

How to Do a Literature Review for your Master Thesis?

Why do we Need a Literature Review?

“... the use of ideas in the literature to justify the particular approach to the topic, the selection of methods, and demonstration that this research contributes something new” (Hart, 1999, p. 1)

- Help the researcher understand the existing body of knowledge
 - What we know
 - What we do not know
- Develop a validated framework for the study
 - Research questions
 - Goals
 - Approach and Methodology

Literature Review Guidelines

Frequent **problems** in Master thesis:

- Mostly Web sources
- Students «reinvent» the wheel, because they are unaware of existing knowledge (e.g. established frameworks, models or methods) and do not use them as starting point for their investigation
- Many formatting problems (citations and reference lists)

Recommendations:

- 1) Critically **assess the quality of the sources**
(Not every Web resource is a suitable reference!)
- 2) Use a **systematic search strategy**
(Google search is not enough, use databases to search for academic literature!)
- 3) follow the guidelines for **formatting in-text citations and reference list**
(Zotero may help)

1. Quality of References (1)

Depending on your topic, different type of references may be relevant:

- Articles in academic journals
- Articles in conference proceedings
- Books
- Practitioner reports, market studies,
- Documentation and whitepapers from software vendors
- ...

The following criteria may be helpful in assessing the (academic) quality:

- Peer-reviewed academic publications (journals, conferences, ...)
- Number of citations
- Reputation of the author(s)

1. Quality of References (2)

Which journals are relevant?

8 Top IS Journals have been defined by the « AIS senior scholar's basket of journals »

- MIS Quarterly
- European Journal of Information Systems
- Information Systems Journal
- Journal of Information Technology
- Journal of Management Information Systems
- Journal of Strategic Information Systems
- Journal of the Association for Information Systems

Systèmes d'information et Management (SIM) is the leading French-speaking IS journal

Management journals, especially when reporting on technology trends: Harvard Business Review, Sloan Management Review, ...

Computer Science journals: IEEE Transactions, Communications of the ACM, ...



2. Search Strategy – Overview

- Use appropriate databases (cf. next slides):
 - Search for scholarly literature (scholar.google.com)
 - Academic literature databases (EBSCO, ProQuest)
 - Online Libraries offered by academic associations (AIS, IEEE, ACM)
- Start (but don't stop) with keyword searches
 - Keywords change over the years
 - “Buzzwords” especially volatile
- Proceed to “backward searching”
 - Reference search
 - Author search
 - Terms and concepts
- Then on to “forward searching”
 - References
 - Authors
 - Terms and concepts

2. Search Strategy – UNIL Access

- Campus in-site workstations and UNIL provided VPN (www.bcu-lausanne.ch/)

The image shows a screenshot of the BCU Lausanne website. The top navigation bar includes 'Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire - Lausanne' and 'Accès aux catalogues'. A search bar is visible with options for 'page' and 'document'. Below the search bar, there is a section titled 'Accéder aux documents électroniques de la BCU Lausanne' which explains that users can access electronic journals and books (PerUnil) through the BCU's subscription. It lists access points: on-site computer workstations at UNIL or BCU, or remotely from home for university members. A sidebar on the left contains a menu with 'Accueil', 'Recherches de documents', 'Guichets et prestations', and various collection categories. At the bottom, there is a section for 'Accès direct aux principales plateformes' with logos for ScienceDirect, Taylor & Francis Online, Wiley Online Library, Springer, and ingentaconnect.

- PerUNIL: Recherche de périodiques disponibles sur les sites UNIL, CHUV et BCUL: unil.ch/perunil

2. Search Strategy – Databases (1)

Google Scholar (scholar.google.com) provides a search of *scholarly* literature across many disciplines and sources, including theses, books, abstracts and articles.

The screenshot shows the Google Scholar search interface. The search bar contains 'enterprise architecture'. The results are displayed in a list format. Annotations in red text and arrows point to specific elements:

- It is a Book:** Points to the first result, 'Handbook on enterprise architecture' by P. Bernus, L. Nemes, and G. Schmidt (2003).
- Date:** Points to the year '2003' in the citation information.
- How to properly cite the paper:** Points to the citation information 'Cited by 114' and 'All 12 versions'.
- It is a Journal paper:** Points to the second result, 'Enterprise architecture: Management tool and blueprint for the organisation' by H. Jonkers, M.M. Lankhorst, and H.W.L. ter Doest (2006).
- Access to paper via UNIL:** Points to the 'Full Text@UNIL' link for the second result.

