

ERIC via CSA Illumina

A UCI Libraries Database Guide – updated August 2005

The ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) database

contains records of education-related literature on all age groups—“neonates” through “older adults” (ages 65+). Sources include citations and abstracts to professional journals, reports, classroom guides, meeting papers, book/product reviews, theses and dissertations. The UC-eLinks provide call numbers to print copies of the journals *and/or* full-text articles online when available.

DATE COVERAGE

1966 – present; ERIC is updated monthly.
ERIC documents (non-journal literature) from 1993 – present are available in full-text online via UC-eLinks.

GETTING STARTED

From the Libraries' home page (<http://www.lib.uci.edu>), click on ANTPAC. Perform a Title/Journal Title search for **eric** database in the Entire Collection. In the list of results, click on the **ERIC via Cambridge Scientific Abstracts**. Follow that link to enter the database.

QUICK SEARCH

Words entered in the Quick Search window are searched “Anywhere” in the record. This usually creates results too large and unwieldy to be useful. Instead choose the **Advanced Search** tab.

ADVANCED SEARCH

Use the **Advanced Search** screen to combine different types of searches and to limit/refine your search. Scroll down the **Advanced Search** screen to see these options, such as Date Range, English Only, Journal Articles Only, and ERIC Documents only. To see the list of Publication Types, click on the **Search Tools** tab, then on the **Indexes** tab, then select **Publication Type Index** from the pull-down menu. Click **Go**.

In the search windows near the top of the screen, use the pull-down menus to select the type of search you want to do. The “Anywhere” default will likely generate too many records—instead, choose **Keywords** or other menu choices. **Keywords** searching scans the words in the article titles, descriptors (main subjects of the record), and abstracts (summaries). Multi-word search terms will be searched as an exact phrase (e.g., digital divide). If you need more search lines, click on **Add Row**, which is at the upper right of the search windows.

Advanced Search example:

academic achievement Descriptors, DE=
and **immigra*** Keywords, KW=
and

Limited to: English Only
[the asterisk (*) is the wildcard, or truncation symbol;
immigra* retrieves immigration, immigrant, and immigrants]

At the bottom of each screen of results, see the **Advanced Search** strategy that generated the list of records. Use it to refine the existing search results, such as
- add, replace, or delete search terms; change the limits
- change the search field (e.g., from **Keywords** to **Descriptors**)
OR enter a new search – click on **Clear** and begin anew.

SUBJECT SEARCHING in the THESAURUS

Search the ERIC Thesaurus to identify standardized subject headings--called **descriptors**--used in the ERIC database. Click on **Thesaurus** at the bottom of the **Advanced Search** screen, or, next to the Advanced Search tab, click on **Search Tools**, then on the **Thesaurus** tab. Note the **Definitions** and **Tips** at the first Thesaurus screen. Type search terms in the search window, then click on **Go**. Enter single concepts (e.g., learning theories), *not* concepts you plan to combine (e.g., cognitive style and computers). To combine concepts (sets), see the next page.

When Thesaurus results are displayed, click on the descriptor to see if there are **Broader**, **Narrower**, and/or **Related Terms**. To retrieve all ERIC records to which a descriptor has been assigned, check the box next to the descriptor to select it, then click on **Search** (at left) to generate the list of results.

To search for multiple, similar descriptors from the Thesaurus--such as **Ethnicity** and **Ethnic Groups**--and create one list of records that have either term as a descriptor, check the box next to each in the Thesaurus list, check the OR operator (“to broaden”), and click on **Search** (at left).

DISPLAYING RESULTS

Your search results appear in “Most Recent First” order. Use the tabs across the top of your search results to see sub-sets of your total results, such as only the records from **Peer-Reviewed Journals**. To see all sub-set result categories, click on **More** at the far right of the horizontal tabs.

At the last line of each short-format record, click on **View Record** to see the full record--not the full-text--and abstract for a specific citation. To change the display format for all records retrieved, scroll to the bottom left of the results list and choose from the pull-down options in the **Show** window. Click on **Go** to redisplay the record(s) in the new format.

ARE THESE AT UCI? IN FULL-TEXT?

To see if the UC Irvine Libraries have a specific journal or ERIC document, click on the orange **UC-eLINKS** (at the bottom of each short-format record; at the top of each full-format record). The new UC-eLinks screen offers the option to:

- 1) Link directly to the **online full-text article**, if available
- 2) Link directly to the **ERIC document in full-text online** available from ERIC (for 1993-present only; older ERIC documents are on microfiche only)
- 3) Search UCI's ANTPAC Catalog and display the UCI call number if the libraries own the specific book or journal --in **paper copy and/or online full-text**
- 4) **Request** an Interlibrary Loan for items that are not available in the UCI Libraries. This service is for currently-enrolled UCI students, faculty and staff only. Allow 5-10 days for delivery. Usually there is no cost.

NEED HELP? Not finding anything useful?

