Research Guide

General Guidelines
Before starting your research, make sure you are connected to a university network (e.g., Eduroam) or using a VPN (virtual private network) connection so as to be able to fully use the platforms and databases listed in the following. You can download the VPN client here:
https://www.uni-augsburg.de/de/organisation/einrichtungen/rz/it-services/uaux/wlan/vpn/

Search Terms
When looking for research pertaining to specific materials (e.g., a novel, a short story, a film or a TV series), place the search terms into quotation marks.

> For instance, if you are looking for research on Helen Oyeyemi's novel *White is for Witching*, type "white is for witching" (capitalization can be disregarded).

This way, your search will only yield results including this combination of terms. Without the quotation marks, the results might contain articles mentioning any parts of the title only and therefore will likely not match your search.
   When doing research, it is important to **think outside the box!** Just because you cannot easily find an article on the primary material you want to write about, does not mean there is no relevant research on similar topics. Hence, make sure to try out different search terms (e.g., the name of the author/director, the theme or technique applied in the work, etc.).

> For instance, there might not be a lot on Spike Lee's Netflix-series *She's Gotta Have It*, but there is plenty of research on the earlier film of the same name, his directorial style, adaption theory, the representation of Black women's sexuality, etc.

Another great starting point for research is the Works Cited list of an article or book that is relevant for your topic—just follow the research trail!

First Steps
- Check databases first, especially the MLA database
- Look for relevant keywords, e.g., those listed under the abstract of an article
- Follow the research trail
- Save your searches and compile a bibliography (ideally an annotated one)

1. Database Infosystem of the University of Augsburg (DBIS):
https://dbis.ur.de/dbinfo/fachliste.php?bib_id=ub_a

The Database Infosystem (DBIS) can be found through the university library's website under the rubric "research," by searching for "DBIS Uni Augsburg" in a browser or by clicking the link above. You can either search for specific databases directly (e.g., MLA International Bibliography) or browse available databases sorted by research areas (e.g., "Anglistik, Amerikanistik").
   Databases marked with a green dot are open access while those marked with a yellow dot are restricted and require you to log into the university network via VPN or Eduroam.
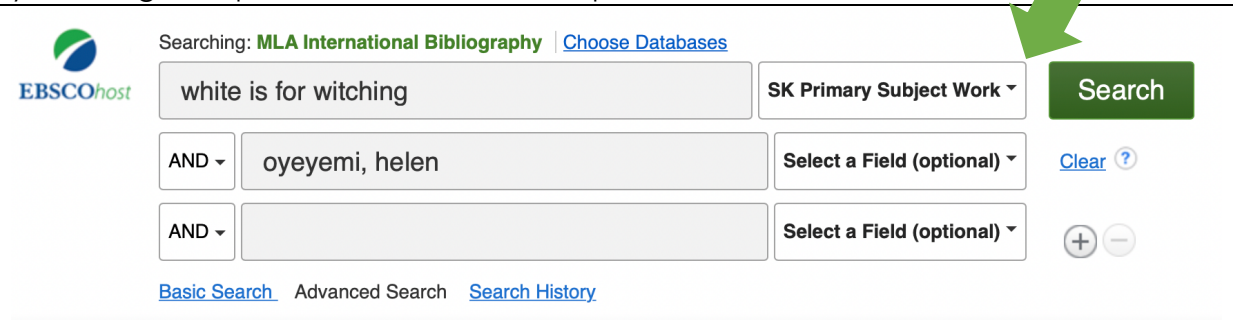
Databases will allow you to get an overview over existing research on a specific topic. Through the SFX button $S \cdot F \cdot X$ you can check whether an article or book is available through the university library (see p. 4 for how to use the SFX-system).

2. MLA International Bibliography

The MLA International Bibliography is one of the most important and extensive databases for literary and cultural studies and thus an excellent resource for starting your research. It can be accessed through the DBIS via VPN or Eduroam.

You can search the MLA database using keywords (English only!), author or editor name(s), title, etc. By clicking "Advanced Search" you can further specify your search, e.g., by filling out details concerning publication date and type, language, genre, etc. You can also refine your search by selecting source types, subject, publication date, etc. on the left of the search results or change the order of entries (e.g., by relevance, newest first, source type, etc.).

The most important search function for a specific material is via "SK Primary Subject Work" in the "Select a Field" option. If you enter the title of your primary material here, you can get a quick overview over most publications on this material.