Other visible elements include the Google logo, search button, filters on the left (Articles, Legal documents, Any time, Sort by relevance), and a 'Create alert' button.

Number of citations that shows the reliability of the publication

2. Search Strategy – Databases (2)

Academic literature databases provide online access to articles from the most prestigious scientific journals:

- **EBSCOhost** (search.ebscohost.com): Select “Business Source Premier” for access (table content, articles including full text) to the top management and IS journals

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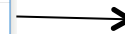
Choisir les bases de données | Sélectionner un autre service EBSCO

Pour effectuer une recherche au sein d'une seule base de données, cliquez sur son nom dans la liste ci-dessous. Pour effectuer une recherche dans plusieurs bases de données, cochez les cases de celles qui vous intéressent et cliquez sur *Continuer*.

Continuer

Sélectionner / désélectionner tout

- America: History & Life**
America: History and Life constitue le recueil de publications incontournable concernant l'histoire et la culture des États-Unis et du Canada, de la préhistoire à la période contemporaine. Avec un index comprenant 1 700 revues datant de 1910 à nos jours, cette base de données est sans conteste l'outil de référence bibliographique le plus important pour les étudiants et les spécialistes de l'histoire des États-Unis et du Canada.
[Plus d'informations](#)
- Art Full Text (H.W. Wilson)**
Art Full Text™ est une source d'informations sur l'art exhaustive. Elle réunit des articles en texte intégral tirés de plus de 300 périodiques (dont les plus anciens remontent à 1995), un index détaillé et des résumés de plus de 600 périodiques (dont les premiers datent de 1984), 280 d'entre eux ayant été revus par un comité de lecture, ainsi qu'un index et des résumés de plus de 13 000 thèses consacrées à l'art. En outre, un index de près de 200 000 œuvres d'art donne accès à des exemples des styles et mouvements artistiques et permet de découvrir des œuvres d'artistes émergents. Cette base de données couvre les beaux-arts, les arts décoratifs, commercial et populaire, mais aussi la photographie, le cinéma et l'architecture. Elle comprend également un thesaurus spécifique.
[Liste de titres](#) [Plus d'informations](#)
- Art Index Retrospective (H.W. Wilson)**
Art Index Retrospective™: 1929-1984 vous donne accès à plus d'un demi-siècle de littérature sur les beaux-arts, les arts décoratifs et l'art commercial. Son contenu inclut un index très riche de près de 600 publications, dont une grande partie a été revue par un comité de lecture, ainsi que des citations de plus de 25 000 critiques de livres.
[Liste de titres](#) [Plus d'informations](#)
- Biography Index Past and Present (H.W. Wilson)**
Biography Index: Past and Present est une ressource biographique réputée. Elle combine la couverture rétrospective de Biography Index jusqu'à sa première publication en 1946 avec une indexation actuelle pour offrir aux étudiants, érudits, professionnels du monde des médias, clubs de lecture et chercheurs toutes les informations biographiques dont ils ont besoin. Elle contient notamment : Plus d'un million de citations d'articles et de livres Une couverture rétrospective de Biography Index jusqu'à sa première publication en 1946 Données bibliographiques de personnalités et célébrités contemporaines Entrées sur des personnes reflétant la perspective de l'époque à laquelle elles ont été rédigées
[Plus d'informations](#)
- Business Source Premier**
Business Source Premier est la base de données la plus utilisée pour les recherches ayant trait à l'économie et aux affaires. Elle propose plus de 2 300 revues en texte intégral, dont 1 100 titres revus par un comité de lecture. Les documents en texte intégral proposés remontent pour les plus anciens à 1886, et les références citées interrogeables datent de 1998. *Business Source Premier* se distingue des autres bases de données par sa couverture en texte intégral de toutes les disciplines de l'économie et des affaires, notamment le marketing, le management, les systèmes d'information de question, la gestion de la production et des opérations, la comptabilité, la finance et l'économie. Elle est mise à jour quotidiennement sur



Nouvelle recherche | Publications | Profils d'entreprises | Thesaurus | Plus

Recherche : Business Source Premier | Choisir les bases de données

Suggérer des termes de sujet

Sélectionner un champ (facultatif)

Rechercher Effacer

AND

Sélectionner un champ (facultatif)

AND

Sélectionner un champ (facultatif)

Ajouter une ligne

Recherche simple | Recherche avancée | Recherche visuelle | Historique de recherche

