



Ask A Librarian Online



Do you have a question? Help is just a mouse click away. Chat live, one-on-one, with a librarian in an interactive online environment.

The Wolfson Library implemented virtual reference in September, so now there is one more way to get help with your information needs. The service provides convenient online access to a library professional for one-on-one assistance in locating and using electronic library services.

You can try the new service by clicking the *Ask A Librarian* button on the library's Web page, or you can go to <http://www.askalibrarian.org> and select Miami Dade College from the list of libraries. The virtual reference desk is open from 10:00 am until 10:00 pm Monday through Friday. You can tell when the desk is not staffed, because the chat button will be gray. You can always ask a question by email, and the service includes a searchable database of questions that have been answered, so you can check it before you ask your question.

The virtual reference desk is staffed by librarians from colleges, universities, and public libraries all over the state. Ask A Librarian is a statewide collaborative venture between the College Center for Library Automation (CCLA) and the Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC). Miami-Dade Public Library and Barry University will go live soon. The initial implementation is funded by a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

New LINCCWEB Portal

In January, LINCCWeb will have a whole new look. The current software will be replaced by a portal that provides a single search with personalization.

If you want to research a topic today, you have look in at least two places. You search the catalog for books and other materials in the library, and then you search the databases – one at a time -- for articles. The new system will let you search all these resources and more at the same time.

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Library Hours:

- Monday - Thursday: 7:30 am to 9 pm
- Friday: 7:30 am to 4:30 pm
- Saturday : 9 am to 1 pm

Library Closings:

Semester Break: December 22, 2003-January 2, 2004

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How to Find Articles

Wolfson Library subscribes to a number of magazines and newspapers. You will find current issues on racks in the **Reading Room**. You can sit in the air-conditioned comfort of the library and read or browse these magazines. You can keep up with what's new, and save money on subscriptions. Back issues of these magazines and newspapers are available at the **Service Window**. The library has some periodicals on microfilm, and you can ask for them at the **Service Window**.

If you want to find articles on a particular subject, start with the databases. The College subscribes to a number of electronic databases that contain periodical articles and other reference sources. You will find the databases in a section of LINCCWeb, the online catalog, called *Electronic Resources* (<https://www.linccweb.org/eresources.asp>).

You will need to enter your borrower id, which is your student number. This validates that you are currently student, faculty, or staff at Miami Dade College. Although these databases are Web-based, they are not Internet resources. They are proprietary databases available only to registered students, faculty, and staff. Since the databases are available through the Web interface, they are available anytime, from anywhere you have access to the

Internet.

The research topic or subject determines which database or databases to choose. Some are general and others are more specific to a particular subject area. *Academic Search Premier* is a good place to start. It indexes thousands of periodicals from a wide range of academic areas including business, social sciences, humanities, general academic, general science and education.

Some databases, such as *Literature Resource Center* and *Health & Wellness Resource Center*, contain reference sources as well as periodical articles. The advanced search feature in *Literature Resource Center* gives you criticism of a particular work as well as biographies of the author. The same search could take an hour in the **Reference Area**. A search in *Health & Wellness Resource Center* will give you articles from *The Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine* and other reference sources as well as periodical articles.

Although these databases are Web-based, they are not Internet resources. They are proprietary databases available only to registered students, faculty, and staff.

New LINCCWeb Portal

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You can preview the new portal now by clicking this image from the LINCCWeb screens. The new system goes live December 8, 2003.

The personalization feature will allow you to maintain your own resource list. So when you use Advanced Search, you can just check items from your list to be searched. Resources include databases as well as other libraries. That means you could routinely search particular databases and the Miami-Dade Public Library and FIU Library every-time you search LINCCWeb.



You can preview the new portal now by clicking this image from the LINCCWeb screens. To use the personalization features, you have to login before you search. When you don't need personalization, you can use LINCCWeb as a guest.

If the single search feature sounds too good to be true, keep in mind that it only works for broad searches. It's similar to using meta search engines on the Web. If you are doing complex searches, you will need to search different resources separately. You might, for example, search library catalogs together and then search databases together or one by one.

The new Library Management Software (LMS) is Aleph by Ex Libris. Ex Libris is an Israeli based company, and Aleph is its flagship product. It is used by 3 million users at 700 sites in 48 countries

