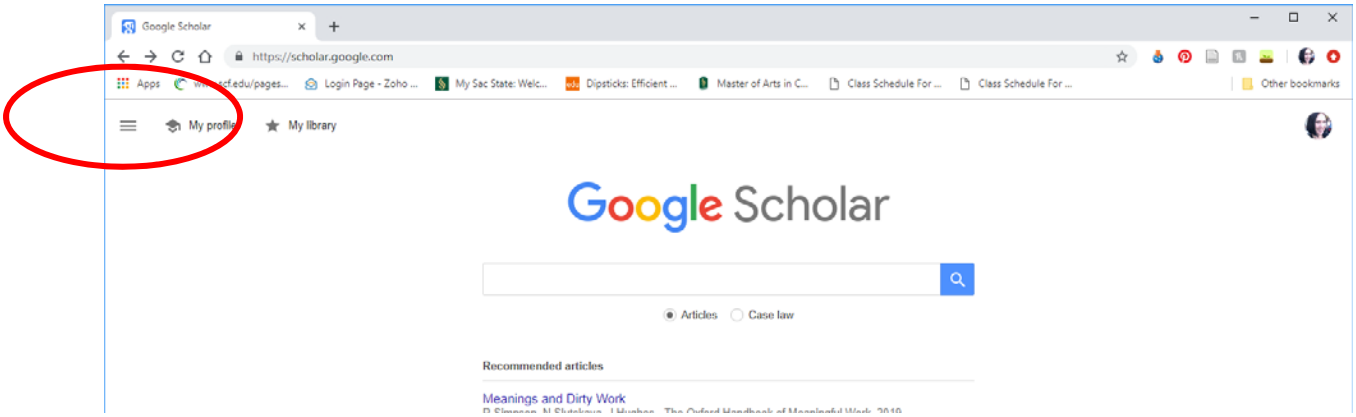
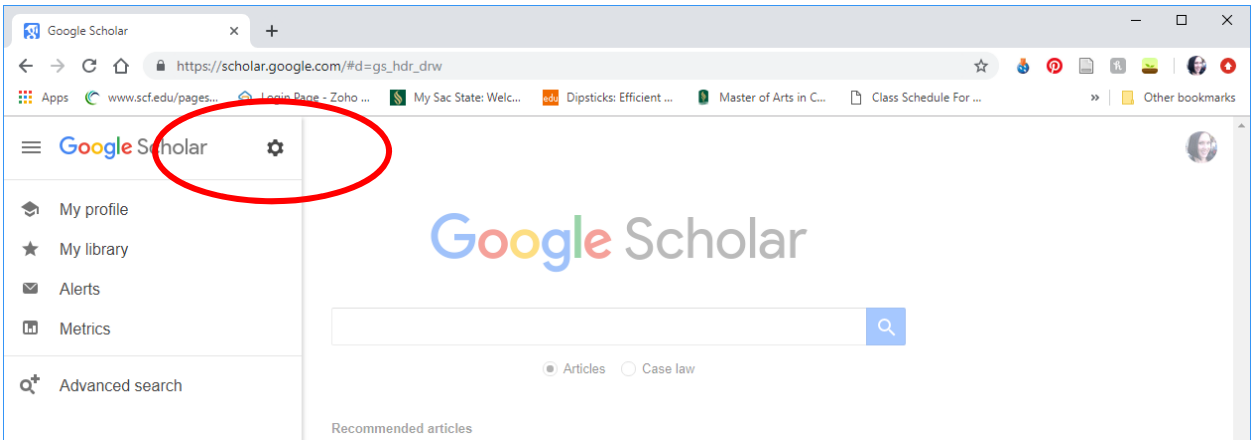
Finding Scholarly Sources via Google Scholar

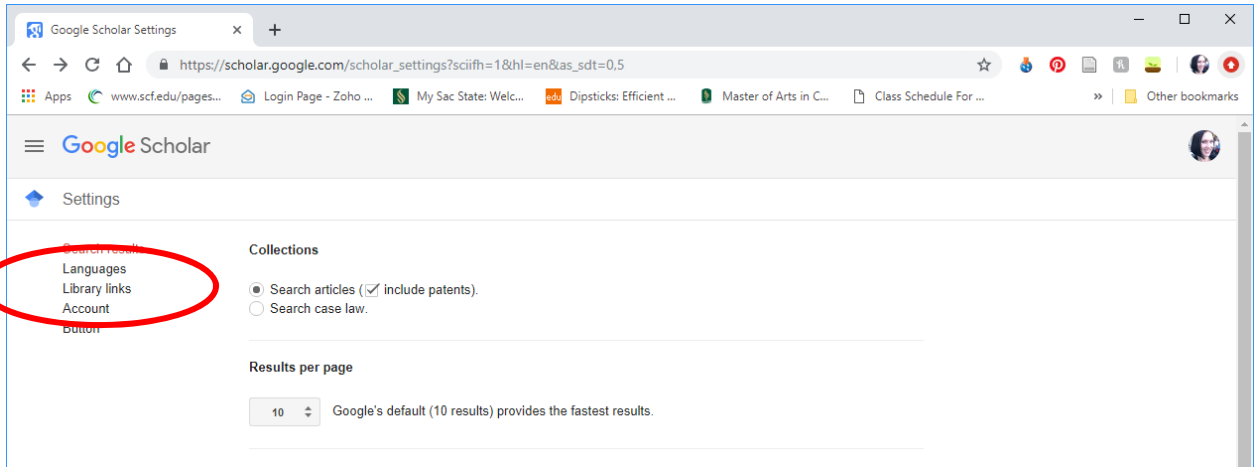
1. Navigate to www.scholar.google.com. Go to the drop-down menu.



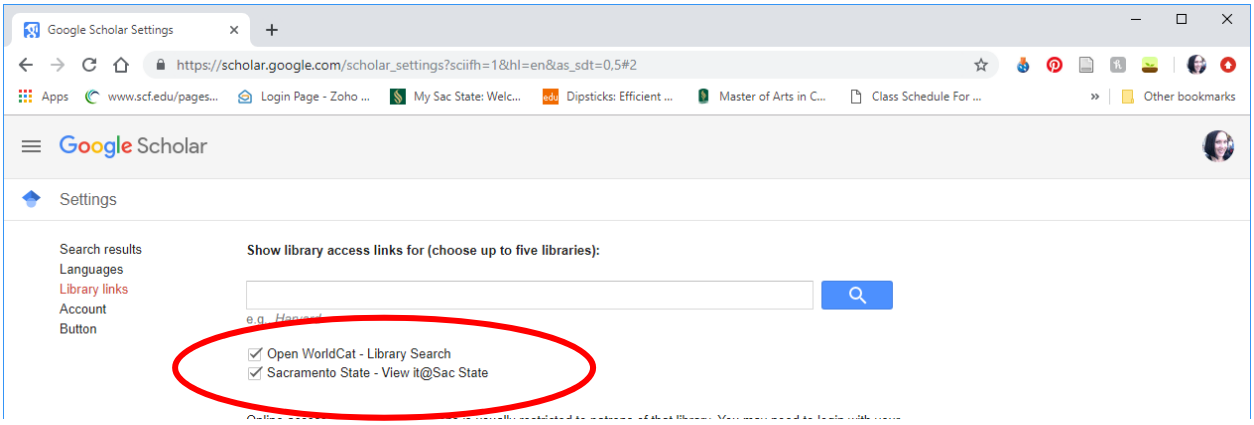
2. Click the Settings icon.



