Getting More from EBSCO*host* Databases

September 2006, St. Mary's University, Louis J. Blume Library, http://library.stmarytx.edu/acadlib/
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What is EBSCO*host*? EBSCO*host* is a database system that offers indexing/abstracting and selected full text retrieval of periodical (magazine, newspaper, and journal) articles. Our library currently subscribes to forty databases that are part of this system. These databases include: ***Academic Search Premier, Business Source Complete, Catholic Periodical & Literature Index, MLA International Bibliography, MasterFILE Premier, MEDLINE, Military & Government Collection, PsycINFO***, and more. These databases have full-text articles from nearly 10,000 periodicals and indexing and abstracting for additional journals, magazines, and newspapers.

Figure A – Partial list of EBSCOhost databases

How do I access the EBSCO*host* databases? Go to the Blume Library page at http://library.stmarytx.edu/acadlib/ then click on Databases Listed Alphabetically. Users may access the databases on campus and current students, staff, and faculty can access the databases off-campus, too.

How do I simultaneously search more than one database? You may search a database by clicking on its name. Once at the EBSCO*host* search screen, to simultaneously search other EBSCO*host* databases, click on the blue Choose Databases tab near the top of the search screen. Check the boxes next to the databases you wish to search and click on **Continue**.

Searching in EBSCO*host*: By default, the *Advanced Search* is selected. *Advanced* searching allows the user the most flexibility in performing searches. It provides three keyword search boxes to separate unique terms or phrases as well as capabilities to search within specific parts of each record. (Note: Each record consists of the citation information, abstract, and possible full-text.) By clicking on the *Subjects* button on the green toolbar, you may browse a complete listing of all subject headings available in the current database.
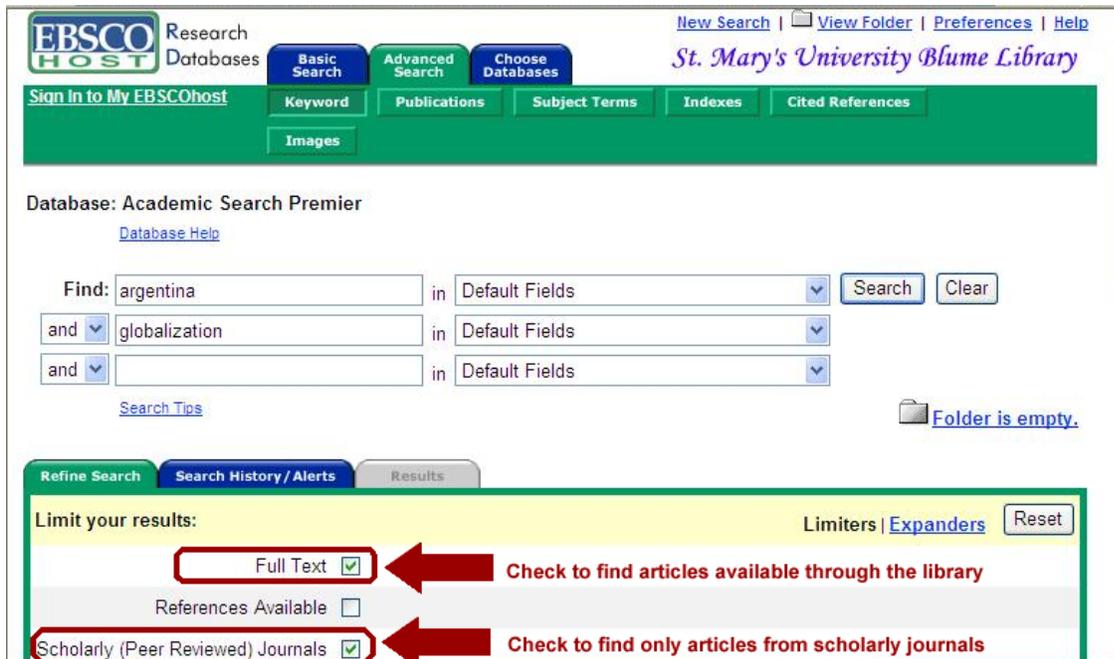

Figure B – Search screen with several limiters checked

Example: **argentina AND globalization** will retrieve articles that have the word *Argentina* and the word *globalization* somewhere in the record. If you enter a phrase without any Boolean operators, EBSCO*host* will search for the words together, as a phrase, in the order you entered them.

