Abstracts in Social Gerontology and AgeLine are both databases that focus solely on literature about the elderly. This handout provides instructions on how to search them simultaneously; this is recommended as each database has unique content. If additional research is needed, search PsycINFO or other databases as appropriate. Ask your librarian for help.

Begin in Abstracts in Social Gerontology, then click CHOOSE DATABASES (look above the search box).

- From the pop-up CHOOSE DATABASES list, add a checkmark for AgeLine, and then click OK.
- From the search screen, click ADVANCED SEARCH (look below the search box).
- Analyze your topic (e.g., elder abuse in nursing homes): enter a word or short phrase for each aspect of your topic in a separate search box as show below. Use quotation marks to search two words as a phrase. Click SEARCH.

Review your search results. Note the source database of relevant citations, and compare the Subject terms of that database to your search terms. In the present example, natural language (your search terms) match AgeLine Subject terms exactly.
The left side of the results page provides numerous **REFINE RESULTS** options. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select the database that you have not reviewed results from, which in this case is *Abstracts in Social Gerontology*. Place a checkmark to choose that database, and then review the results again.

- Note that Subject terms reflecting the same concepts may be different because each library database has its own unique vocabulary.

After reviewing a sufficient number of citations and their assigned Subject terms, modify your search as appropriate. To retrieve more articles, add synonymous terms separated with the word **OR** (use capital letters). Combine Subject terms from both databases in this way.

- The default **AND** between each horizontal search box will focus your search by limiting results to articles that address each aspect of your topic.
- If you include your own keywords or phrases, be certain that they are likely to appear as natural language in the titles or abstracts of articles of interest. Including overly detailed or specific phrases in a search can cause you to retrieve zero matches.

**Search Tips:**

- Create an EBSCO account before you begin your search, and save citations of interest to a folder in your online account. This is the most effective way to ensure that citations of interest will not lost.
- Do not use the “Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals” or “Academic Journals” limits. This feature works only when searching a single database. Be aware that some of the publications from *AgeLine* are not scholarly articles. Use your judgment to assess the publication type of citations of interest, or apply the “Special Limiters” for each database to any result set by clicking **ADVANCED SEARCH** and following the instructions on the last page of this handout.
- Do not limit your results to “full text”. Articles not full text in these databases may be available full text in other library sources. Click the **Find it @ NEIU** button for alternate full text options.
How to Limit to Peer Reviewed Journals for a Combined *Abstracts in Social Gerontology* and *AgeLine* Search:

The Advanced Search Screen provides limits for each database. Do not use the “Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals” checkbox on either the Basic Search or Advanced Search Screen: this feature may only be used when searching a single database. When searching multiple databases, you must use the special limiters options for each database as illustrated below. Apply these limits as a final step once you have adequate search results.

- Click **ADVANCED SEARCH**
- Select “Academic Journal” for *Abstracts in Social Gerontology*.
- Select “Professional-Provider,” “Public Policy,” and “Research” for *AgeLine* (on a PC, press and hold down the Ctrl key when selecting multiple items; on a Mac, use the Command key).
- Click **SEARCH**.