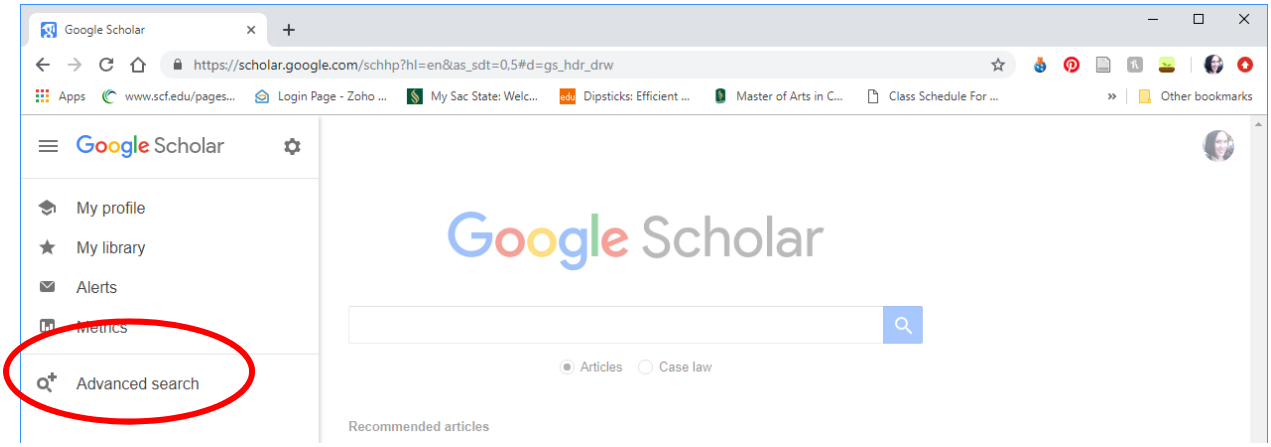
3. Click the Library Links link to customize your search results to include materials available in the Sac State library.



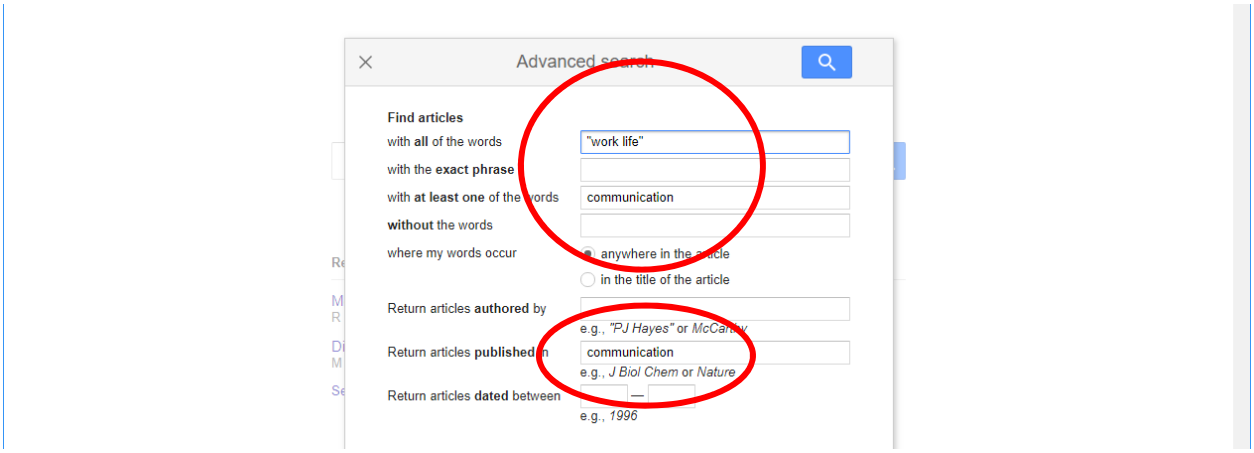
4. Make sure "View it @Sac State" is shown.



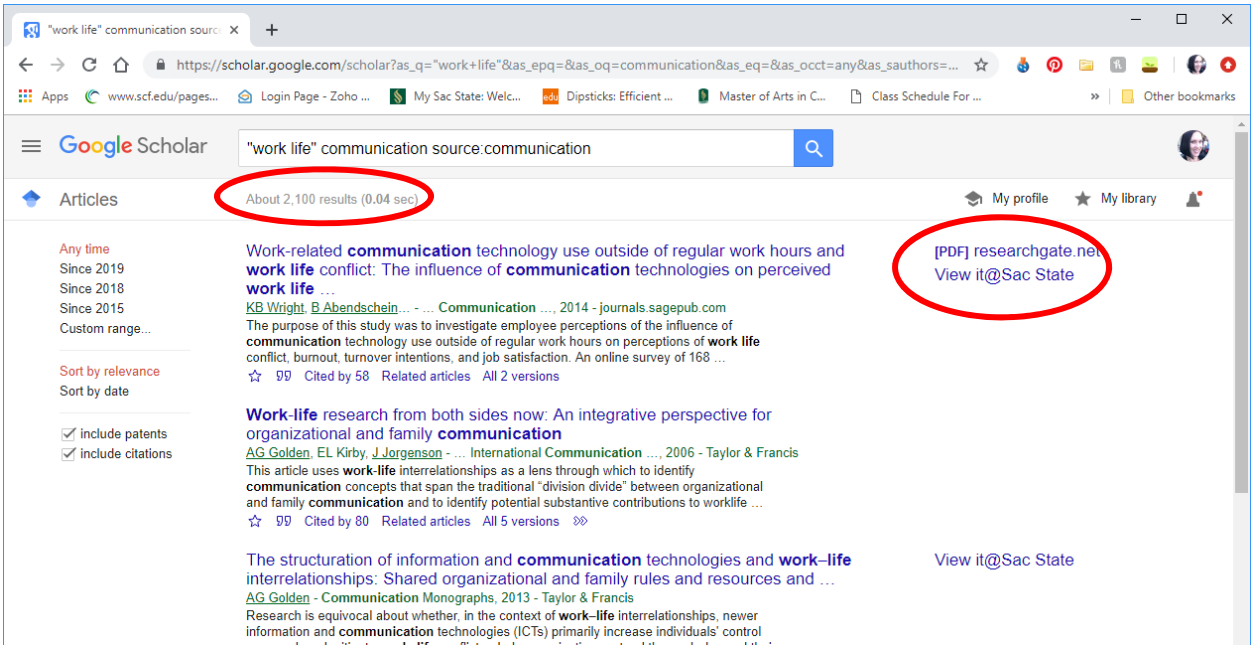
5. Go back to the home page drop down and click the "advanced search" link



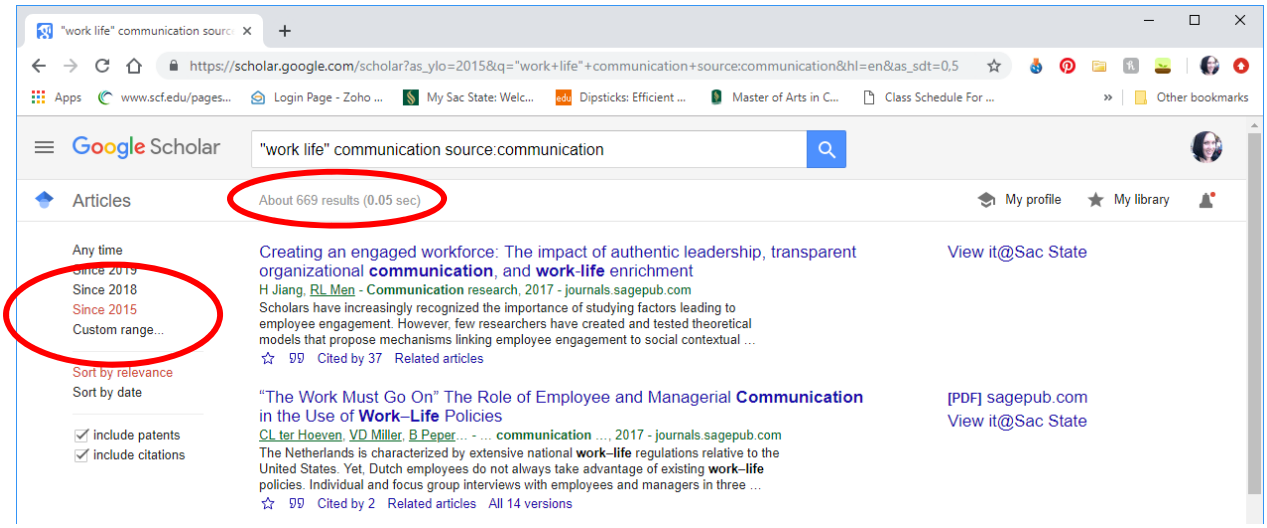
6. Customize your search. Since I'm looking for communication research related to work life issues, I'm searching "work life" and "communication." You can also search specific disciplines or publications, so I enter "communication" here. You can also use the name of a specific journal.