Options de recherche

Search Modes and Expanders

Modes de recherche

- Boolean/Phrase
- Trouver tous mes termes de recherche
- Trouver n'importe lequel de mes termes de recherche
- Recherche SmartText [Astuces](#)

Appliquer les mots communs

Rechercher aussi dans le texte intégral des articles

2. Search Strategy – Databases (3)

Academic literature databases provide online access to articles from the most prestigious scientific journals (cont.):

- **ProQuest** (search.proquest.com/index)

To search in a specific publication e.g. a journal

Searching: 19 databases | 1 Recent searches | 0 Selected items | My Research | Exit

Basic Search | Advanced | **Publications** | Browse | Preferences | English | Help

ProQuest | Advanced search | Recent searches | Search tips

Full text Peer reviewed

Search subject areas | List view

- Economie Entreprises
- Histoire de l'art
- Litterature & Language
- Social Sciences
- Politique publique

To search your keyword in the whole database

2. Search Strategy – Databases (4)

Online libraries from associations, such as AIS, IEEE or ACM provide online access to journals and conference proceedings to their members:

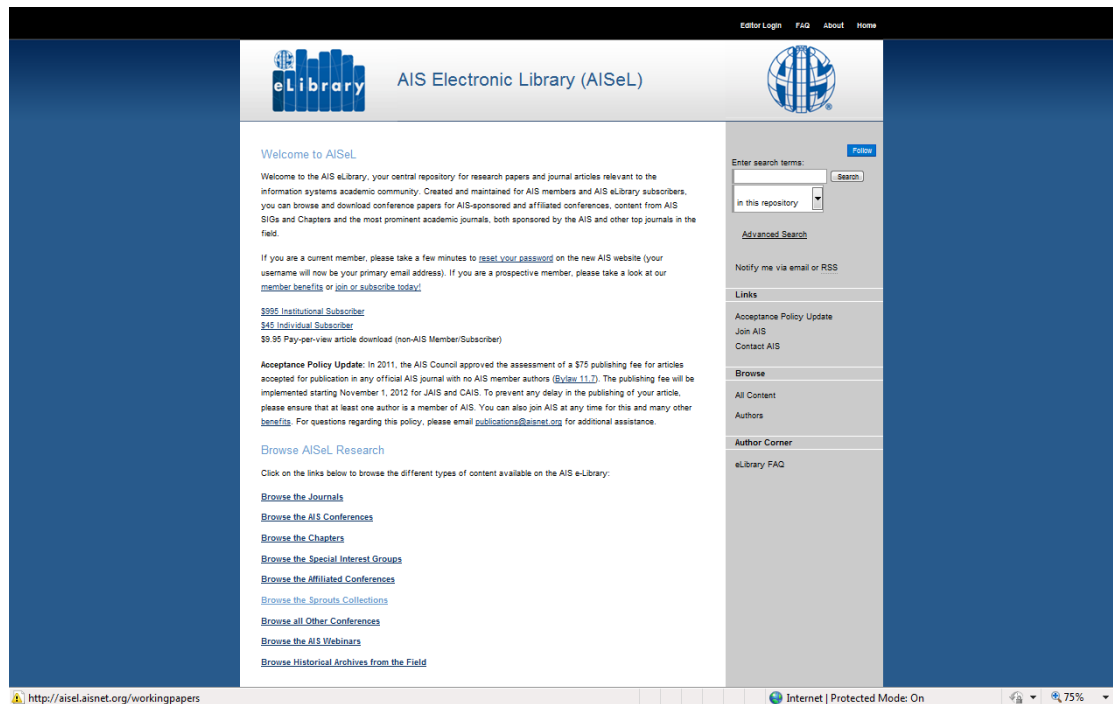
- The **AIS Electronic Library** (aisel.aisnet.org) provides online access to the journals edited by the Association of Information Systems (AIS), such as Journal of the AIS and Communication of the AIS, and the AIS affiliated conferences, notably International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS), European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS) and others.
→ *institutional access, available for all UNIL students!*
- The **IEEE Digital Library** (ieeexplore.ieee.org/Xplore/guesthome.jsp) provides online access to IEEE journals, such as IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing and others, and the IEEE affiliated conferences.
- The **ACM Digital Library** (dl.acm.org) provides online access to ACM journals, such as Communications of the ACM, and the ACM affiliated conferences.

You may need to register (for free). Some articles are for free, but some may require a member login which your professor should provide you upon request.