How do I limit my search to material the library has? By checking the box next to **Full Text**, your search will be limited to items that include full-text articles in the database, that we have online access to through another EBSCO*host* database, or that we have in print in the library. To verify if an article or item is available through another database, click on Locating Journals at the library's home page.

How do I search only in scholarly journals? To limit your search to scholarly journals, check the box next to **Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals.** More information about scholarly journals is available in the guide "What is a Scholarly Journal?" available at
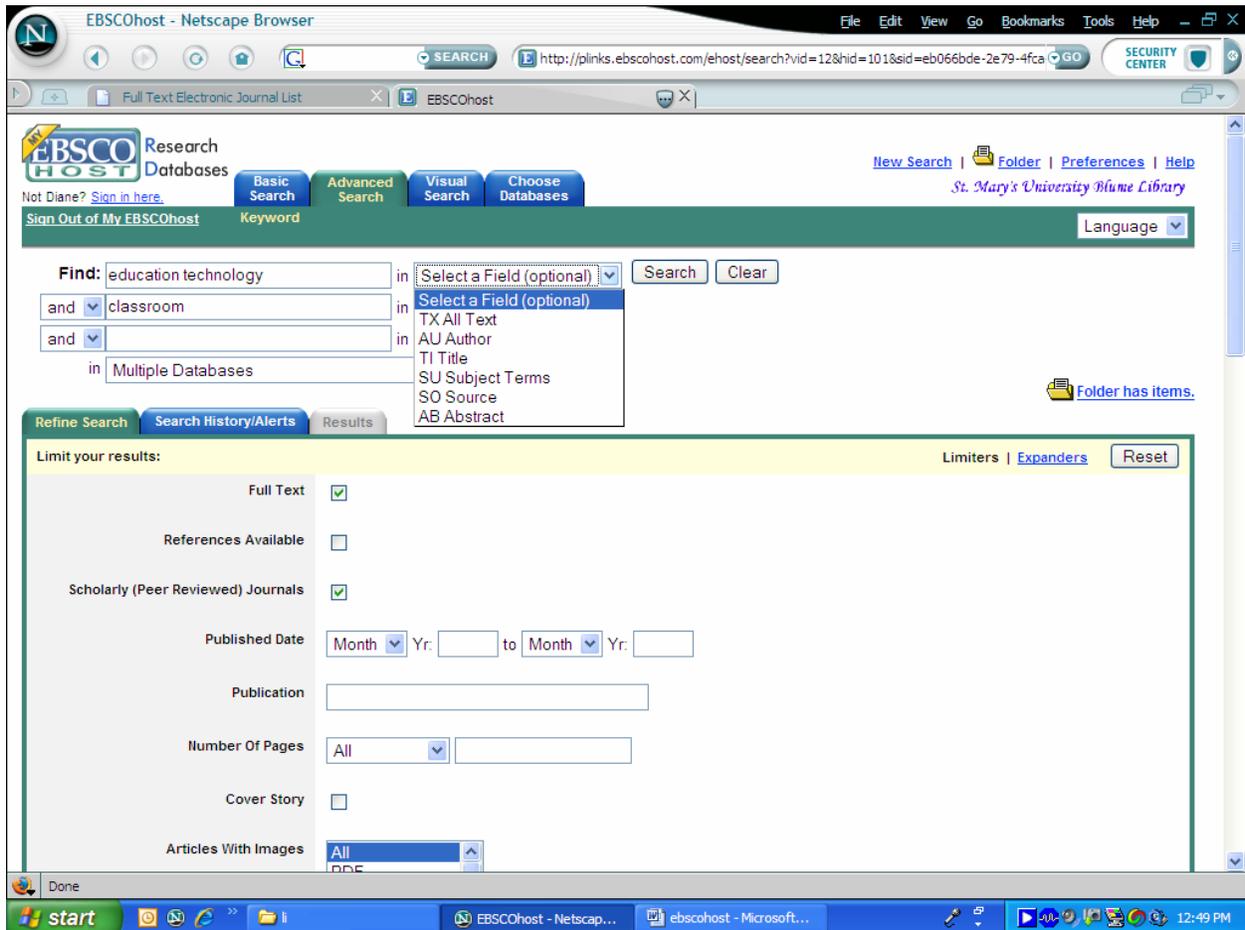http://library.stmarytx.edu/acadlib/subject/misc/scholjrn.htm

