

Science Seminar – Research Tools Session

For this session, make sure you are using Mozilla Firefox as your web browser (sometimes this browser is just called Firefox). If more than one person from your group is present, sit next to them, but make sure you have your own computer to work with.

In today's session, you will explore the following:

1. Reference Management Software
2. Annotated Bibliographies
3. Navigating Databases
4. Online Collaborative Tools (if time/interest)

1. What is reference management software?

- Time for activity: up to 10 minutes.
- There are lots of reference management tools. Today, you will learn to use a tool called Zotero. From the Zotero website "**Zotero** [zoh-TAIR-oh] is a free, easy-to-use tool to help you **collect, organize, cite, and share** your research sources. It lives right where you do your work—in the **web browser** itself." Zotero is already installed on all the campus computer lab machines. If you want to use Zotero on your own computer, you can Download Now from the Zotero main page (do that on your own time).
- Go to <http://www.zotero.org/> and read the information on that first page (Collect) and also read Organize, Cite, Synch, and Collaborate.
- Create a Zotero account using the Log In link in the upper right corner and then Register for a free account. **Note: develop and use a professional (and if possible consistent) Username. This is a powerful tool and you might use it for ongoing serious professional work.**
- Instead of using the page that comes up when you log in directly, click instead on the Zotero icon in the lower right hand corner of your browser window (it will either say zotero or Z). This should split your browser window in half vertically, with the top half the browser window and the bottom half a Zotero window.
- Use the New Collection button in the upper left hand corner of the Zotero window to create a New Collection – I recommend calling it SoD2012 or something similar or maybe the name of your project or the name of the assignment. When you are doing your research and you find an interesting item, you can store it in Zotero. If Zotero can store it automatically, you will see an icon in the navigation window that might look like a file or a page; if you click on that, Zotero will capture all the information it can. I recommend checking each time to make sure it grabbed the information. Sometimes you will need to have the relevant article actually open in order for Zotero to grab and link to the actual article. If Zotero can't store it automatically, you can use the Zotero window to create a new item from the current page (which you will do below).

2. What is an annotated bibliography?

- Time for activity: up to 20 minutes.
- Open up a google search window, and type in "annotated bibliography".
- The first link that comes up should be Purdue OWL: Annotated Bibliographies. (Note that Purdue OWL is the Purdue Online Writing Lab, and is an incredible resource for you. I highly recommend exploring it on your own time – it gives you access to resources useful to writers at all levels.)
- Click on the link for Purdue OWL: Annotated Bibliographies (if that isn't the first link that comes up in your google search, go to <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>).
- Read through that page. Given your experience with the work we've been doing, which combination of Summarize, Assess, and Reflect makes sense for you to do in your group's Annotated Bibliography?
- Read the Next Resource (the button in the lower right hand corner of that page or by using the navigation bar on the left), which is Annotated Bibliography Examples.
- Read the Next Resource, which is Annotated Bibliography Samples.
- Go back to the first Annotated Bibliography page at Purdue OWL. Put this page in your Zotero library. You'll notice that you don't have the Zotero icon in the navigation bar, so you can't click on that. Instead, open up Zotero using the icon in the lower right hand corner of your web browser. Make sure you are in the right Collection. Click on Create

New Item from Current Page, and explore what comes up. Note: you get a snapshot of the current page, which means that even if it changes or goes down in the future, you have access to what you've just read.

- Go to Notes and add a note describing the item. In general, these Notes should be useful to you and if you put this item in a shared collection, the Notes should be useful to your collaborators.
- For homework (don't use class-time for this): go back to the google search results for "annotated bibliography" and look at three other descriptions of annotated bibliographies (don't use the Wikipedia entry and don't just use the first three hits that come up, look around). Choose two of those three other descriptions that offer you (at least a little) different information than the Purdue OWL site, enter them into your Zotero collection, and add some Notes.
- For homework (don't use class-time for this): Read through the Zotero documentation at its website or using other online resources and figure out how to make a shared collection/group library. You may find the Groups tab and the Documentation tab at the Zotero web-site very useful. When your group members get their Zotero accounts, share your annotated bibliography research with them.

3. How to navigate sources and databases

- Time for activity: up to 1 hour.
- Hopefully at this point you have at least some general idea of your topic, enough to do a general web search and become familiar with some key terms. It's fine to begin with general search results and even online encyclopedias. I'd recommend putting all of this into your Zotero collection, but certainly your notes should indicate that these are just starting points.
- Once you have some good key terms/search words, you can do some database searches or go to specific journals (if you can find a general article in Scientific American, Science, or Nature, you are in very good shape. Note: our on-line access to Scientific American is not full-text with image, so if you find an article you like, you'll have to go to the library building and look up the article in the paper journal. If you like it, you can copy it, scan it, and upload it to your Zotero collection).
- Go to the Evergreen library web-site, and go to Articles via Databases. Start searching for scholarly books, articles, etc. using your search terms. Whenever you find anything interesting (based on title or abstract), put it in your Zotero collection. You can decide later what you want to spend more time on, but for right now, you are casting a very wide and broad net.
- I am available to help you with this phase.

4. Online Collaborative Tools - if you are interested in this, join me at 11:45 and I'll give you a brief orientation.