2. Search Strategy – Databases (5)

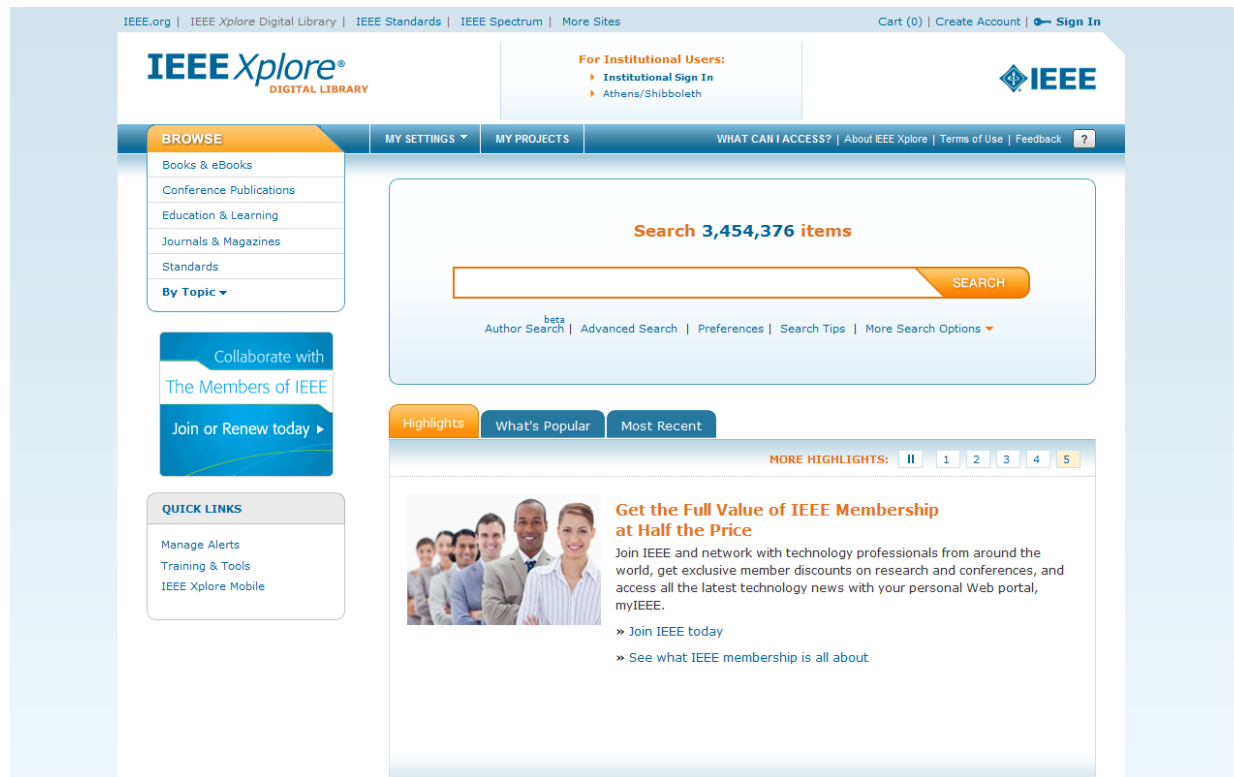
Online libraries: AIS Electronic Library (aisel.aisnet.org):

→ *Institutional membership at UNIL, access available for all UNIL students!*



2. Search Strategy – Databases (6)

Online libraries: IEEE Digital Library (ieeexplore.ieee.org/Xplore/guesthome.jsp)
→ available from EPFL, some UNIL professors have also (personal) access



2. Search Strategy – Databases (7)

ACM Digital Library (dl.acm.org)

