

Introduction to College Research

<http://codlrc.org/research/success>



Develop Research Plan

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>

Do Background Research

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"

Create Search Strategy

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



Find Sources

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>

Evaluate Sources

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

Put it Together

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>

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