

Research Plan

Name: _____ Course Project: _____

This form is designed to help form your research topic, guide your research process and organize your research notes to avoid lost bibliographic information, and to make the creation of a bibliography simple.

Stage 1. Define the Topic

A. Thesis statement or topic stated as a question: _____

B. Keywords and subject terms:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

- Additional keywords can be added throughout the research process.
- Remember to include synonyms and alternate spellings in the list (e.g., poison, toxin, born & borne, aer & air).

Stage 2. Determine Best Sources*

A. Select background sources, such as subject encyclopedias and dictionaries:

- Remember to add newly discovered keywords from background sources to the list in Stage 1.

B. Other types of sources required:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> scholarly journals | <input type="checkbox"/> newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> magazines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> books | <input type="checkbox"/> Websites | <input type="checkbox"/> primary documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> images/other media | <input type="checkbox"/> prof./trade journals | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |

C. Select and record appropriate databases:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

* Consider using the Library catalog at <http://207.67.203.67/S92001Staff/OPAC/index.asp>.

Stage 3. Perform Searches and Retrieve Information

Database	Search Query/Keyword Search	Bibliographic Notes (such as journal title, article title, author, etc.)

HINTS

- Use advanced search strategies such as Boolean operators (and, or, not) and truncation or wildcard characters for effective searching.
- Too little or too much information found from your search may require returning to Stage 1 to broaden or narrow your topic.
- Remember to note citation information for your bibliography in one safe place (email it to yourself for a back-up copy).

Stage 4. Evaluate Information

In addition to checking if information can be useful for your topic or thesis, critically examine each resource or piece of information for:

- authority
- quality
- bias
- currency
- accuracy
- relevance

Stage 5. Document Your Resources

Note all necessary citation information as each item is incorporated into the project. Then, format all the information in the bibliographic citation style of the American Psychological Association (APA).

- For guidance in formatting your citations, use either the print manual (library call number: REF WZ 345 P97 2001) or from one of the three electronic APA style manual guides at <http://www.stvincentscollege.edu/aboutsvc/linkstomanuals.cfm>.

For Additional Help

Contact the College Librarian:

- In-person at the College Librarian's office (4th Floor of the College building)
- By phone at 203-576-5869
- By e-mail at svclibrarian@stvincentscollege.edu

Check the College Librarian's Schedule for the librarian's hours at the following locations:

- At the Daniel T. Banks Health Sciences Library
- In the Barone Center

Ask any one of the librarians at the [Daniel T. Banks Health Sciences Library](#) or at the [Sacred Heart University \(Ryan Matura\) Library](#).