Click on a title to get more information on it, including basic bibliographic information, keywords and, if available, its DOI or stable URL. On the right side, you find a number of tools, such as print or cite—the latter gives you the full citation that you can save to your own working bibliography (make sure you select MLA 9 citation style!). On the left, you can click on the SFX button $S \cdot F \cdot X$ to see whether you have access to it via the university library. However, if this does not yield a result, you should check directly in the OPAC library catalogue and in Gateway Bayern (see below) by using the data from your MLA search!

A very useful tool, especially at the beginning of your research project, is the "find similar results" button. This leads you to research using similar keywords or on similar topics, broadening your research by just one click.
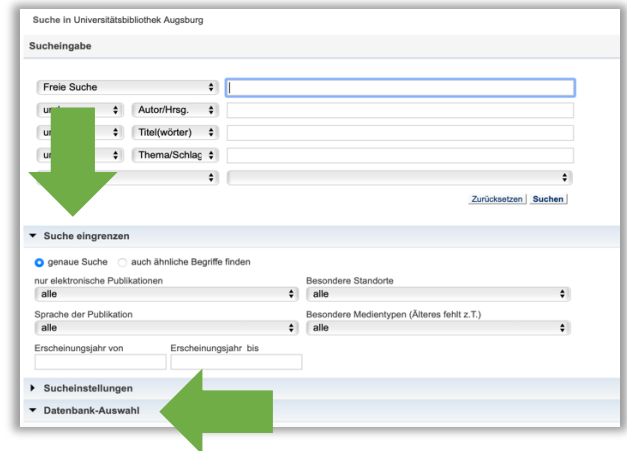
3. OPAC University of Augsburg: https://opac.bibliothek.uni-augsburg.de

Via OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue), you can search all media available at the university library (books, journals, DVDs, CDs, etc.). To search the library's catalogue, you can use keywords, author or editor's name(s), titles, ISBN, etc. Unfortunately, it is **not** possible to look for individual articles in journals or anthologies (for that, you can use the Gateway Bayern Aufsatzsuche, see below). In the OPAC, you first have to enter the title of the journal or anthology in which it was published to see whether it is available locally.

You can filter your search results with parameters such as date of publication, language, research area, etc. Alternatively, you can also refine the search by selecting specific media.

Click on a title in your search results to get detailed information about it. Oftentimes, this contains a preview of the table of contents, a short description or, if the medium is available online, a link to access it (simply click the Volltext button).

All print media available at the university library have a signature indicating their location in the library (subject area, shelf, etc.) where you can find the copy. The v:scout-system (available at https://vscout.bibliothek.uni-augsburg.de/) can help you locate a medium. Signatures starting with 01 or 00 are in the Magazin and have to be ordered. For this, simply click "bestellen." You will be notified via email when the medium can be picked up.

> **Note:** For library services you have to be logged into your library account. Your username is the 12-digit library number on your Campus Card, your password the first four digits of your birthdate (DDMM), unless you have changed it!

The information listed at the bottom of the page also tells you whether a medium is currently available or not. Since our library is a reference library, most media (except for those in the "Magazin" and the "Lehrbuchsammlungen," signature starting with 170) cannot be borrowed by students for longer periods.[1] The service desk can only provide information on books borrowed from the "Präsenzbestand." Books currently in a "Semesterapparat" are also listed as borrowed but are openly available in the library. Again, the information desk can tell you where to find the specific title.

You can bookmark a title by clicking save to "Temporäre Merkliste" at the top of the page. You can also create new lists for each project. Keeping track of titles that are relevant for your research is very important and can save you a lot of time when creating the works cited list for your project.

When you find a title on the shelf, make sure to also check the surrounding titles, as they will be on similar topics and can be very useful for your project as well!

---

[1] Students can borrow up to five books from the "Präsenzbestand" overnight ("Abendausleihe," from 8 pm to 10 am the next day) or over the weekend ("Wochenendausleihe," from 3 pm Friday to 10 am Monday). Students with children under the age of 10 can borr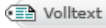ow books from 15:00 on throughout the week, see https://www.uni-augsburg.de/de/organisation/einrichtungen/familienservice/.

Research tip: If there are related titles available at the library, they are linked above the detailed information.