At any ERIC search screen, click on **Help & Support** at the upper right. UCI's **Ask a Librarian** services can also assist you: <http://www.lib.uci.edu/services/ask/ask.html>

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SAVE, PRINT, EMAIL RECORDS

While reviewing search results in the short format, click in the box next to the record number for each record you want to print, save, or email. In the long format, this box is at the top. Click on the **Save, Print, Email** button at the top of the results list; on the next screen, note the number of Marked Records.

Select options for record format—the default is **Short format**. To email the marked records, scroll down to the Email button and enter an email address. Click on **Email** to mail records, **Save** to download, or **Print** to format records for printing.

Note: Emailed ERIC records include your search strategy but *not* full-text of the articles. The option to email online full-text articles varies, depending on the full-text provider and your email's ability to receive full-text (as html, as pdf, etc.) **To email the full-text of articles, display each article in full-text on the screen** and look for email links there or in the tool-bar.

Use **QuikBib** to format your **List of References** in APA format (or choose from a brief list of other formats/styles): In the Save, Print, Email screen, note **Create a Bibliography with QuikBib**. Using the records you've marked, choose a document format, such as RTF or MS Word, then click on **Create** to have QuikBib automatically format the records in APA format. You may cut and paste this list into your document, adjust for font and spacing, and preserve the hanging indent characteristic of APA 5th format. Note the QuikBib header at the top and its Print – Save – E-Mail functions. This header also provides a link to a few online APA style guides. Proofread carefully; automatic formatting is not perfect.

USING/COMBINING PREVIOUS SEARCHES

Before exiting ERIC or being timed out, return to earlier searches/search results during your session by clicking on **Search History** (at upper right of the screen). This lists all searches, including the most recent, in reverse chronological order. In each search record, you may click on:

- **Save as Alert** – to have ERIC automatically run the search each month and email you the newest records
- **Run Search** – to re-display those search results
- **Save** – to store a search strategy for 6 months--often a carefully refined one containing several terms combined in precise AND and OR relationships.
- **Combine searches** – Combine results from two or more searches in this list; use the window below Search #1
- **Edit** – Return to the Advanced Search screen to add, remove, and/or replace search terms and search lines.

Click on **Help & Support** (upper right) for more details and screen shots describing these database features.

SEARCHING by ED Number

When only the ERIC document number is known, the ERIC record for it can be retrieved via an **Accession Number** (AN=) search. Select it from the Advanced Search pull-down menu. In the search box, type in ED and its 6 digits (no spaces). To search for several at a time, enter an EDnnnnnn in each search box separated by **or**.

SEARCHING by AUTHOR

To identify materials by a specific author, start by finding the different ways his/her name appears in ERIC records. Click on the tab, **Search Tools**, then on the **Indexes** tab. Select Author Index from the pull-down menu. Type in the surname and at least a first initial. From the list of results, click in the small box at the left of each name and its variant. Click on **Search** (at left) to list records with one of these names as author.

SEARCH TIPS in Advanced Search

At the bottom of each search results screen is the search that created it. Edit your search here. Click on **Search Tips** for ideas. The strategies below for improving search results are not meant to replace consulting with a librarian. For UCI assistance, see <http://www.lib.uci.edu/services/ask/ask.html>

Refining too-large search results

As appropriate, use the options available below the search windows, such as Date Range, Journal Articles Only, and English Only.

Change the default search field, **Anywhere**, to **Keywords** searching. Examine the **descriptors** in the most relevant records, and edit them into your search--replace **keywords** in your search with **descriptors** to shorten the results list further and improve relevancy.

Replace broad search terms with narrower ones, such as **long term memory** instead of **memory**. Use the **Thesaurus** to identify narrower terms (see first page, upper right).

Add a narrowing concept—an “and” search line. Click on **Add Row** at upper right of the Advanced Search text boxes.

Improving zero or too-small search results

- Double-check **spelling**
- Use truncation/wildcard (asterisk*) to retrieve similar words—click on **Help & Support** (upper right of screen), then on **Index**, then on **Wildcard Symbols** for description/examples.
- If you used limits, especially in Publication Type, consider removing it, or choose more than one to broaden the search.
- Add synonymous terms to one or more search lines (terms connected with OR), e.g., **dropouts or academic persistence**
- Use the **Thesaurus** (see first page, upper right) to find Related, Narrower, and Broader descriptors to add to your search.
- Change one search line at a time from **Descriptors** searching to **Keywords** searching.
- When two or more search lines (connected with AND) were used, remove the least crucial line.
- If an **author's name** comes up several times in relevant records, click on it to see all records in ERIC by him/her.
- Perform your search in another, related Article Database, such as PsycINFO, Education Full Text, or Sociological Abstracts. Consult the online **Subject Guides**, each of which has an annotated list of sources for finding journal articles: <http://www.lib.uci.edu/online/subject/subject.php>

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