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## Why Should You Use Library Resources?

Librarians recognize that many students feel their research needs are met adequately by Google and other Web search engines. And hey, who can blame a student for using the Web? It's fast, easy, and offers a wealth of information on almost every topic under the sun. Library Web pages, on the other hand, can be confusing, difficult to navigate and bewildering to search. But have you considered what kind of information you're getting when you use something like Google to fulfill your research needs? While a good bit of the information you retrieve from a Google search will be unbiased and reliable, a lot of it will be untrustworthy, perhaps promoting someone's

personal agenda or simply giving you a sales pitch. In worst-case scenarios you may even find pages full of offensive or hate-filled rhetoric. Why is that? Well, unlike a library database which contains only copyrighted articles that were originally published in mainstream or scholarly journals, magazines and newspapers, *anyone* with Internet access and little know-how can publish a Web page and have it say whatever they want. Some publishers of Web pages are clever, disguising misinformation with academic writing. Distinguishing between authentic, verifiable information and that which is suspect can be tricky. Using a library database will allow you to actually shorten the amount of time you spend

on your research since the results of your search will only contain licensed, copyrighted materials from reliable sources. Many students are frightened away because they don't know how to access library databases, and truth be told, we know that it can be initially intimidating. But that is precisely why librarians are here to help you! If you need help starting your research, don't hesitate to contact us. We can work with you to put your research efforts on the fast-track to success.

To learn more about obtaining research assistance, contact Maryellen Allen, Distance Learning Librarian at [mallen@ua.edu](mailto:mallen@ua.edu) or visit the following web page: <http://www.lib.ua.edu/distanced/>.



## New Online Tutorials

During the Fall 2007 semester, the UA Libraries had the distinct honor of working with three talented and industrious graduate fellows working to complete their Master's degrees in Library and Information Studies. Maryellen Allen, the Distance Learning Librarian for the UA Libraries was fortunate enough to have their assistance in designing and creating a series of online interactive

tutorials aimed at the needs of online and distance users. These short interactive movie clips address such areas as using the Libraries' electronic reserves system, employing the Libraries new hybrid search tool known as ExtremeSearch, and helping students troubleshoot common remote access problems with an online interactive guide. These tutorials have been published on

the Libraries' distance learning web page and are available for viewing. To access a tutorial, simply visit <http://www.lib.ua.edu/distanced/help.htm> and look under the heading "to view online tutorials for distance users". More tutorials will be added in the near future, so be sure to check back!

## Did You Know...?

That Alabama distance learners enrolled in degree-seeking programs at the University of Alabama are eligible to use their Action Cards (Student IDs) to check out materials at other state universities? Schools that have reciprocal agreements with UA include:

- Alabama A&M
- Auburn University
- Beville State Junior College
- Huntingdon College
- Judson College

- Selma University
- Shelton State Community College
- Stillman College
- UAB
- UAH
- University of Montevallo
- University of West Alabama

If you live far from Tuscaloosa, but closer one of the schools listed above, you can check out books and other materials from a reciprocal borrowing institution.



*“We would welcome the opportunity to assist faculty members in*

*incorporating online resources into your course site, providing your students with a comprehensive encapsulated online learning experience!”*

## Distance Services for Faculty

The University Libraries provide instructional services designed especially to assist University of Alabama faculty teaching off-campus courses.

We can work closely with you to design customized web pages and online interactive tutorials tailored to your assignment.

In addition, we are familiar with the workings of course management software applications such as eLearning and WebCT. We would welcome the opportunity to assist faculty members in incorporating online resources into your course site, providing your students with a comprehensive encapsulated online learning experience!

To find out more about

incorporating the library and online resources into your eLearning or WebCT course shell, contact the Distance Learning Librarian via phone at 205-348-8432 or email [mallen@ua.edu](mailto:mallen@ua.edu).

## Spring Online Research Workshops

Join us for a brief webinar on how to efficiently conduct research and use the Libraries’ online resources...all from the comfort of your own home! Participants in the introductory workshop will learn how to access the Libraries’ online resources (databases and electronic journals), assess a research topic, formulate efficient online research strategies, and obtain full-text

materials.

Spring workshops will be held on the following days/times:

**Sunday, Feb. 10, 3:00 pm**

**Tuesday, Feb. 12, 7:00 pm**

**Thursday, Feb 14, 3:00 pm**

Please note: All times reflect Central Standard Time.

To sign up for one of these workshops, please contact Maryellen Allen ([mallen@ua.edu](mailto:mallen@ua.edu)) or call 205-348-8432.