→ available from EPFL, some UNIL professors have also (personal) access

The screenshot displays the ACM Digital Library homepage. At the top left is the logo for ACM Digital Library. To the right is a search bar with a 'SEARCH' button and links for 'SIGN IN' and 'SIGN UP'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Full text of every article ever published by ACM and bibliographic citations from major publishers in computing.** This section includes links for 'Using the ACM Digital Library' and 'For Consortia Administrators'.
- Announcements:** A 'New Journal' section for 'ACM Transactions on Economics and Computation (TEAC)', mentioning co-editors Vincent Conitzer and Randolph P. McFee.
- Recently loaded issues and proceedings:** A list of recent publications including 'Journal of Experimental Algorithmics (JEA)', 'Journal of the ACM (JACM)', 'ACM Transactions on Architecture and Code Optimization (TACO)', 'ACM Transactions on Graphics (TOG)', and 'ACM Transactions on Mathematical Software (TOMS)'. Each entry includes a link to a specific volume and issue.
- Advanced Search:** A section with various browsing options: 'Browse the ACM Publications' (Journals/Transactions, Magazines, Proceedings), 'Browse the Special Interest Groups' (Special Interest Groups (SIGs)), 'Browse the Conferences' (Recent and Upcoming Conferences, Conference Listing), 'Browse the Special Collections' (eBooks, ACM International Conference Proceeding Series (ICPS), Classic Book Series, ACM Oral History interviews), 'Browse the Publications by Affiliated Organizations', 'Browse all literature by type' (with a dropdown menu), 'Browse all literature by Publisher', and 'Browse by the ACM Computing Classification System'.
- The Encyclopedia of Computer Science:** A section describing it as '...is the definitive reference in computer science and technology...'
- Institutional Profile Pages Beta:** A section stating 'ACM releases new feature giving snapshot of an Institution's contribution to the field.'

At the bottom, there are links to 'Send us your Feedback' and four buttons: 'Join ACM', 'Subscribe to Publications', 'Join SIGs', and 'Institutions & Libraries'.

3. Bibliography – Requirements

- The Master thesis comprises a list of all references that were cited in the manuscript.
- The reference list should be in alphabetical sort.
- Depending on reference sources (journal, conference, book, etc.), each reference should be made up all necessary elements, such as authors, date, title, page numbers, publisher, etc.
 - **Journal:** Schmidt, C. & Buxmann, P. (2010) Outcomes and success factors of enterprise IT architecture management: empirical insight from the international financial services industry. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 20, pp. 168-185.
 - **Book:** Hersey, P., Blanchard, K.H. & Johnson, D.E. (2008) *Management of Organizational Behavior: Leading Human Resources*. Ninth version. Pearson Prentice Hall.
 - **Website:** Open Group, (2009). TOGAF Version 9, Available at: <http://www.opengroup.org/togaf/>, Accessed 29 May 2009
 - **Report:** Langenberg, K. & Wegmann, A. (2004) *Enterprise Architecture: What Aspects is Current Research Targeting?* , (EPFL Technical Report IC/2004/77).

3. Bibliography – Software (1)

Zotero is software to manage bibliographic data and related materials (such as PDFs, images, audio and video files, snapshots of web pages).

It offers:

- web browser integration,
- online syncing,
- generation of in-text citations, footnotes and bibliographies,
- integration with the word processors [Microsoft Word](#), [LibreOffice](#), [OpenOffice.org Writer](#) and [NeoOffice](#).

Installation

- Students can download Zotero on <http://www.zotero.org/>. The first step is to download Zotero for Firefox in order to use web browser integration's feature. Then Word Processor Plugins for Zotero for Firefox have to be installed.

3. Bibliography – Software (2)

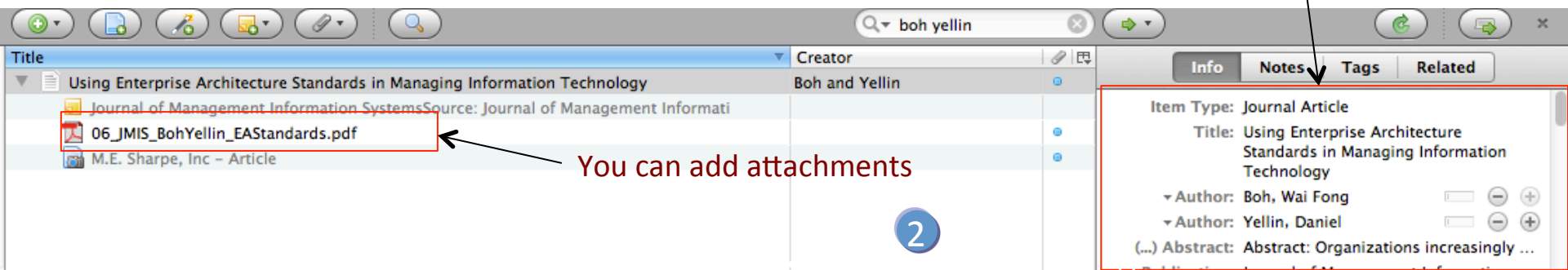
Searching for literature: Add a reference in Zotero

1

Click here to add the given paper in your reference list on Zotero



All the paper info. automatically goes here. Make sure that they are all correct e.g., item type, authors, publisher, date, etc.

