

Memorandum of Understanding for Systematic Reviews  
UAB Libraries, Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences  
University of Alabama at Birmingham

**In coordination with:**

*(researchers' names go here)*

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**Department/School/College:**

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Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences is committed to providing the best possible systematic review service and experience for our UAB faculty, residents, fellows, staff, and graduate students. In order to provide high quality systematic reviews, UAB Libraries follows the [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions](#) or [JBI Manual for Evidence Synthesis](#), and Wichor Bramer's "[systematic approach to searching](#)." We are outlining these terms of agreement to ensure that your review project will be completed in an appropriate amount of time and in a thorough and reproducible way.

To meet the review teams goals while providing a high-quality review, we have defined responsibilities and expectations for both research teams and librarians involved in these projects. Collaboration and timelines are addressed below.

**The UAB Librarians agree to:**

- Determine if a systematic review on the topic has been published or is in process
- Review the systematic review processes and steps with the team
- Refer to relevant systematic review reporting standards
- Give advice on formulating the research question using an appropriate framework (PICO, SPIDER, ROSES, PEO, etc.)
- Meet with the research team or primary investigator to establish parameters for the systematic search
- Identify terminology, locate appropriate databases, create the search strategies, and perform the systematic literature searches
- Provide advice on available systematic review management software (EndNote & Covidence)
- Document the search process and manage the search results
- Periodically update the research team on the search progress & actively seek feedback
- Write and provide the search strategy methods section of the manuscript or appendix according to [PRISMA guidelines](#)
- Give guidance on how to obtain full-text of published papers (*it is the team's responsibility to obtain full-text of any published papers that will be reviewed unless otherwise agreed upon with librarian.*)
- Run search updates when the initial search exceeds one year
- Review and edit the manuscript before submission to the target journal

**The Researchers agree to:**

- Include Librarians as co-authors in acknowledgement of collaboration

- Provide a specific research question in PICO or other similar formats
- State clear inclusion & exclusion project criteria
- Provide a project protocol/plan including an estimated project timeframe for completion
- Establish a research team that includes experts from various disciplines
- Timely communications and feedback to systematic review librarians, including either email, in-person or video-conference meetings
- Provide the librarian with at least 3 months to complete the searches after the research question is defined or after the protocol is written
- Share the completed manuscript with the librarian for review prior to submission
- Send the accepted manuscript with all tables, figures, and appendices to the librarian prior to the journal's copyedits and publication

### Additional Considerations

- There will be a mutually agreed upon timeline during the search process to include: iterative literature searches, delivery of results for citation management software, and literature search methodology draft.
- Modifications of a systematic review project plan is contingent upon renegotiations with librarian for reasonable timeframe for completion.
- UAB Libraries will maintain records related to a systematic review search for 10 years. Research teams are responsible for complying with any data sharing or archiving policies.

### Authorship

- Librarians will be listed as co-authors in acknowledgement of their collaboration. This is consistent with the recommendations of Health and Medicine Division of the National Academies of Science Engineering Medicine Systematic Review Standards and [ICMJE](#).
- Librarians may decline authorship due to time constraints or if teams are not adhering to the appropriate methodology designated for systematic review research.

If all the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding are agreeable to you, please indicate below your acceptance of these terms.

Primary Investigator \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

UAB Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*\*(if PI is a graduate student)*

Librarian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Systematic Reviews Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_