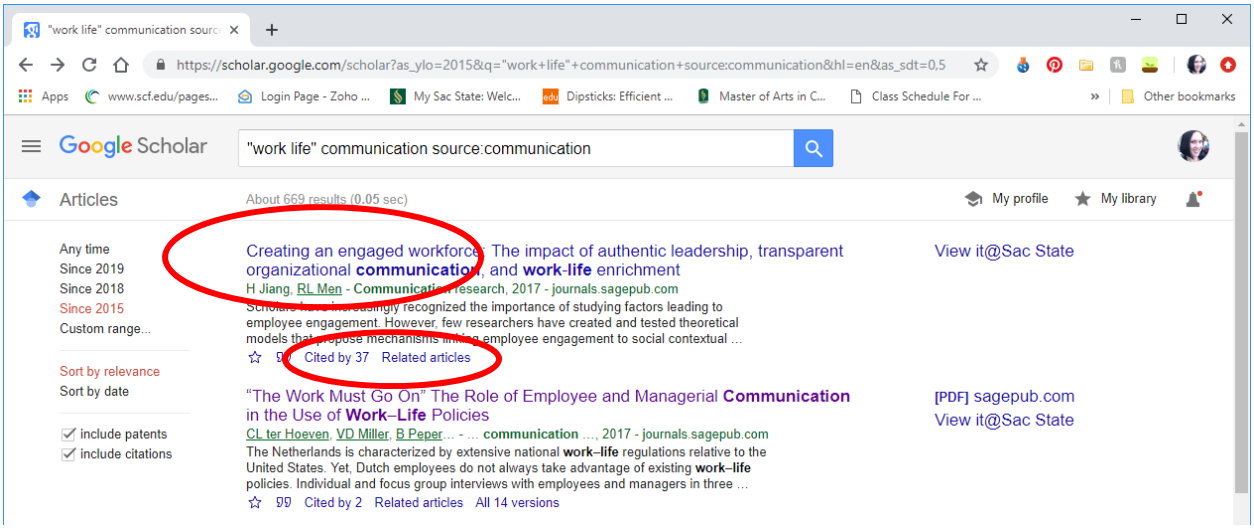
7. Review results. This initial search nets 2100 articles, many of which may not be completely relevant, but the first section looks promising. To retrieve articles, you can click the [PDF] links for those that are available open access, or click "View @Sac State" which will direct you to Sac State's library web site. (Make sure you are logged in with your SacLink ID to access the articles.) I always right click to open articles in a new tab so I can keep track of my initial search results.



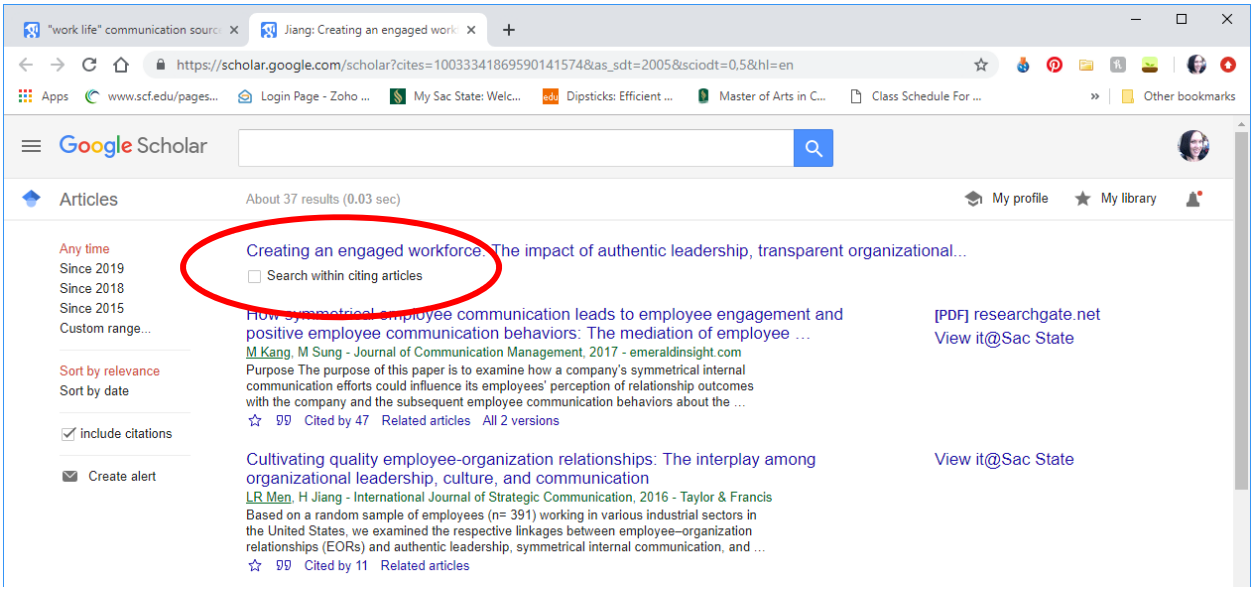
8. Customize results. Since my search netted 2100 sources, I want to limit to the most relevant. One criteria to use is date. Google Scholar lets you customize date ranges. Here I've chosen to limit my results to research about communication and work life that has been published since 2015. Now I only have 669 articles to sort through.



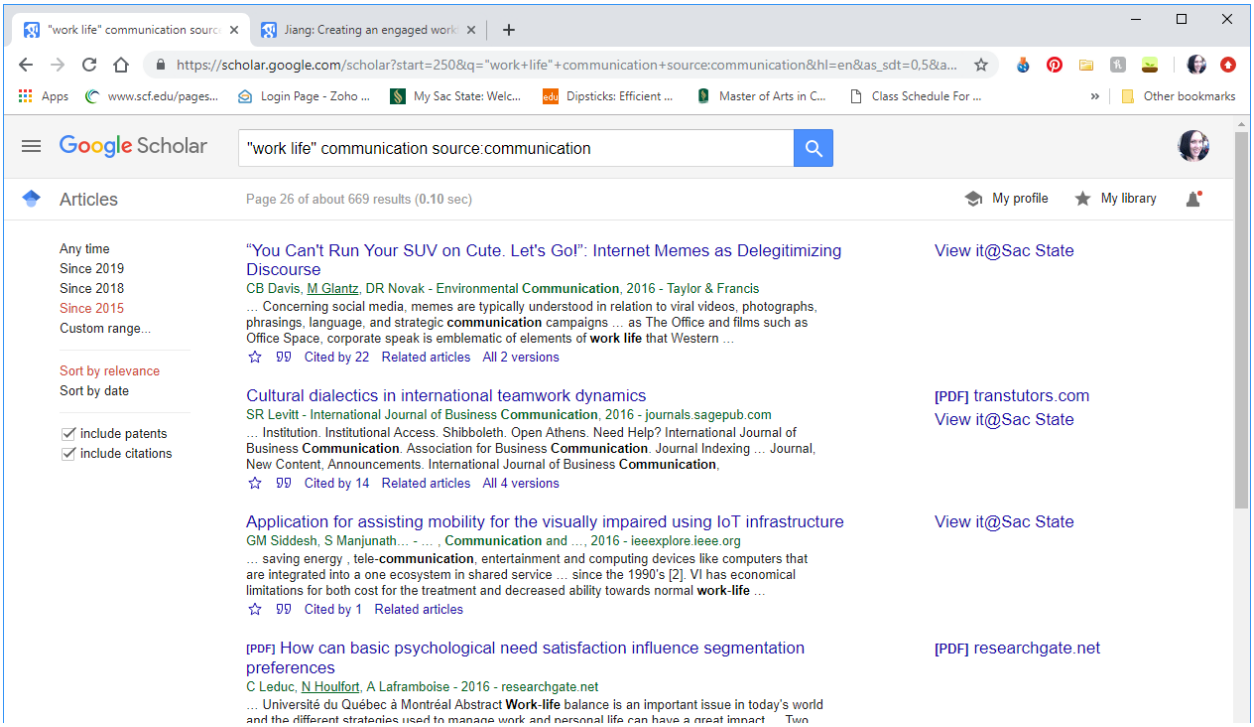
9. Follow the trail. A great way to follow a scholarly conversation is to see who is citing whom. Let's say I've found a perfect article for my project, and I want to know who else has read and is riting about it. I can click "Related articles" which will show me the articles cited within the specific piece I'm looking at, as well as "Cited by" which will show me who has cited the piece.



