

Search for What's New



Embarking on a journey requires specific tools and habits of the mind. For example, if you head out for a camping trip, you need to make sure you have the proper gear to stay safe, healthy, and to reach your goals. The same can be said for “gearing up” for college - you need to have the right resources and focus to succeed in your studies.

In college, academic research and writing is often central to the process of exploration and discovery. Libraries contain vast repositories of knowledge and artifacts, just waiting to be unearthed, analyzed, and applied in new and exciting ways. Academic libraries, like the one at APU, can feel like tangled jungles of articles and books. Even if you think something might be helpful, the information can seem hard to find, read, and understand.

You may be thinking, “Can’t I just use Google?” Well, in college-level research, limiting your searches to Google will not get you down into the depths of the information you need. Search engines like Google, Bing, or Yahoo are great at pouring through information on the “open web.” But the “open web” contains only a fraction of the information that is available online. In actuality, the vast majority of information (especially quality, scholarly information) is only available by accessing the “deep web” - the closed, subscription-based networks of academic libraries and archives.



Libraries like Azusa Pacific’s pay subscriptions to dozens of databases and resources in order to provide learners with access to the best, most relevant, and most scholarly information available. Neglecting the information on the deep web is like riding up to the Temple of Doom with Indiana Jones but not going inside to find the real treasures.

This week we will practice venturing into the jungles of academic research. You will review several tutorials related to research and APA formatting (which is how you identify where you found your research - so you could take Indiana Jones back with you if needed). With a little orientation, the APU Library will become your go-to place for exploration and discovery. APU provides a plethora of tutorials and assistance to aid in your research journeys. To get started, this week you will begin work on the Annotated Bibliography that is part of your PASSport project.



In the midst of the practical library exercises, we will also return to *Uncommon Gratitude*. Your reflection paper this week will provide an opportunity for further engagement with the themes and questions raised in the book. Even in the midst of “academic” tasks like research, our journeys are still being shaped and formed by God’s real presence in the world.

This week, our reading in *Success as an Online Student* will address how to form good study habits, find a work-life balance, and manage time effectively.

You will also have the opportunity to explore and share about the kinds of apps and resources that you may find useful to integrate into your life as a learner.

We will also continue to read a few chapters in *Uncommon Gratitude* - on conflict, sinners, and saints. Remember, this book operates on a different plane than the “how-to” concepts that we will talk about in *Success as an Online Student*. *Uncommon Gratitude* draws us into the larger spiritual questions of life, where the answers are often not so straightforward and clear. But, chances are that you will identify with some of the questions and insights from the book on a deeper level. Take those questions along with you, as they are also part of how we experience the journey.