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).

F:\Library Resources\St. Vincent's College's Library Website\On Website as of 3-10-15\research_plan.doc
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:

- scholarly journals
- newspapers
- magazines
- books
- Websites
- primary documents
- images/other media
- prof./trade journals
- other: ____________________

C. Select and record appropriate databases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database 1</th>
<th>Database 2</th>
<th>Database 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Consider using the Library catalog at Daniel T. Banks Library Catalog.
Stage 3. Perform Searches and Retrieve Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Search Query/Keyword Search</th>
<th>Bibliographic Notes (such as journal title, article title, author, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 APA Citation Style Manuals and Websites

For Additional Help

Contact the College Librarian:

- In-person at the College Librarian’s office (1st Floor Hunting Building)
- By phone at 203-576-5869
- By e-mail at svclibrarian@stvincentscollege.edu

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