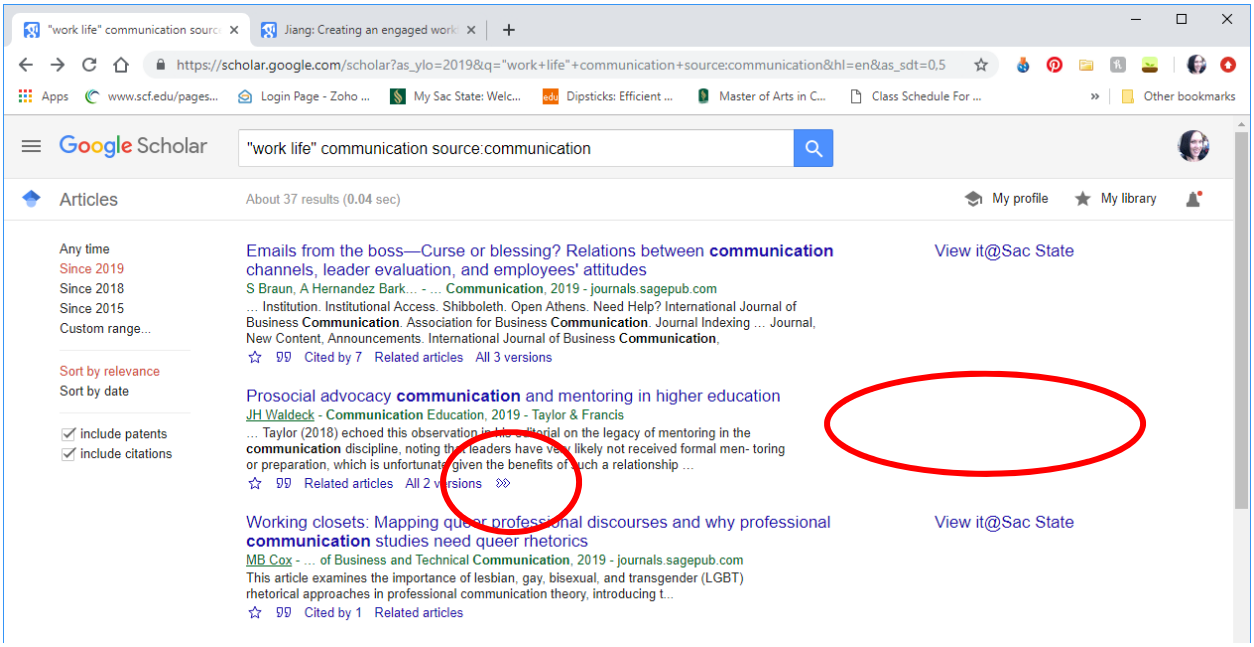
10. Open "Cited by" and/or "Related articles" in a new tab. In this search, I clicked "Cited by" above and opened it in a new tab so I could review the 37 people who referred to this article in their own papers. If you use this technique on a foundational article, you might be sifting through thousands of citations, so also consider limiting the results by recency, if pertinent.

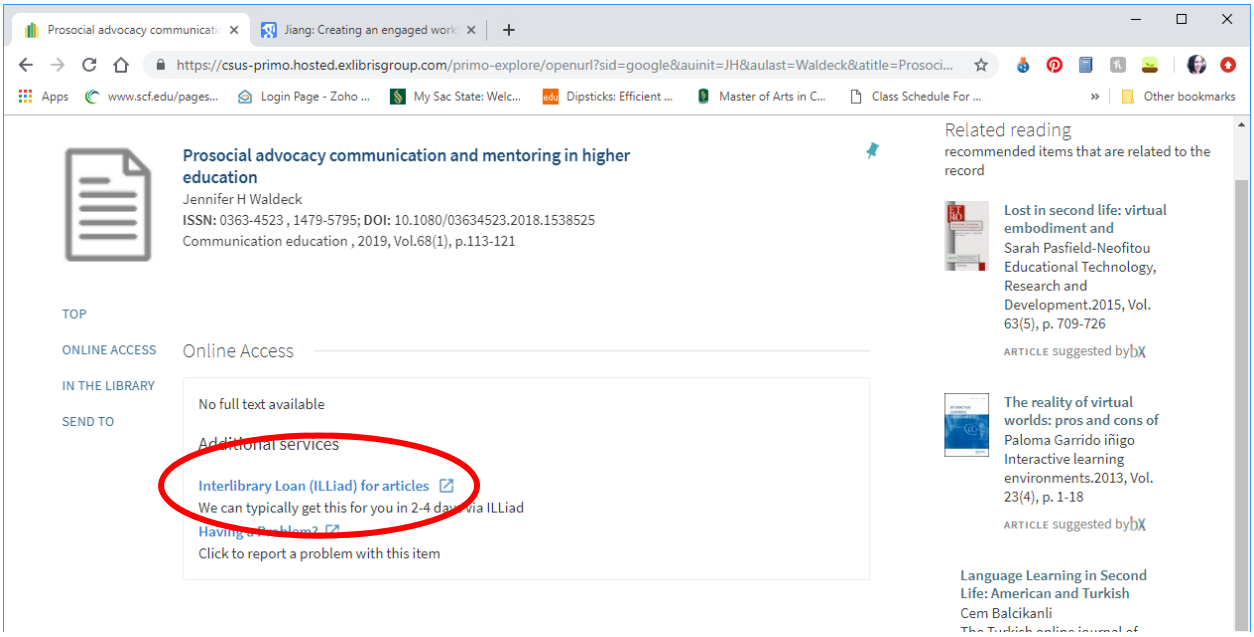


11. Caveats. I usually start with Google Scholar because it's easy to navigate. However, it will very often cast a wide net and return things that aren't quite relevant or accessible.



12. Bonus Tips—Interlibrary loan magic. Many times Google Scholar will return sources not immediately available via the Sac State library or, oh my, actual books that you cannot retrieve online. Take that information to the library to retrieve the book or request an inter-library loan online. When your article is ready, which usually takes no more than a day, they will email you a link to retrieve it. So easy!

