SIX STEPS TO THE PERFECT RESEARCH PAPER

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ITU Library Website
WELCOME TO THE ITU LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTER
THIS WORKSHOP WILL HELP YOU:

#1: Use the 6-step formula to plan, research and write a successful scholarly paper

#2: Use library databases to refine, source, cite & present your paper with academic honesty

#3: Know the tools for efficient & ethical research – Reference Manager, turnitin, ITU style guides
ESSENTIAL RESEARCH TOOLS

#4: Master’s Thesis Guidelines
#5: ITU Style guides, APA Format
#6: ITU Plagiarism Prevention Policy
#6: ITU Student Code of Conduct
#1: Fake or Fact: Library Workshop
#2: Say No to Plagiarism: Library Workshop
#3: Recommended Resources for Research (ITU)
BEFORE WE START
Information / Research Cycle

RESEARCH CYCLE

#1: Choose your topic
#2: Find Information (scholarly)
#3: State your thesis (hunch or guess)
#4: Organize notes & draft outline
#5: Citations & acknowledgement
#6: Write & review several drafts & bibliography (plagiarism checker!)
THE SIX STEPS

#1: Choose your topic
#2: Find Information (scholarly)
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A good paper will be a back-and-forth process among the six steps until you are satisfied you have written an honest scholarly paper.
STEP 1: Topic

#1: Select or given

#2: Simplify & limit – keywords, phrases

#3: Manageable – time avail., scope

#4: Write in one sentence

#5: Original research or literature review?

#6: A paper is a formal written report; includes research findings student’s ideas.

Your topic depends on: time available, type of paper, scope & information available.
Step 1...continued

- **Step 1: Develop your topic:**
  - **Select a topic** – Research Qs – Keywords, synonyms, wildcards (* #), background info, Boolean (and, or, not)
  - **Useful reference:** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library. Start your research
STEP 2: Scholarly Information

- Locate “quality” information:
  - **Search engines**: Dogpile, Bing, Google Scholar
  - **Google** “Settings>Advanced Search>
  - **Subscription databases**: ITU Library Catalog, ACM, Ebsco, NYTimes
  - **Types: Primary**: Raw data, news report;
  - **Secondary**: Books, e-books, articles, videos, images, websites - .gov, .edu, .org
  - **Citation tools**: Reference Managers (Mendeley, Zotero), Citation Styles (APA)
  - **Other style guides**: e.g. IEE, MLA, Harvard

Reliable
Accurate
Honest
Unbiased,
Timely
Relevant
Authoritative
Domain or
Publisher
STEP 2 … continued

- **Revisit your purpose/audience** – Evaluate for relevance, appropriateness, authorship, reputation, scope/coverage, accuracy, objectivity/bias, currency,
- **Scholarly?**: Periodical or popular magazine? Blog? Tweet? Audience/purpose?
STEP 3 & 4: Organize & Draft

- **Plan/outline**: Outline your paper, purpose, goal/objectives, audience
- **Intro**: State thesis & purpose clearly - chief reason for the paper? Why should the reader be interested?
- **Body**: Clearly stated arguments to support your thesis statement.– three supporting arguments for each position (use evidence)
- **Concl.**: Restate your thesis, critically compare, contrast, synthesize & summarize your arguments. Why have come to this particular conclusion. Is it objectively supported?
- **Grammar**: Sentence structure, punctuation!! Use a spell-checker
STEP 5: Citations & Acknowledgement

- **ITU & Other style guides** – APA, ACM, IEEE
- **APA Style Guide**: Johnson & Wales University APA Style Guide
- **APA In-text referencing** (in body of paper), e.g. J&W APA Examples
- **Bibliography and References** – style guide Comparison of Reference Mgt Software (Wikipedia)
STEP 6: Write & Review ...

Draft and re-draft as you critically review, synthesize, paraphrase & cite to form your main ‘body’ or argument. Conclude with Qs for further research or discussion.