Interlibrary Loan

Some media might not be available locally. The OPAC also offers you to search media available through interlibrary loan (**Bayerischer Verbundkatalog/Fernleihe**, see green arrow). These titles can be ordered for free. Simply click on the title you want to order, then select the tab "zum Dokument" at the bottom of the page and click on "Fernleihe durchführen" (make sure to be logged into your library account!). This will open a new page where you have to select the pick-up place (select Zentralbibliothek) and the preferred edition. Finally, click on "Fernleihbestellung abschicken"—**not** "Kopie aus dem Buch bestellen" (for which you will have to pay a fee). You will be notified via your university email when your order is ready to be picked up.

Similarly, you can search for articles using the OPAC by clicking on **Aufsätze & mehr** (yellow arrow). Articles you have access to online are marked with . By clicking on a title, you get more information on where it was published (journal, anthology or monograph) and whether you have access to it.

For more information on using the OPAC, visit the university library's website: https://www.uni-augsburg.de/de/organisation/bibliothek/recherche/opac-recherchetipps/

Finding and ordering media via **:**

When you click the SFX button, you will be redirected to the following page where you have several options:

1) **OPAC und Fernleihe:**
   Click this option to order the book via interlibrary loan. You will be asked to log in with your library number and password (see above). Afterwards, follow the steps described above under "interlibrary loan").

2) **Bestand innerhalb des Bibliotheksverbundes:**
   Here you can check which library owns a copy of this title.

3) **Suche bei einer wissenschaftlichen Suchmaschine:**
   This is especially useful for articles in journals. Since you cannot order entire journals via interlibrary loan but only a copy of the respective article (for a fee!), this option allows you to search the article in scholarly search engines which can direct you to a version available via one of your institution's subscriptions (e.g., JSTOR) or as open access.

> It is not recommended to order a copy of the title via Subito, as this involves high fees. Ordering an interlibrary copy of an article will usually be much cheaper (€1,50 per article)!

4. Gateway Bayern: https://www.gateway-bayern.de/

Gateway Bayern allows you to search media that can be ordered via interlibrary loan. You can either do a basic search (keywords, author or editor name(s), title of publication, etc.) or specify your request by clicking "Erweiterte Suche" (advanced search). You can also filter the search results (on the right of the page) by publication date, type of publication (e.g., article or monograph), language, etc. Unlike the OPAC, Gateway Bayern allows you to search for articles directly via "Aufsatzsuche Plus" (see below).

Click on a title to get more detailed information, including which library owns a copy. If the title is not available in Augsburg, you can order it via interlibrary loan by clicking the SFX button and following the steps described above.

Article results also contain information on the journal or anthology in which they were published. Click on "ID der Serie/Reihe" (Series ID) to view the journal or anthology. The latter you can order via interlibrary loan, following the steps listed above. Available journal articles can be accessed by clicking the SFX button directly. If you order a copy of an article, it will arrive as a hard copy to be picked up in the library for a fee of €1,50 per article. **However, it is recommended to use the "Aufsatzsuche Plus" tool when searching for articles.**

Aufsatzsuche Plus
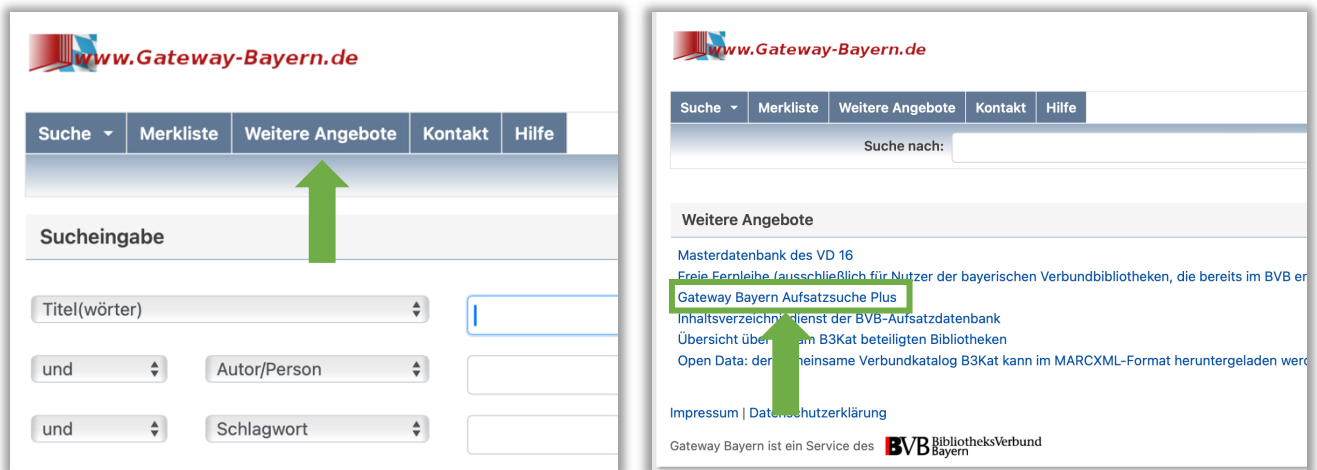
This service offered by Gateway Bayern (only available in German) is specifically designed to search for articles published in journals, anthologies, newspapers or other (online) sources. It is particularly useful to get access to the relevant articles and chapters you have identified via the MLA search.

