Introduction to College Research

http://codlrc.org/research/success

Understand your assignment
- How long is it?
- When is it due?
- Does it require specific types of resources?

What to do
- Make sure you understand your assignment.
- Create a realistic plan and timeline to complete the assignment.

Helpful Resources
- Research help books
- Online research guides
- Assignment Calculator http://ac.codlibrary.org
- Writing Assistance Center http://www.cod.edu/write

College research is about building on the ideas and research of others and adding to these ideas with your own.

What to do
- Become familiar with your topic.
- Keep track of important words and phrases related to your topic.
- Take notes.

Helpful Resources
- Encyclopedias
- Wikipedia
- “Google around”

Is your topic manageable?
- Is it too broad?
- Is it too narrow?

Are you asking the right questions?
- Is your topic researchable?
- Does it meet the requirements of your assignment?

What to do
- Pick the “key” words that describe your topic.
- Make your topic “bigger” or “smaller”, depending on what you find.

Helpful Resources for Every Stage of the Research Process

Your instructor— use your instructor’s office hours; check-in at different stages of your research; ask questions

The Library— visit the Reference Desk; make an appointment with a Librarian; call, email or even text the Library
Before you begin searching, look at your assignment and ask yourself:
- How many sources do I need?
- What types of sources do I need?
- Are there any sources I cannot use?
- Does the information need to be current? How current?

What to do
- Find out what the Library has for you.
- Know the differences between types of sources (books, newspapers, magazines) and their formats (print, online) and how to pick the right ones for your needs.
- Use the right tool to find the right source (catalog, databases, search engines).

Helpful Resources
- Subject Research Guides http://codlrc.org/research
- Research Fundamentals http://codlrc.org/research/fundamentals
- SOS Workshops & Webinars http://codlrc.org/sos

What are you looking for?
- Information that is **useful** to your research
- Information that is **credible, unbiased, timely and correct**

Remember the CRAP Test
- **Currency**
- **Reliability**
- **Authority**
- **Purpose/Point of View**

What to do
- Look at your sources and see if they are **USEFUL** for your research
- Look at your sources and see if they are **RIGHT** for your assignment
- Look at your sources and see if they are the **BEST** available on your topic

Know when to cite
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing
- Quoting

Know how to cite
- Use the right format: APA, MLA, Chicago Style— not sure? Ask your instructor!
- Keep track of your sources during your research

What to do
- Pull out the details and ideas from your sources.
- Organize everything in a way that makes sense.
- Understand what plagiarism is and make sure it’s clear which ideas are yours and which come from other sources.
- Pick a citation style and stick to it.

Helpful Resources
- Library’s Citing Sources page http://www.cod.edu/library/research/citenet.htm
- NoodleBib
- APA and MLA citing webinars http://codlrc.org/sos/online
- Writing Assistance Center http://www.cod.edu/write

[http://www.cod.edu/library](http://www.cod.edu/library)

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