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Finding Conference Proceedings in the Biology Library

Introduction

Proceedings can be an important source of information, and many times the most current available on particular research or topics. Various types of professional gatherings such as conferences, workshops, symposia, expositions, and congresses, may disseminate presented papers or abstracts of papers as published proceedings.

Proceedings may be published in many forms, including part of a journal issue, a special journal supplement, a technical report, a book, or part of a series. Some papers published in proceedings, or redeveloped papers from the original ones, may go on to be published in other monographs or serials. Not all conferences and other types of meetings publish proceedings. And not all published proceedings are peer-reviewed. The same evaluative methods must be used for proceedings as for any other source of information.

Getting Started

Because of the varying ways that conference proceedings and papers may be published, finding them can be a real challenge. There are a number of techniques that can be used in a search strategy, as below. First it would help to see how a proceedings record displays. For an example, go to the UIUC Online Library Catalog and do a Title Search on “Computational methods in systems biology.” You will see the record starts with three fields: Conference, Title, and Series. Not all records for proceedings have all three of these fields – depending on if the title is a book chapter, part of a series, journal supplement, etc. But this gives you an idea of the complexity of the record and the challenge that may lie ahead. The tips below should aid you in coming to a successful conclusion with your search. One of the tips may do the job, or it may take some combination of tips to find what you are looking for. If you help at any point along the way, a librarian would be more than happy to assist you.

There are a number of places where details about conference proceedings may be located. Some will provide citations which will allow you to find the item in our *Online Library Catalog*, or pursue through interlibrary loan. Others may provide links to the full-text item. If the proceedings is possibly in a monograph (book, series, journal supplement, etc.) begin with the *Online Library Catalog*. If you find it here, it will be on campus at the location indicated on the record if it is not checked out. If it is published as a journal article start with an article database (which may also index other items besides journal articles depending on the database – the key is to know what information the database indexes contain, and this can be found in the “About” link in the e-resources list, or in the database Help.). When the article database does not have the title in full-text, you must go to the Online Library Catalog with the citation details to see if the item source (e.g., journal title) is available on campus, or must be pursued by interlibrary loan. The following are major databases that may provide details about conference proceedings in the biological sciences:

- [Biological Record \(BISOSIS\)](#), 1969 to present
- [Conference Papers Index*](#) (Cambridge Scientific Abstracts), 1982 to present
***Note:** Conference Papers Index provides citations to papers and poster sessions presented at major scientific meetings around the world. Subject emphasis since 1995 has been in the life sciences, environmental sciences and the aquatic sciences, while older material also covers physics, engineering and materials science. Information is derived from final programs, abstracts booklets and published proceedings, as well as from questionnaire responses. Records include complete ordering information to obtain preprints, abstracts, proceedings and other publications derived from the conference, together with title and author information needed to track the specific papers.
- [Current Contents](#), 1993 to present
- [OCLC \(Online Computer Library Center, Inc.\) ProceedingsFirst](#) [Available via *OCLC WorldCat*] 1993 to present

This guide is available online at <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/bix/conference.pdf>

Last updated 9/26/2006- mma

- [Directory of Published Proceedings \(DoPP\)](#), 1994 to present locates and procures available literature from nearly 50,000 conferences, meetings and symposia from around the world.
The print version of DoPP Series SEMT: Science / Engineering / Medicine / Technology is available in the Main Library Reference Room, 1965 to present; or Grainger Engineering Library, 1967 to present [016.06 D628](#)
- [PubMed](#), 1950 to present
- [Zoological Record](#), 1978 to present
- Contacting the sponsoring organization directly
- Contacting the editor or author directly

Biological Abstracts/RRM (Reports, Reviews, Meetings) or BIOSIS Previews (Combination of BA and BA/RRM) are databases that index conference proceedings, symposia, meetings, reports, etc. in the life sciences BUT the UIUC Library does not currently subscribe to these databases. Print issues of BA/RRM are available for 1980 - 1996; for earlier citations, check the print issues of Bioresearch Abstracts, 1967 - 1979. [**UIUC Library subscribes to *Biological Record (BIOSIS)*, online 1969 to present, and print 1926-2000, which indexes journal articles, but does not index conference proceedings, reports, reviews, meetings.**]

Search Strategies

Below are search tips that can be used in various catalogs and databases as search strategies to locate details about proceedings. The search may require a combination of more than one type of search (e.g., author / keyword).

Title Search

- Use *exact* title
Note: Refer to database instructions for whether to keep or remove any article words as first words, or whether complete or just beginning title words are needed)
- Use year, place, and/or number (e.g., 1st or First) if known using keyword search in title field
Note: These variables are placed in the title field of the record for books and series.

Keyword Search

- Use sponsor name and/or relevant keywords from the title
- Use the words "conferences," "workshops," "symposia," "expositions," or "congresses" as applicable

Author Search

Note: Conference editors and sponsors are cataloged into the item record as authors

- Search sponsor name (e.g., American Physiological Society)
- Search editor name(s)

Subject Search

Note: LCSH (Library of Congress Subject Headings) are used in our Online Library Catalog and in some databases, and will include the word "Congresses" for proceedings subject headings in the record.

- Search a topic word and the word "congresses" (e.g., Sodium channels—Congresses)

Other Searches

Note: Some databases have additional fields specifically for meetings that can be searched (e.g., Biological Abstracts (BIOSIS) – Reports, Reviews, Meetings)

If you are using a database / index that does not provide full text of materials, then you will need to check the UIUC Library Online Catalog < <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/catalog/> > to see if the item is at a campus library. Read the following guides for additional information on finding library materials at UIUC:

- UIUC Library Handouts (guides to the Online Library Catalog <http://door.library.uiuc.edu/learn/handouts/handouts.htm> >
- Brief Guide to Locating Books, Journals, and Series < http://door.library.uiuc.edu/bix/locating_items.htm >
- Locating Items in the Biology Library < <http://door.library.uiuc.edu/bix/locate.htm> >
- Guide to Finding Medical Books and Journals at UIUC < <http://door.library.uiuc.edu/bix/medical.htm> >

And if you need help, just **ask a librarian !**

This guide is available online at <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/bix/conference.pdf>

Last updated 9/26/2006- mma