Evaluate Search Results Worksheet

☐ Scan the Titles in the Results List

☐ Do they meet the information need?

☐ Examine the Full Bibliographic Record:

☐ Read the Description – Does it …

☐ support your argument

☐ oppose your argument

☐ provide facts or data concerning your topic

☐ contain a bibliography

☐ Examine the Subject Headings

☐ Will any improve the search query?

☐ Does the topical content relate to your topic?

☐ If not, could the concepts be extended to apply to your argument?

☐ How current are records?

☐ Does currency matter?

☐ If Scholarship matters,

☐ Find info on the publisher.

☐ Publisher’s Web site for Books or Journal


☐ Examine the Format of the work

☐ Are there lower case Roman numerals (i, vii, xi, etc.).

☐ Is there a Bibliography

☐ Are there graphs, illustrations, charts, etc.

☐ Does the description contain “Purpose”, “Findings”, “Methodology” and/or “Results”?

☐ Do the books exceed 150 pages; Articles in excess of seven pages
Examine your search query syntax

- What is the Boolean priority default (AND, OR or both ranked by relevance);
- Are all terms in one search box?
- Consider splitting search terms between boxes
- Should you apply different fields to your keywords?
- Consider splitting Boolean operations between search boxes

Consider the meaning of the search terms used

- Do the records reflect your intended meaning?
- Do you need to change terms?

Consider the number of records in your results list

- Too few?
  - Consider using the Boolean “OR” to broaden the search query.
  - Try eliminate limiting options one by one
  - Should you use a different database?

- Too many?
  - Search terms in specific fields (title, subject, abstract) instead of keyword
  - Consider using exact phrases
  - Apply some limiting option to narrower the search.