To get to the "Aufsatzsuche Plus," you have to click on "Weitere Angebote" (additional services, see green arrow above) in the upper toolbar of Gateway Bayern, then select "Gateway Bayern Aufsatzsuche Plus" from the list (third from the top, see green highlight above). You will then be redirected to a different interface.
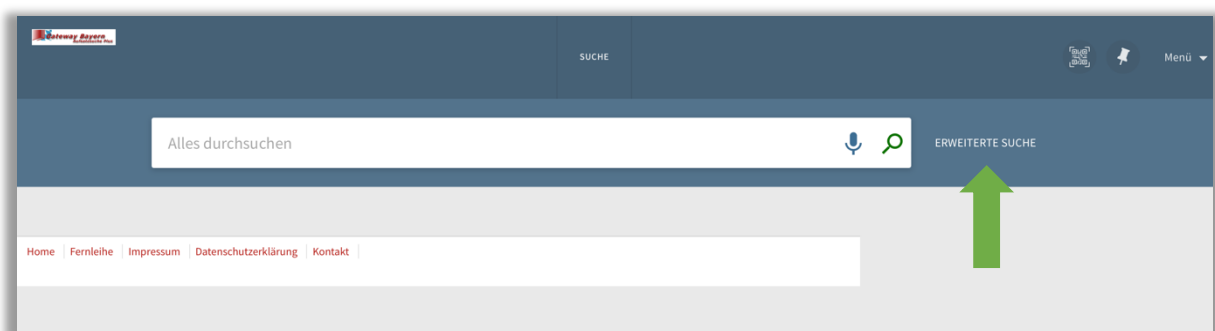
As in Gateway Bayern, you can do a basic or an advanced search (see green arrow). The initial search results might be very few in number. To see more results, you have to click on "Ergebnisliste erweitern" (on the right of the page).

Click on an article's title to get more information. If the article is available online, a green link reading "Volltext verfügbar" will be shown underneath the title's basic information. Simply click the link to access it.

If the article was published in an anthology or a journal not available online, click on the link "Wie man sie aufruft" in the "Services" section. This will direct you to the SFX

interface (see above). You can then either order the entire anthology via Fernleihe, check if the respective journal is accessible via the Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek (EZB Regensburg) or order a copy for a fee of 1,50 € per article.

> **Note:** Gateway Bayern does not provide an exhaustive list of articles published in a certain field. For getting a better research overview, make sure to check the MLA International Bibliography (via DBIS, see above)!

> For more information and research tips on Gateway Bayern, visit:
> https://www.uni-augsburg.de/de/organisation/bibliothek/recherche/opac-recherchetipps-copy-2/

5. JSTOR: https://www.jstor.org

The JSTOR database contains articles, (e)books, images, artwork as well as (other) primary sources. To access titles, make sure you can see the banner "Access provided by Universität Augsburg" at the top of the page (for this, you also have to use a university network or VPN).

You can do a basic search or refine your search by item type (e.g., article, review, book, etc.), date of publication, language, journal or book title, etc. in the advanced search. You can also filter the search results by subject, date or language and do a search within the results or sort the results by relevance or date of publication. JSTOR also allows you to select whether you want to only see content you have access to or all content. If you find something you do not have access to via JSTOR, you can usually get this material via Gateway Bayern!

By clicking on a title, you get detailed information on it as well as a preview of the content. If you have access to it, simply click "Download" and check the copyright pop-up. The "cite"-button provides you with the full bibliographic information for your own bibliography (make sure to select MLA style)!

In case of a journal article or book, you can also click on the journal or the specific title (linked above the detailed information on the left) to browse other content in this publication.

