Hi. This is Pam Sukalski, Librarian at SMSU’s McFarland Library. In this video clip we will be searching for a specific book – first in SMSU’s collection and then in the rest of the MnPALS libraries.

Many times as you conduct research, you will use resources that are mentioned in bibliographies of sources you are already using. If you need to look for a book, you’ll want to use the MnPALS online catalog.

You’ll find a search box for MnPALS in the middle of the Library homepage under the Books tab. Since you’ll have an exact title, you can choose to set your search to only look in the title field. In my example, I am looking for a book by Ainsworth called *Power Standards: Identifying the Standards that Matter the Most*. This is a long title, so I will only use the first few words. I do not need to include punctuation that may display in the title such as the semicolon (:

I am only searching in SMSU’s collection right now – I can see that by the University logo in the upper left. One title displays, but this is not the book I am interested in. So now I want to see if another library owns this book. To do that I will change the drop-down menu from Southwest Minnesota State University to All Libraries which is found at the top of the list. Note how the logo has changed from SMSU to MnPALS; this is a good indicator that I have moved out of my home library’s collection.

Since my results are in Relevance order, the books that most closely matches my words appear at the top. In this case, there are two libraries that own this book. If you want to borrow this book, you’ll need you complete an Interlibrary Loan request.

Your first step is to do that is to look at the record of the book you want to borrow. If there are multiple libraries who own the book, do not be concerned about which library’s record you select. The Library system will determine which library lends the book.

In the Holdings tab, you’ll see the column called Request Item. Click the Login button below there. You will now need to log in with your 14-digit library barcode and password which is typically your last name. After you log into the system, the link under Request Item now says Request. Clicking on Request will bring up a form. All of the citation information for the book you are interested in has been completed for you. A “Not Needed After” date is filled in as well. You may elect to change that date if you know you cannot use the book after a certain point. Please understand, though, that a certain amount of time is needed to get the book from another library, so if you put a date too near in the future the request will not be filled. In other words, you do need to plan ahead and allow time for book requests through Interlibrary Loan. Most materials arrive at our library within a week of the request.

To complete your request, click on the Create an ILL request. You’ll get a message that your request was successfully created.

Please contact a Librarian if you have any questions about searching for materials at another library or requesting materials via Interlibrary Loan.