This video clip explains accessing and searching the SportDISCUS database.

From the SMSU library homepage, use the A-Z Database list to find SPORTDiscus. If you are off-campus, you will be prompted for your Star ID login information.

So this EBSCO database defaults to a basic search box that looks a lot like Google. There are some ways to limit your results on the lower half of the screen. Those options are also available after you conduct a search.

I am looking for information about the effect of psychology in collegiate athletics. I’ll type the keywords - psychology collegiate athletics -- into the box and click search.

Things to note when your results come back:

First of all, how many results did you get? I have 685 results.

Keep in mind that the database had to find my three keywords (psychology collegiate athletics) somewhere in the record. If I adjust my search strategy, I can either narrow or expand my results. For example, to narrow, I could add the word basketball and my results reduce to 108. To expand, I could use the truncation symbol in the word collegiate so as to ask the database for all words starting colleg* which would include words such as college, colleges, collegial, and collegiate and that would expand my results to 2,235.

I’ll return to my original search.

Another thing you want to notice is what order your results came back in. This database defaults to a Relevance order which means the database put what it considers to be the best match at the top for the words you typed into the search box. But this may not be the most relevant to you. Note that you can choose to put your results in date order as well. I’ll sort them into Date Newest order.

You’ll see off in the left-hand column that there are several options to narrow. Take a few minutes to explore these limiters to see how they can help you target your results.

I will highlight source types. If you know that magazines are not applicable sources for your research and you need to be using academic journals, select that source type and narrow to that format. You can see here we have 462 results remaining.

Another way to narrow is by using the subjects. This gives you an idea of what subjects were used in these articles. You could narrow further by selecting specific subjects.

As you look at your results, you’ll notice that the area that is highlighted in blue is the title of the article and the basic citation information is listed below. Here’s the author(s), the journal title, the date, the
volume and the issue, and the page the article begins on. You’ll also see subjects that are used to describe this article. If you roll over this preview icon, you can also read the abstract, if one is available. This is a shortcut and a good way for you to skim your results. You can also get to this by clicking on the title. This will display the full abstract and separate out the subject terms. You’ll see the subject terms are hyperlinked; note that if you click on one of these subject terms you will lose your original search and begin a new one.

If the full text is available you will see a link in the left-hand column to either the html or PDF Full Text. I’ll click on the full-text and highlight some of the shortcuts here off to the right. You could choose to print this article, you could email it to yourself or a classmate, you could put it in your folder (although be careful with this because your folder disappears as soon as you close this browser window unless you are logged into a MyEBSCO Account). And this is a great shortcut – this is the cite feature. If you click on this it brings up the most common ways of citing information. If you’re using APA, you can highlight this; copy and paste this into your References Page. Or if you’re using MLA, that option is listed below.

Do note that these citations are not 100% accurate so you’ll want to look at them closely, however they give you a good starting point for your citations.

I’m going to go back to my results list now. As I scroll through the results on this screen you can see the PDF or html option that are available, but in this case, neither option shows. But there is a “search for full text” link. If this looks like it would be a relevant source for you, please don’t skip over those that don’t have the full-text available. Click on the “Search for Full Text” link and that goes out to see if this full-text is available in another SMSU database. If it’s not available in another database, you’ll see directs link to search Google Scholar or to request this through interlibrary loan.

If you need assistance using the “Search for Full-Text” option or have other questions about searching the databases, please contact an SMSU librarian.