



ATHENS COLLEGE *of* MINISTRY

Library Manual



Athens College of Ministry Library Manual

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General Information

The ACMin Collection

The Athens College of Ministry's Library is a specialized collection of resources intended to support faculty and students in their scholarly research pursuit of deep theological understanding as well as support their personal spiritual formation. In addition to the print collection housed at ACMin, ACMin faculty and students have access to a rich array of electronic journals and resources.

Our ACMin Library Specialist

For assistance with any library matters and research projects, please contact Mrs. Diane Gomes at 706-769-1472 or dgomes.acmin@gmail.com. Mrs. Gomes is available to visit classes in order to provide additional direction for course research projects.

Library Hours

The ACMin Library is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM and evenings when courses meet until 9:00 PM. See the hours posted in the library each semester.

Using the Library to Support Learning

For Faculty

ACMin is committed to assisting each instructor in the creation of an impactful teaching experience. The need for instructional materials should be considered during the syllabus development process. Instructors should consider resources available in the ACMin Library collection (see instructions below to search the library database in Populi) when creating assignments and research projects. Mrs. Diane Gomes can also assist with resource searches and will create a "Course Reserve" collection of resources at the instructor's request. Instructors may request titles (books, videos, etc.) for acquisition in writing to Mrs. Diane Gomes to support student learning. Instructors are also encouraged to use the library for their own personal edification.

For Students

ACMin is committed to supporting each student with their research and studies through our available print collection and online sources. Students should consider resources available in the ACMin Library collection (see instructions below to search the library database in Populi) as well as online sources when undertaking research and seeking resources to support their learning. Students are always welcome to engage in quiet study in the ACMin Library area whenever the library is open.

ACMin Library Research Guidelines

Purpose of Academic Research

Research involves critical thinking. Critical thinking in the college research context may be defined as "exercising or involving careful judgment or judicious evaluation."¹ The ACMin Library endeavors to serve students to that end.

Identify a Topic

Investigate a problem or area of interest or important to your discipline. Seek help from your instructor, look through handouts, textbooks, and bibliographies, and search the library catalog subject headings to develop a list of "keywords" to help find sources for your research project.

Gather Resources

With your topic in hand begin gathering resources. Use the "Search Catalog" feature in Populi (see below) as well as the online Galileo (see below) database to get started.

Primary Resources come in many formats. They are generally described as first-hand evidence by a participant or eyewitness at time that the event took place. These can be diaries, letters, memoirs, autobiographies, newspaper articles (reporting a current event), eye witness accounts, artistic works, speeches, legal documents, and others. Primary sources enable you to

work with the raw material and draw your own conclusions. The important factor here is that a primary source is an “original” record of the event.

Secondary Resources point to and interpret primary resources. These address or analyze events, people, works, or topics after the fact. They include journal articles, non-fiction books that explain or are developed around an area present in a primary source, biographies, newspaper articles (reporting on past events), encyclopedias, etc. Secondary sources allow you to broaden your research by providing background information, analyses, and unique perspectives one or more steps removed from an original event or work. An important factor here is that a secondary source is an “after-the-fact” account or analysis of a past event.

Checklist to distinguish primary (P) and secondary (S) resources:

- *Author:* What is the author's relationship to the material or event described? P=an eyewitness account or S=an interpretation of the account
- *Purpose:* What is the purpose of the content? P=first-hand documentation of the event or (S) an analysis of the event from a later time or different cultural context
- *Publication Date:* What is the date of the publication? P=sourced at the time of the event or S=after the event

Evaluating Resources

A reliable source is any source that has competence in the field of interest, without any biases or conflicts of interest related to the topic. Finding reliable sources is important in order to ensure that what is written or reported is accurate. Understanding the context in which the book was written better assists you to analyze its content and determine if it is a useful resource. Consider the following when evaluating resources found:

Author: Have you heard of the author before? Has your instructor mentioned the author's name? Is the author affiliated with a college or university or do they have other organizational affiliation? Is the author cited in other books on the subject?

Publisher: Was the resource published by a university press that holds high academic standards? If published by an organizational affiliation is it considered a reliable source with competence in the field of interest?

Date of Publication: Check the copyright date for verifying primary or secondary source. If you are researching a “current issue” you want the most up-to-date sources you can find. Check the date! New evidence can drastically alter previously published arguments or interpretations. If a source was translated, when was it done? If available, choose a source that has been translated from the original into your language.

