

Online Resource Guide

For Human, Physical and GIS-focused Geographers

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Preface

The Contents:

This document contains numerous abstracts of online geography resources available to all Penn State students. After reading this guide, students will be able to recognize the highlighted resources which are most useful to their own geographic needs, locate these resources in their entirety, and use them in their particular course research. The resources discussed within the guide were chosen because they not only exemplified a wide range of informational styles, but also captured the diverse areas of geographic study.

The Intended Audience and Audience Assumptions:

This guide was developed to assist undergraduate students within the Penn State geography department realize the possibilities of general subject research online. As all of the sources mentioned within this guide reside within Penn State's online Library Information Access System (LIAS) or at specific URL's on the worldwide web, it is assumed that any user of this guide has a basic familiarity with the location and use of LIAS as well as with general navigation of the internet. Since it is not the purpose of this guide to teach students how to effectively utilize LIAS, it is suggested that anyone unfamiliar with the library pages or catalog system make use of the friendly and accessible **Get Help!** section of the system before you attempt to find the resources highlighted in this guide.

This guide does not have a particular focus within the broad study of geography, but instead relates information which could be useful to all undergraduates developing a solid foundation in the key areas of human/cultural, physical/environmental geography as well as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) before finding a focus. As geographers touch many topics, having a timely transfer of information is critical and online sources often have a faster turnout rate than printed publications. Many GIS resources are, more often than not, found *only* on the web! So, we see that it is important to become familiar with the online research possibilities for geographers. This guide attempts to illustrate

some of the relevant online sites and databases for geography information for you through a diverse sampling of resources.

Organization:

The included table of contents displays the organization of this guide by type of resource. Major resources are denoted by bold text and their subtopics, and helpful examples are nested and indented beneath them. Resources are correctly cited from websites and are followed by:

- Reasons to use the source
- A description of the purpose of the site and how to use it, with specific online tabs or links mentioned in **bold** text
- Tips that I feel are useful, as well as any optional notes or examples

Note:

This guide is not intended to replace or devalue any research done at a physical university library. It has been created in response to the pressing need for specific literary guidance in the vast, oftentimes intimidating, World Wide Web. Librarians, specifically map librarians are some of the best free resources available to any geography student; they should not be disregarded.

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On-Line Index:

"Web of Science - Thomson Scientific." Thomson.Com. 2006. 9 Oct. 2006

<<http://scientific.thomson.com/products/wos/>>.

Student access: Libraries Main Page → E-Resource List → Web of Science

Reasons To Use This Reference:

- To access multidisciplinary information from 8,700 global research journals
- To discover which individuals are citing specific articles of interest and therefore identify key research figures, future mentors, or possible research collaborators

Description:

The Web of Science is a combination of indexes which together provide access to current and retroactive bibliographic information and cited references. This includes the Arts and Humanities Citation Index dating from 1975 to the present, the Science Citation Index Expanded dating from 1955 to the present, and the Social Sciences Citation Index from 1973 to the present. This broad range of topics is perfect for a geography student looking for more information about a scholarly article. Students can search by individual index, publication year, topic, keyword and published language just to name a few. Once an article is displayed, the Web of Science provides information on all of the other articles which have been cited in the article of interest, as well as all of those articles which have cited your main article. This allows for discovery of related and supporting articles which could be crucial for the students own supported research.