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Other bookmarks
Prosocial advocacy communication and mentoring in higher education
Jennifer H Waldeck
ISSN: 0363-4523 , 1479-5795; DOI: 10.1080/03634523.2018.1538525
Communication education , 2019, Vol.68(1), p.113-121
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Interactive learning environments.2013, Vol. 23(4), p. 1-18
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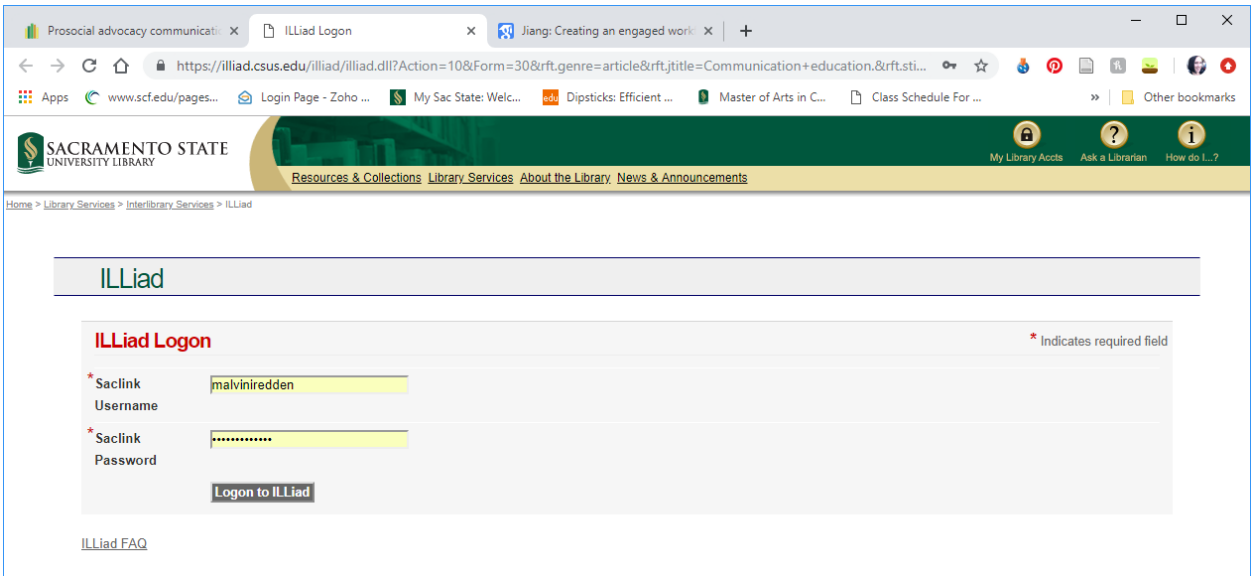
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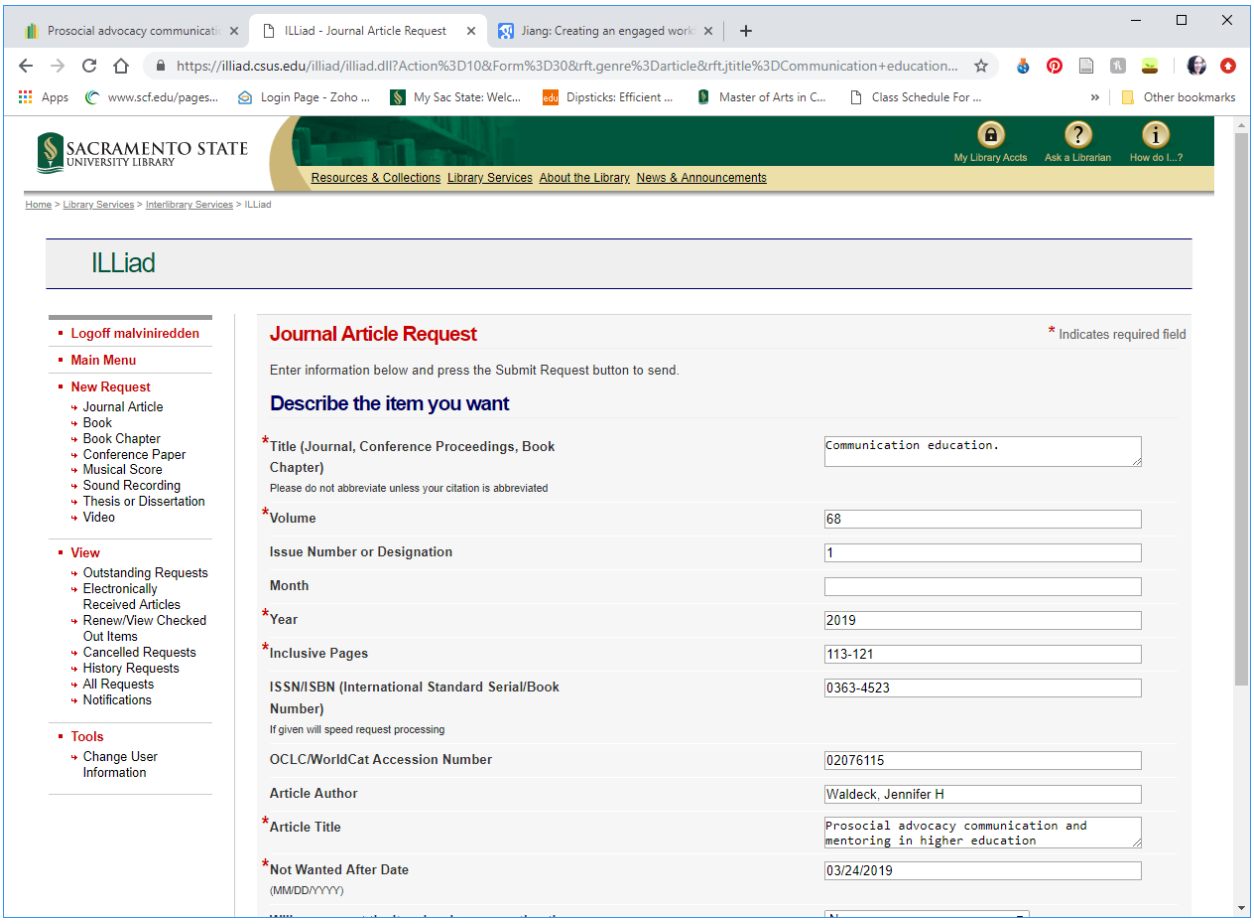
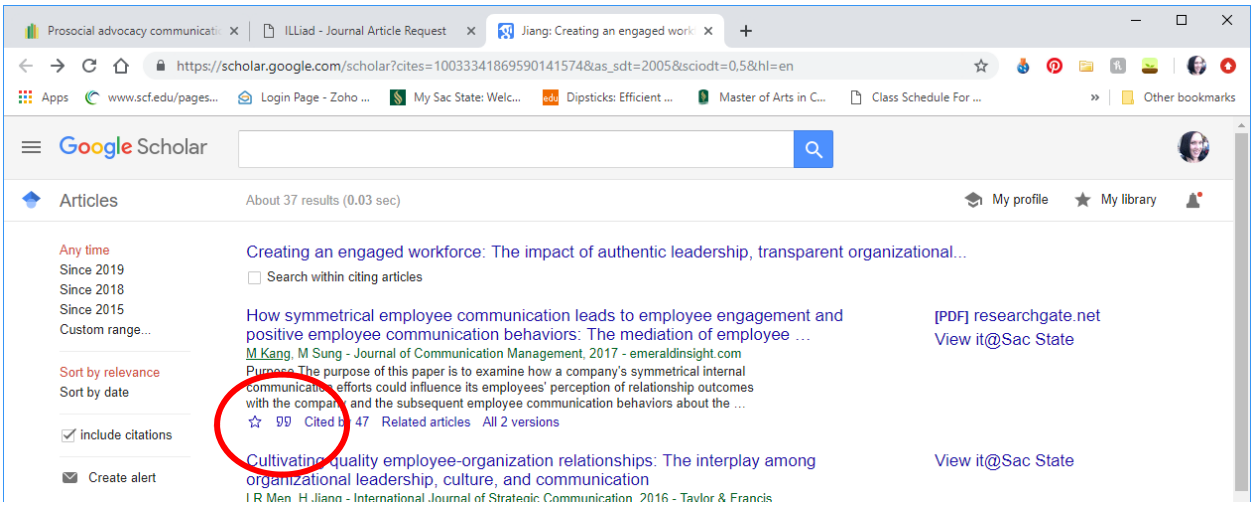
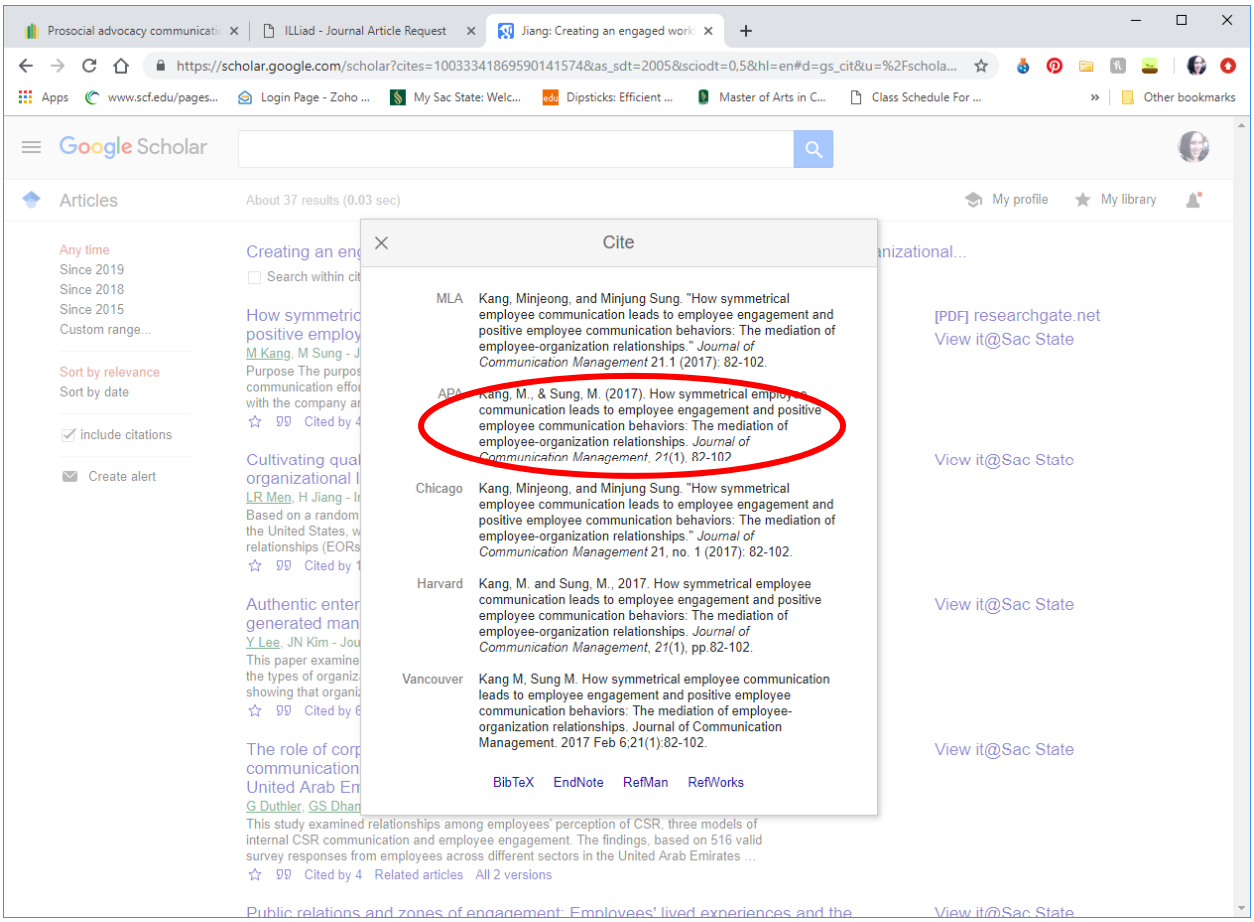
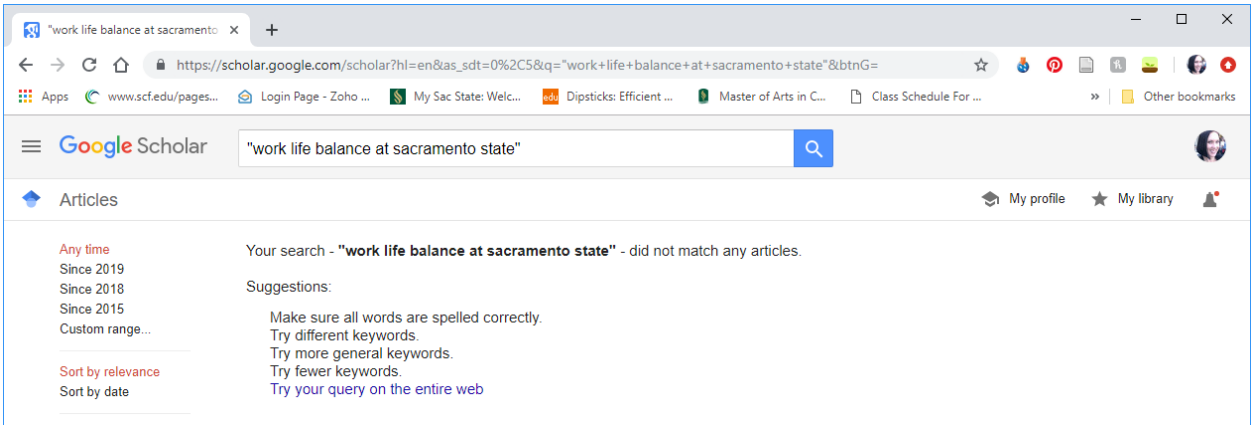