Websites: Much of the same criteria is used for evaluating websites as for printed text sources. This however, may be difficult to find. If the website is published by a credible source it should be listed at the bottom of the front webpage or accessible from a “contact us” or link. If you are in doubt, check with the instructor or library specialist. *Journal articles:* Journal articles

typically meet academic standards and are commonly accessed online. Some databases are provided in CD format accessed through a dedicated computer. *Peer-reviewed* articles are written by experts AND have been reviewed by other experts before the article is allowed to be published. This increases the likelihood of its authoritativeness and accuracy. Some items in peer-reviewed journals, such as editorials, book reviews, and letters to the editor are not typically reviewed for accuracy and may not be accepted by your instructor. Graduate students at ACMin are expected to incorporate peer-reviewed sources in their research projects. (Magazine articles are not typically considered "academic" resources. If you have a question please consult your instructor.)

Objectivity. After evaluating your source analyze the text for objectivity. Secondary sources provide interpretations of primary data. Every interpretation is influenced by the author's context and biases. Find out where the author is coming from and use the evidence accordingly. Using various authors will give you valuable information about the various positions held within the discussion of your topic

Applicability. After identifying your resources from the above criteria it is time to dig deeper to select those you will use for your research. Look at the table of contents. Does the book cover topics or areas you wish to include in your research? Next, look at the index. This is a wonderful resource for researchers as you can use it to quickly jump to particular passages to test if the topic is well defined and covered. The index can also provide a feel for the authority and scope of the text. If you need further determining information read the preface and introduction.

A Final Word

A critical researcher regularly considers the purpose of the research: what is supposed to be achieved and why. Without a sense of what you plan to accomplish, you're unlikely to have much success with your research.

How to Access Resources

Books in the Library

Searching Available Titles in Populi

In order to determine what books and videos are available to you via the ACMin Library collection, log into your Populi account at *acmin.populiweb.com*. Contact Mrs. Gomes if you have trouble accessing your account or need a "Guest" log-in. Follow these instructions:

- Click on "Library" in the black bar at the top of the screen.
- In the "Search Catalog" tab, in the "field" pull-down menu, select "author," "title," or "subject."
- Type in what you are looking and select "Go."

Placing a Hold on a Book

After locating a desired resource through your Populi catalog search (above), if you would like to put a hold on a book so that you can pick it up when you are on campus:

- Click on the link to the resource.
- Click on "Place a Hold" just under the image of the resource.
- In the box that appears, enter your name in the "Patron" box and again click on "Place a Hold."

Your book will be placed in the "Books on Hold" shelf near the Library entrance. Please check out books on hold within one week of placing the hold. Books left on hold longer than 10 days will be returned to the Library collection.

Checking Books Out of the Library

Once you have identified a book for checkout, locate it on the shelves using the assigned call number. Ask the Library Assistant on duty for assistance as needed.

From the "Library" link in the black bar at the top of the Populi screen:

- Click on "Check Out" near the top right corner of the screen.
- Scan the book's barcode or type in the title of the book in the space provided and select the correct book from the list that appears.
- Enter the name of the person checking out the book.
- Click on "Complete Checkout."

Returning Books to the Library

Please return all titles in a timely manner so that others may use them. Course grades may not be accessed at the end of the semester if students have not returned books to the Library. Students will be charged the replacement cost of any lost book. Please contact Mrs. Gomes as needed regarding any matters related to books not returned.

Galileo Online Databases

ACMin Students can access the Galileo search engine, a database run by the University System of Georgia that contains thousands of electronic books, journals, encyclopedias, and more. To access Gallileo:

- Go to: www.galileo.usg.edu/welcome/
- Enter the current password. (See the following page on our ACMin website to obtain the current Gallileo password: acmin.org/Populi)

Once in the database, you can search by title, author, and keywords for both electronic and downloadable PDF books, articles, journals, etc.

LOGOS Bible Software

The Athens College of Ministry makes a large repository of electronic Bibles, bible references, and scholarly biblical research works available to its students through its LOGOS Bible Software found on a computer in the ACMin Library. Visit the ACMin Library for a list of titles available via the Logos Bible Software and to view these resources.