Figure C – Drop-down Menu

In an *Advanced Search*, the user has the capability of limiting the search to a specific field such as the subject, title, or author field. To see all of the searchable fields, simply click on the drop down box located next to the search box. One way to expand your search, is to change from **Default Fields**—which searches the title, source, subject terms, and abstract—to **All Text** (TX). The All Text search will search for your terms within the full-text of the articles as well.

An added benefit in the **Advanced Search** is the presence of more specific limiters. For instance, if a researcher knew s/he needed to find a cover story, find articles of a certain length, or particular publication types, the special limiters section in the *Basic* and *Advanced Search* screens would be most useful. Be advised that each EBSCO*host* database has its own distinct limiters.

The **Refine Search** link allows you to go back to the search screen to refine your search. The **Search History/Alerts** tab provides a complete history of all searches during the current session.

Understanding the Search Results: After performing a search, citations appear in reverse chronological order, with the most recent articles first. Click on the title (underlined and in blue) to see the complete citation which includes an abstract. Full text is indicated by one of the following blue links: HTML Full Text, PDF Full Text, Linked Full Text, or Check the St. Mary's University library catalog for holdings which takes you to the library's catalog to verify our print holdings for this title. To verify if an article or item is available through another database, click on Locating Journals at the library's home page.

Figure D – Search Results

You may change the order in which citations appear by using the drop down menu in the upper right portion of the tab and sorting by another option, e.g. Relevance, Source, Author, or Date.

Printing/Emailing/Saving Records: To print, email, or save an individual record, simply click on the appropriate link at the top of each record.
• *Print Manager* – Select either the Citation/Abstract or Full Text (when available) option, then click on the gray **Print** button.
• *Email Manager* – Enter in your email address and subject then choose whether you want the citation(s) and abstract(s) only or full text if available. Click on the gray **Send** button to email.
• *Save Manager* – Once you have clicked on the gray **Save** button, your items will appear on the screen. To save to a disk, click on **File** and then **Save as** from your browser's toolbar. Be sure to save the document as a plain text file (.txt) or an HTML file (.html).

My EBSCO*host*: My EBSCO*host* is a personal folder in which you can save result list items, links to images, persistent links to searches, saved searches, search alerts, journal alerts and web pages within the EBSCO*host* databases.

Figure E – My EBSCOhost Sign in.

To get started, you first need to sign into *My EBSCOhost*. The first time you sign in, you will need to create a new account. Click on the I'm a new user link and fill in the information.

Figure F – Create a new account screen.

Be sure that you create a username and password that you can easily remember! After all of the required information has been entered, click Submit. A screen will appear confirming your account, and clicking OK will log you in to My EBSCO*host*.

Once you are signed in, you will see the "My" banner at the top of the screen. You can access result list items, images, persistent links to searches, saved searches, search alerts, journal alerts and web pages from your folder.

