NSI Course   **Literature search exercise**   **Negrón-Ortiz August 2002**

Due Thursday. Sept. 6.

Objectives of this exercise: Obtain information relevant to a science topic assigned in lab.
                          Enhance your ability to use library to find published information

A. Use the online article database(s) of the Miami University Library system (WWW.lib.MUOHIO.EDU) to find a
   recent (1990 or later; preferably 2000 - 2002) articles that is relevant to your topic. An easy way to use these
   databases is to use the website for the Library (above) and choose:
          Indexes and Databases
                 Databases by subject grouping:
                        Science and Technology
                               Environment & Ecology
                                      (among the most relevant databases:)
                                      Agricola
                                      Science Citation Index Expanded

        Once in one of these databases you can search by subject, author, etc., but keep notes of how
you searched (e.g. what keywords you tried, what combinations, how many "hits" you got). Look at
the titles and abstracts of the numerous articles the database will provide you, and based on these
choose five that appear to be the most relevant.

        Now find these articles. Our Library has many journals on the shelves (in Hughes Hall) and
many available online. Go to the Catalog page of WWW.lib.MUOHIO.EDU and search by Title,
entering the name of the journal. You will be provided with either the call number of the hard copy
of the journal on the shelves, or a link to a webpage for the online version of the journal. Either way,
find the volume you need, then the article. If the journal is not available, or the article is not that
relevant, try the next article you found.

        Turn in a print out or photocopy of the first page of the article. Write a paragraph (or two)
describing what the article contains in general, and what it contains that is specifically relevant to
your topic, along with a description of how you searched.

A note on the Internet: Lots of useful information is readily available on the Internet, and it is more
fun to use than some other sources because of the ease of searching, the pretty visuals, etc. However,
there are some limits to its reliability. First, there is no quality control analogous to the peer-review
process of publication; anyone can post anything, including falsehoods, on the Internet. Second,
websites can be changed at the whim of the author. Websites can also be deleted at any time. A good
source for the differences among Internet search engines, guidance on searching strategies, etc., try
the University at Albany's site: http://library.albany.edu/internet/search.html