How locate a scholarly article

In this video we will show you how to locate scholarly articles using the library’s website, and provide some explanation for why on earth you would actually want to do that.

Go to the library web site: www.coastal.edu/library.

But wait! Why are we going to the library web page when there are plenty of other places to look?

Simple: the library pays hundreds of thousands of dollars per year for access to high quality online information that IS NOT AVAILABLE ANYWHERE ELSE, which is cool. Right? Well, it’s useful, anyway. And, you don’t have to sort through advertisements for “escorts” or unaccredited online “degrees”. It comes down to this: you can find better research, faster, when you use the library. Oh, and you’ve already paid for it. Where did you think your tuition dollars were going? To pad those bloated librarian salaries? On with the show.

Find the research guide for your class. Research guides are small web sites that link to useful subject-specific resources. Research guides are organized by class (for high enrollment classes like English 101 or biology 122), or by subject, like business or chemistry.

Once you have located the guide for your class, you’ll find a bunch of tabs across the top of the screen. Look for the one that says “find articles”. There will be a bunch of databases to choose from.

So what exactly are databases? They’re collections of articles and other information, usually focused on a particular subject or range of subjects. You will need to do research throughout your college career, and library databases are the place to do it. Not only is the information generally excellent, but when your instructors look at your work, they can tell the difference between crap you scraped off of the Web at 2:00 AM and a quality article from a database. And they will judge you on that. And by judge I mean grade.

Now for a few tips on finding articles in the sciences. First, it’s important that you limit your search to articles published in the last five years. Science research moves so quickly that articles much older than that might be out of date, making you look like a weirdo. A sad, out of date weirdo. You don’t want that do you? DO YOU?! Second, if at first you don’t succeed, for the love of everything shiny, try again. And again. And if that fails, AGAIN. If you’ve been searching fruitlessly for more than 15 minutes, it’s time to seek help. Librarians, as well as your instructor, are available to help you with your research.