The links on this handout are live at
http://spu.libguides.com/THEO2710Drovdahl/PresentationHandouts

**Works of reference:** Consider consulting a dictionary, encyclopedia, or handbook for a summary article on your topic. For a starter list of these, go here.

**Books:** Use the Library discovery system for books.

**Articles:** Start with the appropriate discipline-specific database for articles at

![Image of database interface]

- Add the best Multidisciplinary databases (Academic Search Complete, Research Library Complete, Google Scholar as accessed from the Library database page, etc.), or
- Search the keyword (not necessarily subject) fields of multiple EBSCOhost or ProQuest databases simultaneously:
Starting out: start with the terms and phrases supplied by Dr. Drovdahl and any alternatives you can think of, and then examine your hits, and especially any subject headings, for clues. (Watch also for prompts supplied by the databases themselves.)

Search techniques:

Group synonyms together, separated by ORs, and separate them from other groups of synonyms by ANDs. The following search, though far too broad to be effective, illustrates the principle:

(faith OR trust OR belief* OR spiritual* OR Christian* OR religio*)
AND (develop* OR grow* OR formation* OR matur* OR stage*)

Try different combinations of fields. E.g. keyword (however labelled), Title, Subject/Descriptor, etc. (Note that some databases have more than one type of Subject/Descriptor field.)

Consider truncation: *. E.g. religio* > religion(s), religiosity, religious, etc.

Consider phrase searching: “”. E.g. “faith development” or “mak* discipl*”. That latter combination of phrase searching with truncation works in some (e.g. the EBSCOhost and ProQuest) databases, but not all (not the Library discovery system, e.g.). If not, revert to mak* disciple* (in a single field).

Consult the thesaurus: Some databases, e.g. the Library discovery system and PsycINFO, have highly sophisticated thesauri.

Use the thesaurus supplied by your database (whether highly sophisticated or not) to hone in on official subject headings or descriptors.

Use the Advanced Search area:

All of the databases have ways of limiting a search to research-based articles, e.g.

- Academic, scholarly, or peer-reviewed.
- Document type.
Some of the databases, e.g. PsycINFO, have highly sophisticated ways to limit to groups of various kinds (e.g. age groups):

But if not, use keywords or subject headings to do so, as under “Group synonyms together”, above. E.g.

Follow the “links”. I.e., secure your most promising books and articles, and attend to their footnotes and bibliographies.