

Using the Library Media Center

BCC Library Media Center Homepage: <http://www.bcc.ctc.edu/lmc/>

The Library Media Center website is a tool that will help you be successful in this class. Since we realize that you have many demands on your time, many resources are available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Through the Library website, you can:

- Search the BCC Library catalog and the catalogs of other libraries
- Search for periodical articles, many of which are full-text
- Ask a reference question to a librarian via email
- View and download helpful handouts, such as how to cite using MLA citation style
- Browse through listings of evaluated, quality websites, grouped by subject

Helpful Hints:

- Click on “Library Catalogs” to search for books in the BCC Library, the King County Library and other local libraries
- You won’t find periodical articles in the library catalog.

Searching the Library Catalog

The library catalog allows you to search in different ways:

- **Keyword search** is the most basic way to search. You will find a lot of items when you search by keyword, but sometimes you find things that aren’t really what you are looking for.
- **Subject search** is a very precise way to search. Looking through lists of subjects is also a good way to build ideas.
- **Title or Author searches** are a great way to search if you know a specific title or know a particular author who writes books on the subject you are looking for.
- **Course Reserve Search** searches for items that your instructor has placed on hold in the library for you. You can search course reserves by instructor name, department, or course.

Looking at a record

Once you have found a book you are interested in, here is what the record tells you:

- **Bibliographic data:** This includes the title of the book, author, physical description, publishing information, subjects, and any notes relevant to this book. Look for this information at the top of the record.
- **Location:** This tells you where to locate your item in the library.
 - **Reference stacks** are on the 1st floor of the library and stay in the library.
 - **Circulating books** are on the 2nd floor of the library.
- **Call Number:** This shows you where to find your item on the shelf. The call numbers in this library use letters and numbers. Books on the same subject will have call numbers that are very similar.
- **Status:** This tells you whether the item is “available on shelf” or “checked out.” If the item is checked out, it will tell you when the item is due back in the library.
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Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)

What are Subject Headings?

Subject Headings are used to index different terms in a catalog or database. For example, items in the BCC library catalog are assigned subject headings from the *Library of Congress Subject Headings*.

When should you use Subject Headings?

Determining key words that describe a topic is an important step in the research process because it ensures the successful use of periodical indexes and online systems, such as the library's catalog and databases. You can use subject headings by looking up your topic in the LCSH to see if it is a valid subject heading. The LCSH also lists other related words or phrases. This way you do not have to think of all of the various ways in which a topic may be expressed. Subject headings help you find the right stuff in a short amount of time.

The related terms and phrases included for each subject heading can be used during the research process to help you identify related terms to broaden or narrow your topic.

The LCSH is a 4 volume set of books, arranged in alphabetical order. It is located on the first floor of the library next to the reference desk. Please ask a librarian if you need help finding or using the books.

LCSH Entry Example

If you were to look up "Solar System" in the *LCSH*, the entry would look like this:

Solar system

- BT Milky Way
- SA names of individual planets
- NT Asteroids
Comets
Meteoroids
Meteors
Nebular hypothesis
Planetology
Planets
Satellites
Sun
- Age**
- Early works to 1800**
- Ephemerides**
 - USE Ephemerides
- Exploration**
 - USE Outer space—exploration
- Motion in space**
 - UF Motion of the solar system in space
Solar motion
- Origin**
 - UF Origin of solar system
 - BT Cosmology

Explanation of notations:

- BT (broader term)
- SA (see also)
- NT (narrower term)
- UF (used for)
- USE (lists another subject heading instead)