6. Project MUSE: https://muse.jhu.edu

Project MUSE works very similarly to JSTOR and allows you to search for (journal) articles and book chapters. However, access via the University of Augsburg is very limited. Nevertheless, this can be a useful resource because content not available at first sight might be available via one of the other sources listed here, especially Gateway Bayern.

7. Elektronische Zeitschriftenbank (EZB): http://ezb.uni-regensburg.de/?bibid=UBA

Using the EZB, you can access a number of (academic) journals in various subject areas. Unlike JSTOR, MLA database or Project MUSE, you cannot filter your search based on concrete themes, authors or article titles but only via the title of the journal. If you want to browse journals in a specific field, click on "list by subject" and select "English, American Studies." Alternatively, you can look for a specific journal via the search function, using either its title or ISSN.

The color-coding system indicates whether you have institutional access to the publication. Click on a journal title to get detailed information, including the link to the journal's website.

For results of a specific keyword search, you should use the search function on the publication's homepage (linked on the EZB). To find a specific issue, click on "current issue" for the latest publication or "archive/back issue" for previous issues.

The full texts of the journals are	
☑ ●○○	available free of charge and without subscription
☑ ○●○	available on the campus of Augsburg University
○○●	available on the campus of Augsburg University, but only for certain issues
☑ ○○●	not available on the campus of Augsburg University

8. Open Access Repositories

OA Repositories are digital platforms that provide access to research for free. Some publishers also offer open access material (e.g., Bloomsbury, Manchester UP, etc.). While some of this content will be available via the OPAC or MLA database, you might find newer open access titles via these or other repositories directly:

- OAPEN (Online Library and Publication Platform): https://www.oapen.org
- Open Library of Humanities: https://www.openlibhums.org
- DOAB (Directory of Open Access Books): https://www.doabooks.org
- OpenEdition & OpenEdition Journals: https://www.openedition.org/?lang=en

9. A Note on Academia.edu & ResearchGate:
https://www.academia.edu, https://www.researchgate.net

You have probably heard of these two platforms that provide open access to research and scholarly articles for free for signed-up users. They are useful resources to identify relevant articles as they allow you to view the content of articles you otherwise might not have access to. However, many of the publications on these sites are **pre-print versions only**. This means that the final page numbers might still be missing, making it impossible to correctly cite from them. If you find an article that is relevant to your project, try and get access to it through the options listed in this guide.

10. GoogleScholar: https://scholar.google.com

As a last resort, GoogleScholar can be a useful resource to find an article or book. Via a VPN connection, the search results will automatically show you if you have access to an article via your institution. Unlike databases such as the MLA International Bibliography, the results shown are not checked for their quality or research standard however.

Compiling a Research Bibliography and an Annotated Bibliography

Remember that research takes practice! Over time you will find your own strategies to search for and find titles for your research projects. It is highly advisable to create a working bibliography—either simply in a Word document or using a reference management system, such as **Citavi, EndNote, Mendeley or Zotero** (some are freely available online; others are licensed by the University of Augsburg).[2]

---

[2] https://www.uni-augsburg.de/de/organisation/bibliothek/publizieren-zitieren-archivieren/literaturverwaltung/

Starting your project with a research bibliography will save you a lot of time later on and will allow you to compile a proper Works Cited list for your assignments! Make sure to select MLA 9 style and follow the **Style Sheet for Literary and Cultural Studies**!

Ideally, add short comments to the entries of your bibliography. Try to summarize the work in your own words, highlighting aspects that are relevant to *your* project. This can also be a critical comment on points you disagree with or a note on where in your project this might fit in. Such an annotated bibliography will speed up your writing process and will help you to support your arguments with research! Sample entry:

Gray, Herman. *Watching Race: Television and the Struggle for Blackness*. U of Minnesota P, 2004.

In this new edition of his 1995 publication, Gray explores how the sign of Blackness has been endowed with meaning and utilized in political discourses in the United States, with a specific focus on the role of media and, more precisely, television. His in-depth analysis of three Black sitcoms (*A Different World*, *Frank's Place*, and *In Living Color*) regarding their representation of Blackness is preceded by theoretical considerations on the interplay between political, cultural and media discourses in the construction of and struggles over the meanings attached to representations of Blackness. The new introduction as well as the first chapter are especially relevant for my contextual chapter. Gray's definition of Blackness as a cultural sign and/or signifier will be useful for complicating questions of agency in the construction of racialized representations.