13. Bonus Tips—Simpler citing. Let Google Scholar help you with APA citations. Click the quotation mark under the article entry, and it will bring up fairly complete reference material for various citation styles. Note: Google scholar does not yet include doi numbers, and frequently makes stylistic errors for APA, but it's a good head start for building a reference page.





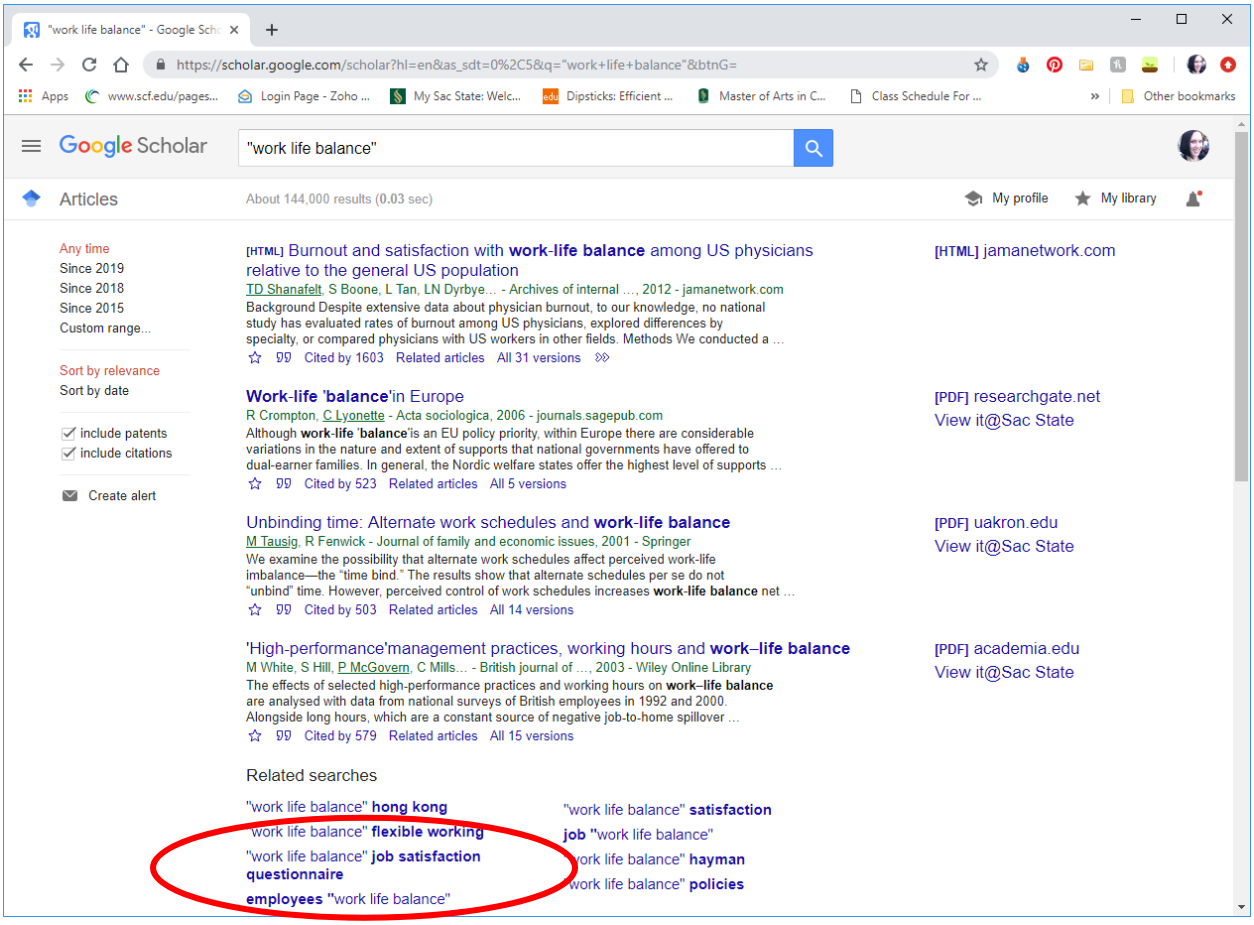
14. Bonus Tips—Dealing with way too many or not enough results. Very often, students report difficulty with finding WAY too many sources or none at all. Dealing with this involves refining search terms. Let's say I start my project about work/life balance at Sacramento State by searching "work life balance at sacramento state." Not surprisingly, I get this result:



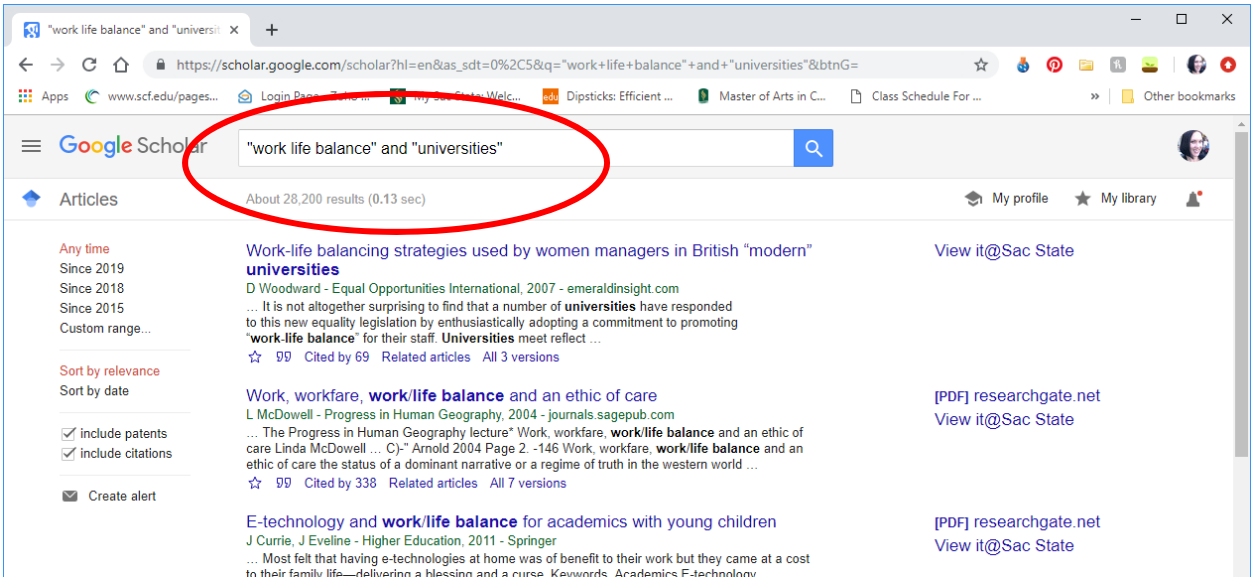
My research request is WAY too specific. So let's say I go broad with "work life balance."

Only 144,000 hits with this one!

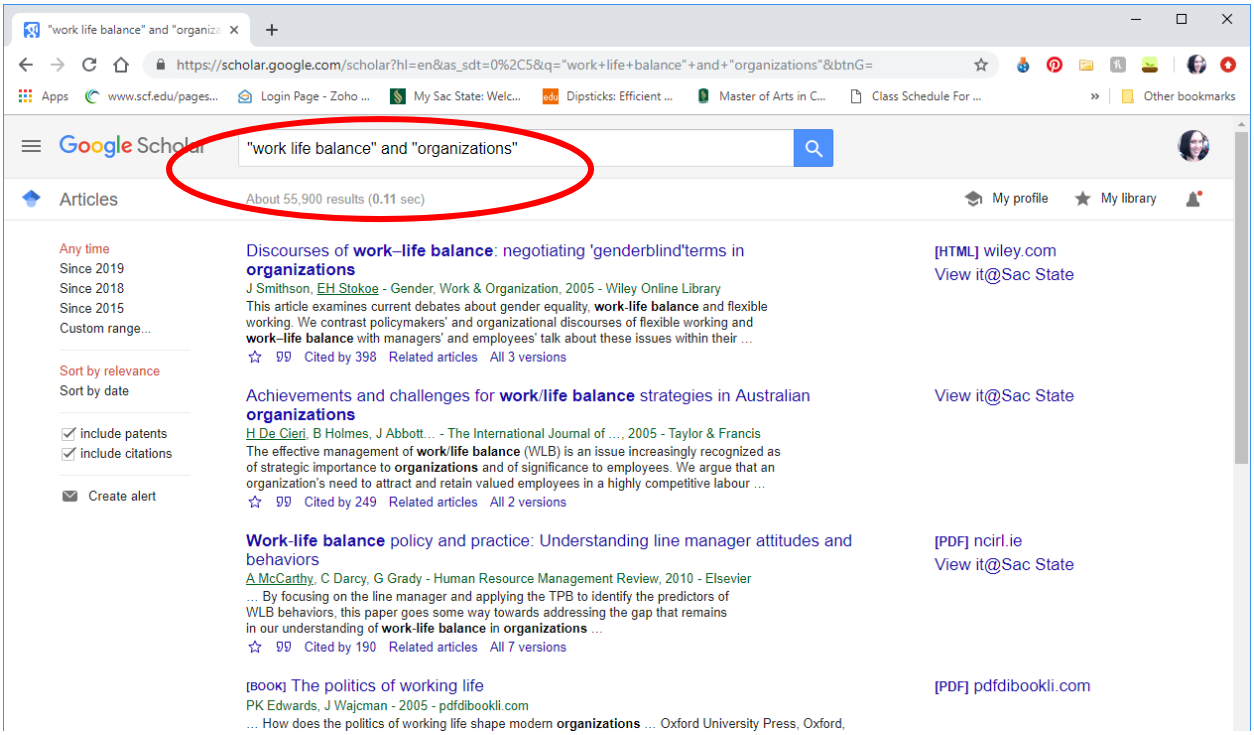
Hone in without getting too specific by tweaking your search terms…



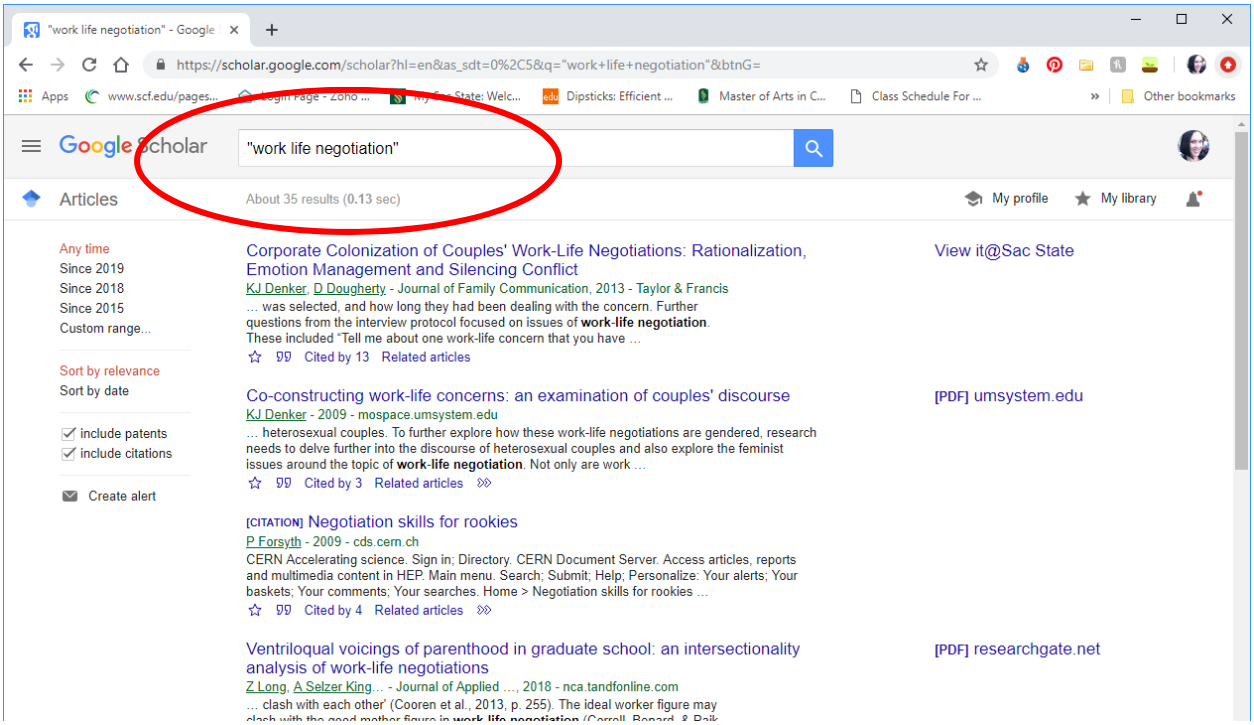
Let's say I'm interested in studying work/life balance at Sacramento State. I can find articles about work/life balance at other universities that I can apply to my study:

