



Research Papers

Research papers are vital to your college success. Whether taking notes on creative fiction or scrubbing an intricate scientific study, researching a topic and then making an argument are essential to most college classes. Thus, it is smart to create a writing process that you can revisit over and over again, a process that helps you to endlessly succeed at writing.

Why plan out my research paper?

Research papers require an organized, long-term writing process that can be overwhelming. Unpreparedness can leave you lost and encourage you to procrastinate. So, from brainstorming to revision, let us focus on a research paper one goal at a time. We have additional handouts for each of these steps.

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|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Topic | 6. Thesis Statement |
| 2. Research Questions | 7. Outline |
| 3. Research Proposal | 8. Drafting and Revision |
| 4. Research | 9. Works Cited/References |
| 5. Annotated Bibliography | |

Research Papers: Step by Step

0. Assignment Review

- What are the requirements? Were you provided a topic or can you choose one yourself?

1. Topics

- What are you interested in? Make it your own!

2. Research Questions

- Ask yourself if you want to find a problem, a solution, or synthesize existing research.

3. Research Proposal *(if necessary)*

- After developing your questions, find some specific research, decide what you will focus on, and write a proposal.

4. Research

- Focus your research on your research questions. Make sure it is specific and from multiple types of sources.
- Continue to develop your opinions and argument.

5. Annotated Bibliography

- To keep track of your sources, you can create an annotated bibliography to organize citations and their content.

6. Thesis Statement

- Create a statement that encapsulates the argument. Focus on clarity and confidence.

7. Outline

- Start outlining your paper. What will the intro, body, and conclusion look like? What sources will you use and where?

8. Drafting and Revision

- Begin writing the paper using all of the previous steps to guide you.
- Receive feedback and revise the paper as much as you can.

9. Formatting and Works Cited/References Page

- Properly format the paper and include a proper Works Cited/References page.