personal relationships and connections suffer; socializing is not a priority | Anxiety over finishing large projects and meeting deadlines. |
| Davis & Coleman (2007) | | | Instructor feedback can be overwhelming, particularly when instructors use red ink when giving feedback |
| Wyatt & Oswald (2013) | Graduate students often have problems juggling academic responsibilities, research, and financial responsibilities | Graduate students are often detached from the social and cultural events and activities largely promoted to undergraduate students on campus. | |
| Pallos, Yamada, & Okawa (2005) | | Limited support and interactions with supervisors | A lot of independent learning and researching without much guidance |
| Salim (2011) | Graduate students must balance teaching responsibilities (office hours, student emails, preparation) | | Managing and working with challenging students in the classroom can contribute to stress/anxiety |
| Perepiczka, Chandler, & Becerra (2011) | | | Statistics and research-focused courses can be overwhelming and produce anxiety/procrastination |

There are some blanks in the matrix, as not all resources will discuss every identified theme.

The writer has included the names of the author(s) and the year. This provides all the information needed for APA in-text citations. For MLA, include author(s) and page number; for Chicago Style, include author(s), year, and page number. Format your matrix according to your assignment instructions.

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- [Synthesis matrix template](#)



Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- When do you stop searching for literature?
 - There is no “one-size fits all” answer
 - This will be informed by your topic, your discipline, guidance from your advisor or the journal publisher, etc.

Strategies for planning and organizing a literature review

- When do you stop searching for literature?
 - Ask yourself if you have:
 - Searched within all relevant resources
 - Utilized various search strategies and keywords
 - Achieved saturation = seeing the same findings and sources repeatedly
 - Found enough sources to justify that your new research is necessary

Fall 2022 Graduate Student Essentials



When: Tuesdays from 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Where: Library first floor classroom (Room 120) and live via Zoom

~~September 6: Essential Library Skills to Ace Graduate School~~

~~September 13: 7 Tips To Make Your Data Management Life Easier~~

~~September 20: 3 Simple Tips for Expanding Your Literature Review~~

September 27: Supercharging Your Scholarly Presence in 3 Easy Steps

October 4: Web Mapping for Every Discipline – How to Use ArcGIS Online