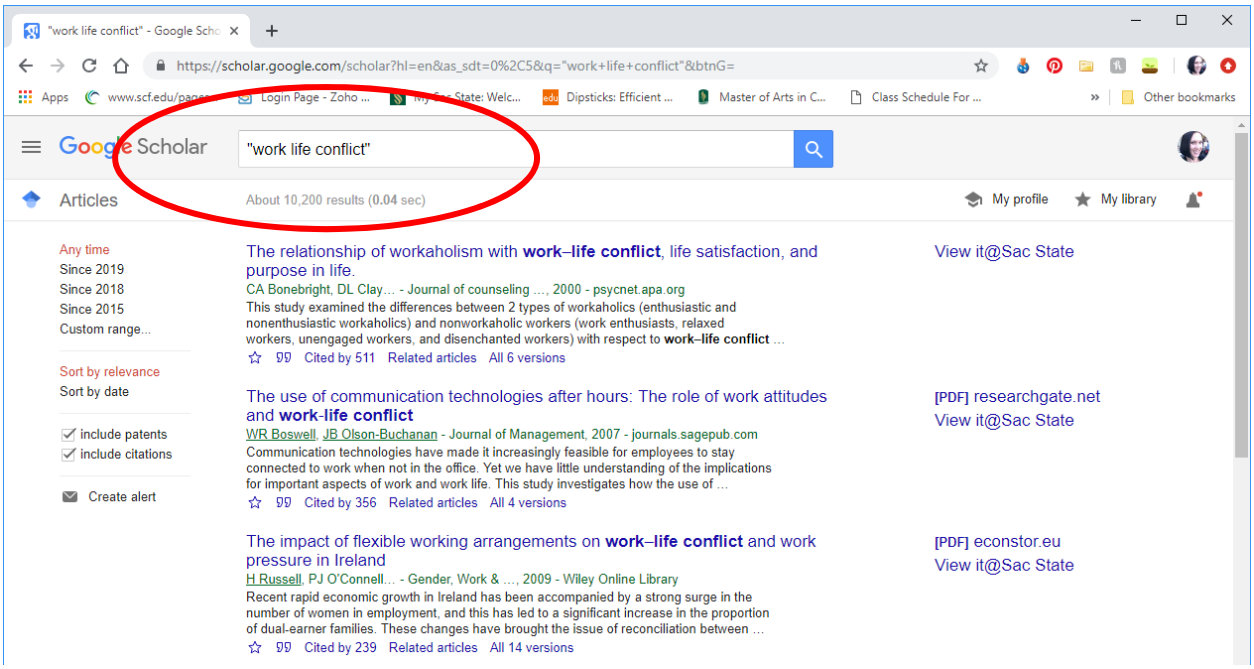


Let's pretend that no one has ever studied work/life balance in an academic context. What then? Then I might broaden my search to be about work/life balance in organizations more broadly:



Each tweak of a search term brings different results. Definitely play around… see what I get with alternative terms…

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CA Bonebright, DL Clay... - Journal of counseling ..., 2000 - psycnet.apa.org
This study examined the differences between 2 types of workaholics (enthusiastic and nonenthusiastic workaholics) and nonworkaholic workers (work enthusiasts, relaxed workers, unengaged workers, and disenchanted workers) with respect to work–life conflict ...
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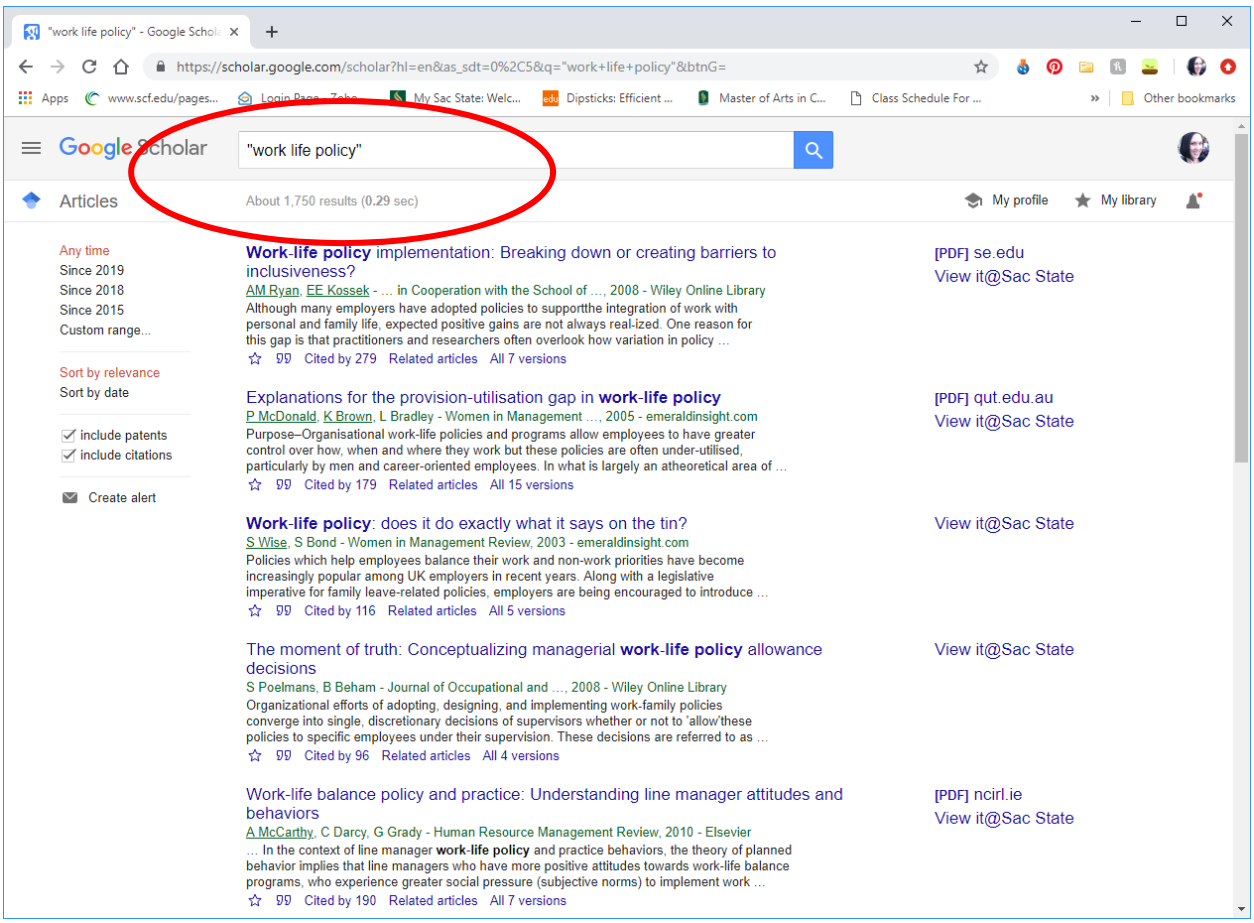
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