

Spotlight: Library and Information Services

The OUI library is a hybrid, comprising traditional hard-copy collections such as journals, reference books and books published by the OUI, as well as multimedia materials. A large digital collection of information databases, online journals, and digital books, music, and art collections currently comprise about two-thirds of the materials overall.

The virtual library took the lead following a strategic decision to prioritize the purchase of digital copies of journals and books previously purchased in print, without increasing the budget. This policy conforms to the needs of distance education, which is one of the cornerstones of the OUI. It enables students and faculty to utilize the library collections both in Israel and abroad.

The library's ultimate mission is to assist students in their studies, especially in writing papers towards graduation. Locating and accessing academic bibliographic sources are important at that stage. Library assistance takes the following forms:

- The library has developed a site for bibliographic instruction which includes informative clips introducing the library and the tools it offers for searching and accessing information. Students may study this site in order to prepare for the bibliography exemption test, which is a precondition for enrolling in advanced courses.
- Assistance in searching and accessing information is offered during working hours. The OUI National Reference Center offers remote information search services by telephone, email, and an online form. A

team of reference librarians offers instruction and assistance in independent learning.

- A quick-search feature enables simultaneous searches in most of the databases and in the library catalog, and easy access to the full texts. It is also possible to search information separately in individual databases.
- Students may order books from the OUI library and receive them by mail to a home address via the "Library in your home" service. Specific journal articles or book sections can also be ordered from the OUI library and other academic libraries, and will be sent by email. Interlibrary loans of books, articles, and book sections from other universities in Israel and abroad are available to senior staff members and faculty. This significantly broadens the selection of printed and electronic publications that are accessible to students and faculty for studies and research.
- Reading and loan services are available to faculty members and advanced students at the libraries of other universities.