GLOSSARY OF LIBRARY AND ACADEMIC TERMS

ABSTRACT - a summary of a book or journal article. If the abstract is interesting, use the citation to find the book or full article.

ANNOTATION - a note that describes, explains, or evaluates a particular document.

BIBLIOGRAPHY - The list of works cited at the end of an article, paper, book, or other research-based writing. It may include more than merely the works referenced in the research. There are also specialized subject bibliographies, published separately as books.

BOOLEAN OPERATORS (Boolean Logic) - The words AND, OR, and NOT are used to combine search terms to broaden or narrow search results.

CALL NUMBER - The letters and numbers assigned to a book to give it a unique location in the library. The call number relates to the book's subject heading. Prescott College, and most academic libraries, uses Library of Congress call numbers; most public libraries use the Dewey Decimal System.

EXAMPLE: Call # = BF637.C6S85 = Subject Heading = Cross-cultural counseling

CATALOG (or Online Catalog) - a database containing records for a specific library or group of libraries. Our Online Catalog contains the holdings (books and periodicals) not only for Prescott College, but for other libraries in Yavapai County as well.

CITATION - The information that allows a reader to find a particular book, article, or other material, whether in print or electronic format. Citations usually include the author or editor name, the book or article title, journal volume and issue number, page number, the place and date of publication, and the publisher. Online information may include a URL, a DOI, and the date the material was accessed. Citations are arranged in very specific formats according to a style manual. Some style manuals used at Prescott College are APA, MLA, and CSE (McMillan).
CONTROLLED VOCABULARY - Specific words or phrases to use for best results when searching in the online catalog or journal databases. The online catalog uses Library of Congress Subject Headings; each database has a Thesaurus or Subject Terms link to help you find that database’s preferred terminology.

COPYRIGHT - The legal right to control the production, use, and sale of copies of a literary, musical, or artistic work, and most of the information, art, etc., you find online.

DATABASE - A collection of information, usually searchable online.

   EXAMPLE: EBSCOhost is a database containing articles from over 12,000 journals, covering many academic disciplines. Some articles are full-text.

INDEX - A systematic, searchable guide to the contents of a database. Also, a subject/author/title listing in the back of a book.

   EXAMPLE: EBSCOhost indexes over 12,000 journal titles, with articles searchable by author, title, subject, or natural language.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN - A means of borrowing books and/or articles from libraries outside of the Yavapai County Library Network.

JOURNAL - A periodical that is scholarly or academic in content and purpose, as compared with a magazine, which is geared towards a more general audience.

   EXAMPLES: Conservation Biology, Ecological Applications.

LC (Library of Congress) CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM - The system of letters and numbers used to assign a call number to books and other materials. The LC system is usually used in academic libraries.

MAGAZINE - A general interest, non-scholarly periodical.

   EXAMPLES: Time, Psychology Today.

MICROFORM - Printed matter is sometimes transferred onto film in either MICROFICHE (rectangular sheets) or MICROFILM (rolls) format. Special readers are required to view this material.

PEER-REVIEWED (Refereed) JOURNAL - Scholarly journals whose articles are reviewed and evaluated by subject specialists prior to publication.

July 2011  Contact library@prescott.edu
PERIODICAL - A generic term for anything published periodically, including magazines, journals, and newspapers.

PLACE A HOLD - Prescott College students may Place a Hold on books from other libraries within Yavapai County, and on books that are currently checked out from our library. The student will be notified when the book is ready for them to check out. This differs from Interlibrary Loan, which involves materials from outside the county.

PRIMARY SOURCE - A manuscript or other document providing original research or documentation.

REFERENCE - The process of answering the questions of library users, or helping them to find information.

REFERENCE BOOK - A book that contains facts, statistics, biographical or bibliographical information, or in some way is a valuable tool for answering reference questions. These books are shelved apart from the rest of the collection, by LC classification system, and may not be checked out.

RENEWING BOOKS - an extension of the loan period. Students may renew books online, or at the Circulation Desk. Books will not be renewed if another patron has placed a hold on the book.

RESEARCH - A thorough investigation of a subject, using all appropriate print and electronic resources. A Research Paper is not a report - be sure you understand the difference!

RESERVES - A selection of specific course readings selected by a faculty member for all class members to read. The books and/or articles may be checked out for 5 hours, and must be read in the Library. Ask for these materials at the Circulation (Front)Desk.

STACKS - In library lingo, bookshelves are known as stacks.

STYLE MANUAL (Citation Style) - A book that describes how to format a scholarly or research paper. It includes sections on citations, pagination, and style. Different disciplines (psychology, literature, etc.) use different style manuals. Commonly used style manuals are APA, MLA, Chicago, and McMillan.

SUBJECT HEADING - An official (Library of Congress) description of what a book or article is about. Learn the subject headings for your area of study in order to search more effectively in the online catalog and various journal databases.

July 2011  Contact library@prescott.edu