Saving Result List Items: You can search a particular area of interest, save selected results using the folder function, then print, e-mail, save or add to a web page any or all of the results in the folder. There are two ways to add results to the folder: click on the **Add** icon to the right of the result, or click on the **Add (1-10)** icon at the top of the Result List to add all results on a page.

Figure G – Example from My EBSCOhost folder.

Saving Images: Click on the green Images box near the top of the search screen to access the EBSCO*host* Images Collection. Enter a subject for which you would like to find images. Once you find an image you want to save, from the results page, click on the **Add** icon to the right of the result or click on the **Add (1-10)** icon at the top of the Result List to add all results on a page.

Persistent Links to Searches: This feature may be used to share the results of a specific search with others, or to replicate the search.

Saving the Search History or Folder items: Once you have signed in, any records added to your folder while you are still signed in are automatically saved until you remove them.

Saved Searches: To save the search history, you must use the *Search History/Alerts* tab located on the *Advanced Search* screen. Once you get to the Search History/Alerts page, click on Save Searches/Alerts. On the Saved Search/Alert page, you must then save the search permanently, temporarily, or as an alert. To return to saved items, sign in and go to *My Folder* which contains all of your saved information.
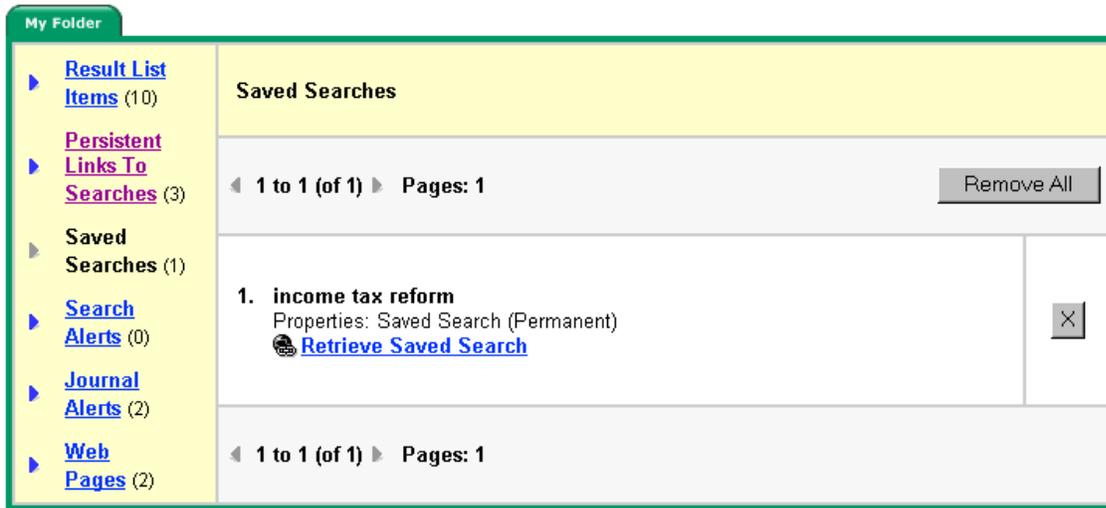

Figure H – Saved Search example from My EBSCOhost folder.

Creating Search Alerts: If you want to save a search as an alert, then you must enter your email when prompted. An alert simply saves your search and whenever any new records added to EBSCO match your search, you will be alerted by EBSCO by email that there is new information on your topic. Remember to provide an easily recognizable subject so you do not think you're getting junk mail.