# Research Assistance

The Libraries want to assure all off-campus users that doing research at a distance doesn't have to be an insurmountable challenge. Research help is available from a variety of online locations. Contact the Distance Learning Librarian via phone at 205-348-8432 or email [mallen@bama.ua.edu](mailto:mallen@bama.ua.edu). During nights and weekends, you can contact the Gorgas Information Services desk at 205-348-6047 or use the [Ask-A-Librarian](#) service located under the "Services" column on the Libraries homepage:

<http://www.lib.ua.edu/>

## Additional Assistance

Do you need more help than a short phone call or online chat can provide? Are you conducting in-depth research? You may wish to schedule a one-on-one session with the distance learning librarian for more specialized assistance. Call Maryellen Allen at 205-348-8432 or email [mallen@ua.edu](mailto:mallen@ua.edu) to make arrangements. We can accommodate you with a variety of

technologies including phone, live chat or instant messenger.



**Distance users can have both UA Libraries print and ILL materials mailed to them directly.**

# Materials Delivery Using Interlibrary Loan

If you are a student registered with the University of Alabama's College of Continuing Studies or if you are a registered University of Alabama graduate student outside Tuscaloosa, the library will check out books to you and mail them through the postal service. Many off-campus users are reluctant to make use of interlibrary-loan (ILL) services

because they believe they'll need to drive to campus to pick up materials. Not so! Distance users can have both UA Libraries print and ILL materials mailed to them directly.

When requesting materials through interlibrary loan, simply make sure you set your status to "Distance Ed".

If you have additional questions about obtaining print materials or using the interlibrary loan service, please contact the Distance Learning librarian at 205-348-8432 or email [mallen@ua.edu](mailto:mallen@ua.edu).

In addition, you may view our brief online tutorial located at: [http://www.lib.ua.edu/tutorials/ill/ILL\\_Tutorial.htm](http://www.lib.ua.edu/tutorials/ill/ILL_Tutorial.htm)

# Loan Periods for Distance Users

Now that you've gotten the books you need from the UA Libraries, how long can you keep them? Our loan periods are quite generous and every student has the ability to renew their materials online unless the material has been recalled by another user. Loan periods vary by your classification. The chart below outlines the loan periods for various types of materials and patron statuses:

Books and government documents:
<b>Undergraduate students*</b> - 30 days, 3 renewals; 100 items total
<b>Graduate students*</b> - 60 days, 2 renewals; 250 items total
<b>Faculty</b> - Fixed due dates of January 31, May 31, and September 30; all items due May 31 must be brought into the library for renewal; 500 items total

\*Distance patrons are responsible for shipping materials back to the libraries within the allotted loan period.

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**ALABAMA**  
LIBRARIES

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The University of Alabama  
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Phone: 205-348-8432  
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## Mission Statement

In support of the UA Libraries mission to strive for excellence in advancing the University's teaching, research, and outreach programs, the University of Alabama Libraries provide its distance learning students with resources and services equivalent to those provided to on-campus users. Services extended to UA affiliated distance populations include such things as access to and use of both on-line and print-based information sources, library instruction, reference services, and limited technology assistance.

## Eligibility for Service

All students, faculty and staff currently enrolled in a degree-granting distance program offered by The University of Alabama are eligible for distance learning library services

## Keep In Touch!

Since the libraries are always changing, we encourage our distance users to keep in touch with us. Here are some of the ways we can stay in contact:

### Phone

Reference & Information Services:

205-348-6047

Distance Learning Librarian

Maryellen Allen

205-348-8432

### Email

Ask-A-Librarian

<http://www.lib.ua.edu/forms/refchatquest.htm>

Distance Learning Librarian

[mallen@ua.edu](mailto:mallen@ua.edu)

### Chat (Ask-A-Librarian)

<http://www.lib.ua.edu/forms/refchat.htm>

### Instant Messenger

Email the name of your IM client and your handle to [mallen@ua.edu](mailto:mallen@ua.edu)

### MySpace

<http://www.myspace.com/bamalibrarian>

### Facebook

Search for [mallen@bama.ua.edu](mailto:mallen@bama.ua.edu)

View profile and then click "Add to friends"

### At A Distance Blog

<http://distancelibraryservices.blogspot.com/>

### Blog RSS Feed

<http://distancelibraryservices.blogspot.com/atom.xml>

### UA Libraries Homepage

<http://www.lib.ua.edu/>

