Political Science 083T First Year Seminar
Prof. Baumgartner
Home work due on Wednesday Nov 5, 2008

This is an assignment on how to use JSTOR. JSTOR is short for Journal Storage, and it is an amazing resource. It includes a searchable database of basically every journal article published in a huge range of journals in so many disciplines you will not believe it. In Political Science, the full text of every article published in 63 different journals is available, including the full historical record of the journals sometimes going back to the 1800s. Over 90 Sociology journals are included. And it covers the hard sciences as well. The only thing it does not have is the last two years; for that you have to subscribe to the journal or get it on the shelves of the library (but you already know how to do that).

So, you need to know how to use JSTOR.
1. From the library home page, go to the tab at the top called "Databases"
2. Find JSTOR in the alphabetical list.
3. Go to "Advanced Search"
4. Enter in a search term, for example "lobbying" and specify you want to search the abstract. (Note that you can easily search for a specific article or author as well, which is good when you know the article you need to find because it was listed in a bibliography, and you want to read it. Here, I want to focus on how to use JSTOR to search for articles you may not already know about, however.)
5. Also specify that you only want to search "articles," pick a date range you want to use (say, 1990 to 2008), and pick some disciplines. In this case, maybe Political Science, Sociology, and History. Also, probably you only want articles published in English, so specify that as well. Do the search.
6. If you search as above you should get 94 hits. Glance through the hits to get a feel for the titles and the journals where these articles are appearing.
7. Find an article that is less dull than the others. Download the PDF. Print the first two pages and bring it to class.

Now, pick a search term of interest to you, in any discipline, maybe something that might be useful for another class. Do the search and browse through the results. Revise your search term by adding more words to it or subtracting some words or specifying that the words have to be in the title rather than in the abstract. Do this three times. Print out the first page of the results page you get for each of your three searches. Select the search term that seemed to work the best. Bring all three pages to class and write on them saying which one was best and what was wrong with the other two.