

Module 4.2 Alternative Access Options

I can see it, why can't I get it? Information is a commodity and access is NOT guaranteed.

Have you ever done a Google search when starting an assignment and found the one, perfect thing that will answer all your questions and provide the ideal background or support for your argument... but you can't actually read the full text? You go to access the full article and you hit a roadblock: a fee to read the article, subscription or licensing restrictions, or there is nothing but a dead link. Unfortunately this will happen to most of us at some point.

When this does happen, there are some options for you... First, see if the library has access to the book or journal you are looking for. Look for the book in the catalogue and search for a journal under the journals tab. Sometimes we have what you want but you have to access it via the library for the full text. This is because of the costs associated with print and electronic publishing.

If we don't have it, you can try some open access options like OA journals and institutional repositories. Some post-secondary institutions will provide a place for faculty and researchers to store copies of their works, such as the U of A's ERA—the Education and Research Archive.

A couple other options include:

1. email the author. They might send you a copy.
2. check out their website, academia.edu, linked in, or other web presence site, if they have one. You might find a pre-print or author-submitted copy in their publications list. These are the author's versions of the article without the copyediting and fancy formatting of the journal.
3. Contact your librarian! We're here to help. You can contact your liaison or stop by a service desk. You'll find contact information and library hours on the website.