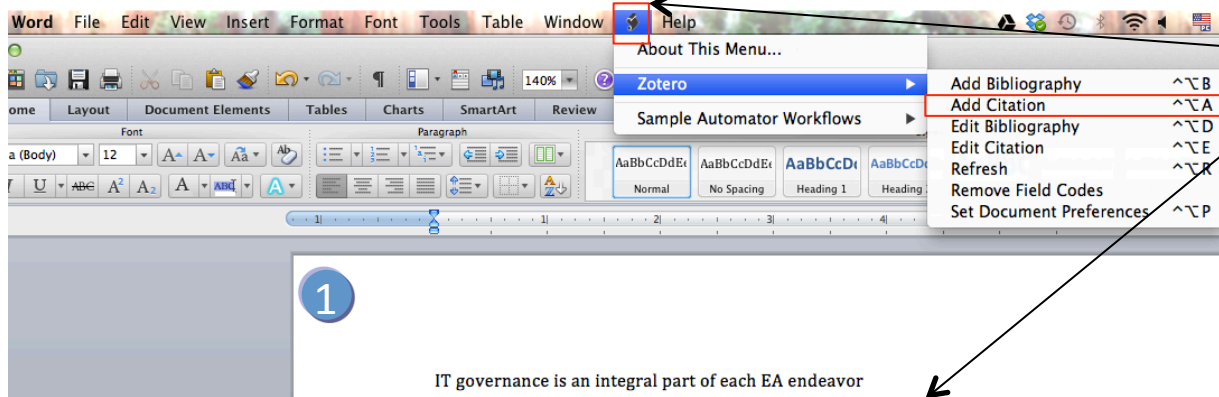


You can add attachments

2

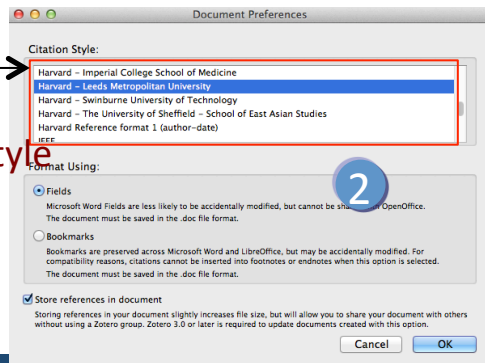
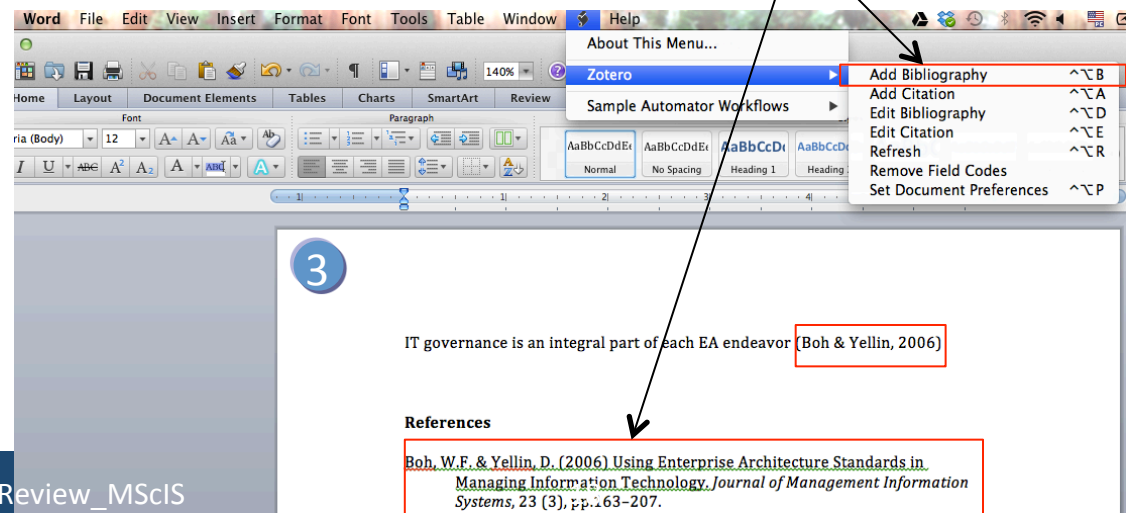
3. Bibliography – Software (3)

Creating references with the Zotero plugin in Word:
Add a citation and its related bibliography in your text



Click on the part of your text that you want to add the reference. Then, click on “add citation”

Add bibliography to your text



Select your referencing style e.g., Harvard