Periodical Publication Information: From the Tabbed Toolbar, click the **Publications** button. Enter your search terms in the **Browse Publications** box, under the Publications tab. You can enter all or part of a publication name. (For example, you could enter *chronicle of higher ed*). Click on the title of the publication of interest.
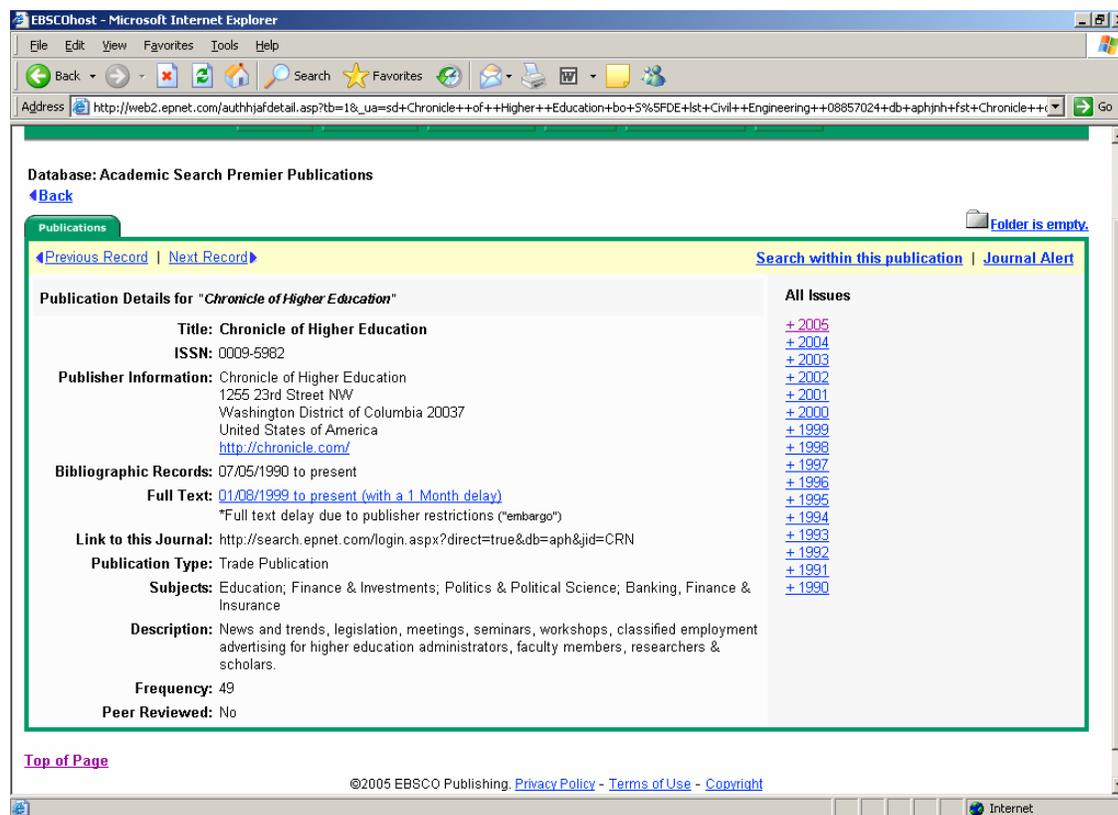

Figure I – Example from Publication Details screen.

The information found on the **Publication Details** screen may include: the title, ISSN, publisher information (name, address, publisher URL), title history, bibliographic record and full text coverage, publication type, the subject and/or a description of the journal, and whether the journal is peer reviewed. Hyperlinks to all issues are displayed in a column on the right side of the screen. If the journal displays a title history, you can switch between **All Issues** in the history or **Current Title Only** (the issues for the current title being displayed).

Journal Alerts: If you want to be alerted whenever any new articles from a particular journal are added to an EBSCOhost database, use the Journal Alert feature. At the Publication Details screen, click on the Journal Alert link near the top right portion of the Publication tab to start your alerts. You must then make several selections on how you want your alerts delivered: email info, length of alert, format, etc.

For more features of the EBSCOhost databases, see "My EBSCO*host* and Page Composer User Guide" available at http://support.epnet.com/CustSupport/UserDocumentation/My_EBSCOhost_User_Guide.pdf

This guide was adapted with permission from the ***Guide to Using EBSCOhost*** by David Salinero at Roberts-LaForge Library, Delta State University.