1. INFORMATION COMPETENCY
is a combination of knowledge and skills that enables us to:
(1) determine what information we need, (2) to find that information efficiently and effectively,
(3) to use it well and wisely.

| Decide what information you need | ▪ What is your assignment?
|                                | ▪ What information do you need to find?
|                                | ▪ What do you plan to do with this information?
|                                | ▪ If you are not sure, check your syllabi, assignment sheet, etc. or talk to your instructor.

If you have to choose a topic, Rio Hondo College Library offers you some help. For ideas on your research topic, check the following resources:

- From the library homepage
  - click on RESEARCH HELP -- SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH PAPERS
  - or
  - RESEARCH HELP -- CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS SERIES
  - RESEARCH HELP -- THE RESEARCH PAPER
  - SUBJECT GUIDES -- HOW TO DO LIBRARY RESEARCH

| Find the information you need efficiently & effectively | ▪ BOOKS and other materials -- use WEBCAT - Rio Hondo Library Online Catalog
|                                                        | ▪ ARTICLES from magazines, journals & newspapers -- use RHC library ONLINE DATABASES such as ProQuest, SIRS, Pro & Con, Issues & Controversies @ FACTS.com, etc.
|                                                        | ▪ WEB SITES
|                                                        |   Find GOOD ones using RHC Library SUBJECT GUIDES
|                                                        |   Use any of these tutorials:
|                                                        |   http://www.pandia.com/goalgetter/index.html
|                                                        |   http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/FindInfo.html
|                                                        |   http://www.whittier.edu/tatiana/internettutorial/tutorial.htm

| Use the information you find well & wisely | ▪ Read through the information you’ve found
|                                           | ▪ Think critically about this information. Ask yourself whether this information is accurate, current, authoritative, etc. For basic guidelines on evaluating information check RESEARCH HELP -- EVALUATING WEB SITES.
|                                           | ▪ Cite your sources using style guides (for example, MLA or APA). Read more on citing sources in RESEARCH HELP -- Citing Sources : MLA & APA or in Berkeley Internet Tutorial:
|                                           |   http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Style.html
## THREE BASIC INFORMATION SOURCES

1) **WEB SITES**
- Use sites that give good, authentic, authoritative, reliable information.
- Evaluate information you get from Web sites. However, when you use a Web subject directory some evaluation has already been done.

2) **MAGAZINE, JOURNAL, and NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**
- **KEYWORDS** - Words you think of to describe information you need.
- **SUBJECT HEADINGS** - Words and phrases experts use in respective databases to describe information about any aspect of human life and interest.

3) **BOOKS**
- **REFERENCE BOOKS** - RHC Library's excellent reference collection is located on the second Floor of the library. You can not check reference books out of the library. You have to use them in the library.
- **CIRCULATING BOOKS** - Located on Floors 3 & 4. You can check these out of the Library for use at home.

## TIPS & TECHNIQUES FOR USING THEM WELL

1) **WEB SITES**
- Start with **WEB SUBJECT DIRECTORIES**
  - [www.lii.org](http://www.lii.org) or [www.dmoz.org](http://www.dmoz.org)
  - Directories include web sites reviewed and recommended by subject experts.
- Get help from RHC Library's homepage by clicking on
  - (a) **SUBJECT GUIDES**
  - (b) **RESEARCH HELP** – ABOUT WEB DIRECTORIES & PORTALS.

2) **MAGAZINE, JOURNAL, and NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**
- From RHC Library's homepage, click on **ONLINE DATABASES**. Choose a database that you are going to search – for example, ProQuest, SIRS, Issues & Controversies, etc. Each database has a brief description. You can search these databases from both on or off-campus.
  - Start with **KEYWORD** searching using your own words and phrases
  - Get some results. Click on the titles listed that you feel will most likely to give you information you need.
  - Look at the full description of the article and note the **SUBJECT TERMS** or subject headings assigned to the article.
  - Conduct a **SUBJECT** (not a keyword) search using these subject headings.

3) **BOOKS**
- From RHC Library's homepage, click on **CATALOG**, then on **WEBCAT**.
  - Start with **KEYWORD SEARCHING**. Use words and phrases you think describe the information you want.
  - From the results list, select those titles that are especially relevant to your interest.
  - Identify **SUBJECT TERMS** assigned to these books.
  - Do a **SUBJECT search** using these subject headings to find other books and materials on that subject.