# *NHU Library Guide to: Advanced Searching Techniques*

The NHU Library subscribes to over 40 academic databases that give you access to thousands of journals, scholarly articles, primary sources, statistics, and more!

When you are doing searches on our databases, you can make your searches more effective by:

- **Choosing the right database for your particular topic**. Click the "View Database Subject List" button on the Library website!

Selecting a discipline from this list ensures that you are searching on the recommended databases for your topic.

- **Choosing and searching the right keywords.** Once you have formulated your research question, you can break your topic into core concepts; these will be the keywords that you will search in our databases and online. Remember to also brainstorm related terms for your core concepts.
    - o For example, research on the "**Cultural globalization and how it is affecting countries with strong, strict, moral and traditional values"** can be broken into concepts: **Globalization, Traditional culture, Cultural Identity, Culture Conflict, Ethics, Religion, and more.**

- **Cross-search multiple databases when possible**. To maximize your search on the Academic Search Complete database, you may **cross- search** it with other EBSCO collections by including additional databases in your search query. This allows you to extend your search throughout various collections in one single search!
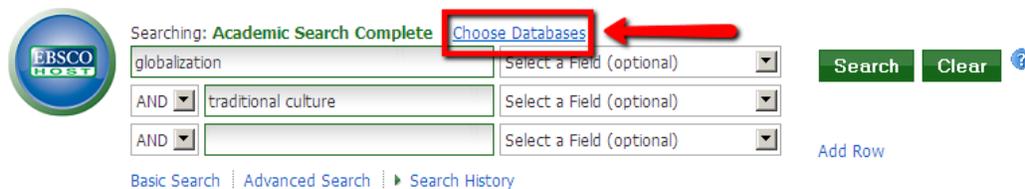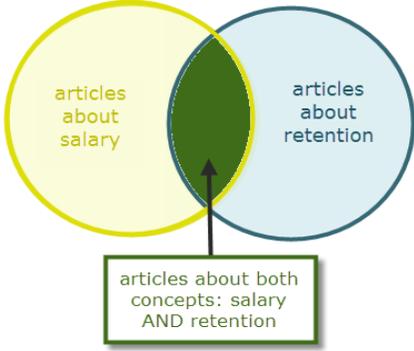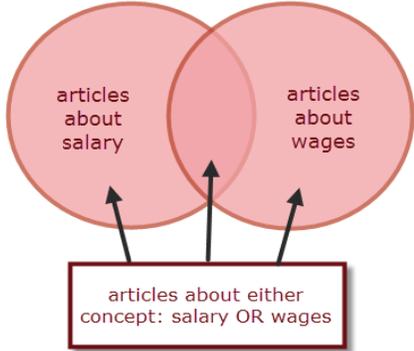

- **Use parenthesis and quotation marks for "exact phrase" searching.** Enclosing your search term in quotations, finds results where the exact phrase appears with no other words in between.
    - o For example, a search for "color blind society" will yield more **specific** results than "color", "blind", and "society."
    - o **Parenthesis** can also be used to nest terms within other search terms, and allow you to specify the order in which they will be searched. For example, when you enter **(Hispanic OR Latino) AND racial identity**, the search engine retrieves results containing **(Hispanic OR Latino)** first.

- **Use truncation.** Truncation is represented by an **asterisk (*),** this feature allows you to search any ending of a root term in your search. The asterisk at the end of the root term, tells the database to search for that word with any ending. This expands your search to find more articles!

Thanks to the Walden University Library, as portions of this guide's template were built upon the template created by their staff. Used by permission.

- o For example, a search for **child*** will retrieve results with **child, children, childhood**.
  - o If your topic uses the word teenagers, the root word is **teen*** and a search will retrieve results with **teen, teens, teenager**.

- **Use Boolean Operators.** Narrow the scope of your search by combining concepts and keywords, or exclude terms.

AND	The **AND** operator connects different concept and finds articles that contain all terms in your query. Examples: salary AND retention tutoring AND grades PTSD AND divorce	
OR	**OR** finds articles that use EITHER of the keywords. Using this operator increases and expands your results because it finds different ways to phrase a concept. Examples: salary OR wages grades OR scores OR achievement	
NOT	The **NOT** operator excludes results that use the keyword. WARNING: Use **NOT** with caution. It can remove relevant results. Examples: standardized test NOT SAT Mexico NOT New Mexico	
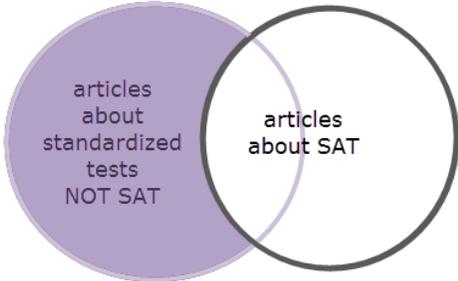
- **Refine your results by selecting limiters.** Most of the databases allow you to limit your search results to items available in full text, in peer-reviewed or scholarly journals. You can also limit the date range of the articles or select to only see journals or articles published in a specific language or geographical area. **Remember to revise your search based on your results.**

- **You can always contact the Library for help finding resources and searching in our databases.** Email us at libstaff@nhu.edu or call us at (408) 273- 2730. **We are here to help you!**