Hello, this video will show you how to find scholarly articles on a topic.

There are two different ways you can do this, and we'll look at both of them, along with some tips for searching and how to get only scholarly articles.
Finding Articles on a Topic

First we'll look at how to find articles on a topic using Primo, the Library's online catalogue. It's the quickest and easiest way to find scholarly articles and is a good starting point.

The search box for Primo is on the Library's main web page, library.wlu.ca. Just type your search into the search box and press Search Primo. As an example, I'll search for legalization and prostitution.
Your results will have both books and articles.
To see only the articles, click on the Articles+ tab above the search box.

When I do that, I see that I have 1,342 articles in my results.
Not all of them are necessarily scholarly or peer-reviewed, though.
To see only the scholarly articles, look in the left menu.
Under Show Only, click on Peer-reviewed.
When I do this, I reduce my results to 825. That's still a lot of articles to look through, though.

One good way of focusing my results better is to use the subjects. Subjects are words used to describe the topic of each article.

Under Refine My Results, I can see subjects listed. Click on More Options to see more of them.

A window pops up with the different subjects in your article results. You can click to include only the ones that look most useful.

Here I'll choose Prostitution and Legalization.
Now I have 129 results, which is a much more manageable number, and they look relevant to my topic. To see an article, click on Available online underneath the article description.

Then click on Open Source in a New Window.
Finding Articles on a Topic

For most articles, you'll see a new window with one or more options under Your article is available electronically. Click on any of them to see the article.

If you're off campus, at this point you'll be asked to follow the directions to log in.

You should see the web page for the article.

Use the pdf file located on the page to read, save, and print the article.
Finding Articles on a Topic

Next, we'll look at searching for articles in specialized databases. Why would you want to do this? Primo is a useful starting point, but it is a general database with a few articles on a lot of subjects, which means you won't always find what you need.

The Library has other databases that have a lot more articles on a few specialized subject areas. These are the best place to search for in-depth research or when Primo isn't giving you good results.

To find these specialized databases, start from the Library's main web page, library.wlu.ca. Click on Databases: subjects and titles.
Finding Articles on a Topic

Then, click on "by subject" underneath the search box.

You'll see a list of different subjects. Pick the one most appropriate for your topic.
My topic is legalization of prostitution, which could be in a number of different subjects listed here.
I'm going to pick Criminology.
On the Criminology page, I see a list of different databases that specialize in Criminology topics. Generally, you should start with one of the ones at the top of the page, which have been selected because they are most likely to be helpful.

If there is more than one, you can read the brief description to see which one would work best for your topic.

I'm going to choose Criminal Justice Abstracts.

Type your search into the search boxes. Put different concepts in search boxes on different lines.

I'm going to search again for legalization and prostitution.
Finding Articles on a Topic

Once you've typed in your search, look down below the search box in the Search Options area. You'll see an option to limit your results to articles from Scholarly (peer-reviewed) journals. Click to check this option, then click on Search.

I get 22 results for my search.
This might sound ok, but actually I'm missing a lot.
That's because of the keywords I used in my search.
If I had included some alternate keywords, my search would be different.
I'm going to redo my search and type legalization or laws or legislation instead of just legalization.

Then I'm going to type prostitution or sex trade instead of just prostitution.
Now I get 402 results instead of 22. Obviously this topic is broader than I initially thought.

When you get this many results, it’s usually a sign that your topic is too broad and you need to focus in on one aspect of it.

You can scan through your results to see what aspects of the topic people write about, and pick one.

Or, you can look at the subjects used in the different articles for ideas on topics and on key words you can use to improve your search.

Here, I’m going to focus on legalization of prostitution in Canada, so I’ll add Canada on the third line of my search and click Search to redo my search.

Now I have 21 results and they all look focused on my topic.
Finding Articles on a Topic

This is a much better, more focused topic and a good set of search results.

To see the articles, click on the GetIt@Laurier button.

Most of the time, you’ll see a list of places where your article is available electronically. Pick one of them.
Finding Articles on a Topic

You should see the web page for the article.

Look on the page for the pdf, which you can use to read, save, and print the article.

This is a basic overview of searching for articles on a topic.

We have several other videos that go into more detail on search tips and strategies for getting better results.
You can find them at library.wlu.ca/help/tutorials.
Finding Articles on a Topic

Questions?

library.wlu.ca/help/askus

If you have any questions, ask us at library.wlu.ca/help/askus.