- **Review outline** – intro, body, conclusion; re-write
- Collect **information**, copies of reviewed articles
- Choose **style guide** & other formats
- As you write, use **in-text referencing**
- Adhere to “fair use” when quoting & paraphrasing
- Check for plagiarism, **honesty (bias)**, objectivity, copyright
- Check grammar, spell check, plagiarism checker
STEP 6: Write & Review …

- Organize, analyze, synthesize, sort and digest information
- Effectively communicate your thoughts, ideas, insights and research findings - most important stage
- Use relevant and understandable information
- Write in your own words - paraphrase
- Acknowledge, cite; reference all ideas borrowed or quote. Include accurate bibliography
- Avoid plagiarism.
CHECKLIST #1

- Is my thesis statement concise and clear?
- Did I follow my outline? Did I miss anything?
- Is there a logical sequence to my argument?
- Are my sources scholarly – factual, reliable, relevant?
- Are all sources properly cited to ensure that I am not plagiarizing?
- Have I proved my thesis with strong supporting arguments and evidence?
- Have I expressed my case clearly?
- Does my style suit my audience?
1. Did I begin each paragraph with a proper topic sentence?
2. Have I supported my arguments with documented proof or examples?
3. Any unfinished sentences?
4. Any unnecessary or repetitious words?
5. Varying lengths of sentences?
6. Does one paragraph or idea flow smoothly into the next?
7. Any spelling or grammatical errors?
8. Quotes accurate in source, spelling, and punctuation?
9. Are all my citations accurate and in correct format?
10. Did I avoid using contractions? Use "cannot" instead of "can't"
11. Did I use third person? Avoid using "I think", "I guess", "I suppose"
12. Have I made my points clear and interesting but remained objective?
13. Did I leave a sense of completion for my reader(s) at the end of the paper?

In 1000 words, use scholarly literature to respond to this statement.

Step 1: Topic in one sentence (in own words)

e.g. What are the barriers to the widespread uptake of autonomous cars in the U.S.?

Step 2-3: Searching, selecting and saving citations (next page)
**EXAMPLE:**

**Step 1:** Topic in one sentence.

e.g. What are the barriers to the widespread uptake of autonomous cars in the U.S.?

**Step 2:** Find scholarly information and strategy

**Keywords/Phrases**
Autonomous (vehicle* or car*)  
Driverless / selfdriving / self-driving (vehicle* or car*)  
market penetration or market barriers  
Uptake or adoption or acceptance or …  
U.S. or united states or north America

**Databases:**
Google: “Setting>Advanced Search”
ITU Library Catalog
Ebsco Business Source Elite

**Search, Select, Download (Zotero, Mendeley)**
Need help with Zotero or Mendeley? Submit a Library Inquiry or drop into the library.
EXAMPLE

Step 3: Read, Summarize in own words

- Read, highlight, summarize key points (paraphrase)
- Reference (cite) as you go (in-text citation)
- Import complete citation into Zotero or Reference Manager
- Start drafting outline

Step 4-6

- Draft outline; review question/topic; is more info needed?
- Introduction, argument / discussion, conclusion
- To avoid plagiarism, cite reputable scholars to ‘build’ your ideas
- Summarize, conclusions
- Questions or ideas for further research / discussion
- Create bibliography
- Check in turniitn (ITU’s required) plagiarism checker (email your professor)
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
## Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority / Publisher</td>
<td>contact details, expert? Opinionated? Credibility? Bias? No author? Red flag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>.gov .edu .org .com .net; Contents, Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency</td>
<td>Last updated? Active links? Evidence? Academic scholarly sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Sources? Citations, Verified?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage / Scope</td>
<td>Relevance, sufficient details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity / Bias</td>
<td>Opinion or fact? propaganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Information</td>
<td>Book, newspaper, image, blog, journal, website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness</td>
<td>Task, audience, advertising (agenda)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity: How to evaluate websites & sources

Determine Website Credibility

Presented by Xtranormal

Discuss
1. What makes sources lack credibility?
2. Write a ‘checklist’ for information credibility
3. What is a good way to narrow search results for more scholarly resources?

How to cite YouTube
APA style:
[Auhor]. [Screen name]. (Year, Month Day). Title [Video file]. Retrieved from [ITU Library Website]
Activity: ITU Library Subscriptions: Business Source Elite (EBSCO)

What is Business Source Elite?
How do I access Business Source Elite?

- Log in to the EMS
- Select E-Library tab in EMS
- **Offsite**: Type in the id and password
- Don’t have a login: email: library@itu.edu
- Select ‘Advanced Search” feature
- Apply your “strategy” by selecting and combining keywords and synonyms
Activity: ITU Library Subscriptions: NYTTimes

What is the NYTimes Academic Pass?
How do I access NYTimes Academic Pass?

- To access NYTimes register go to the following website.
- Use your Student Email ID so that the NYTimes website can authenticate your credentials.
- Log in through the EMS
- Select E-library tab

https://myaccount.nytimes.com/register?
URI=https%3A%2F%2Fmyaccount.nytimes.com%2Fverification%2Fedupass&OQ=
What is the ACM Digital Library?
How do I access ACM Digital Library?

- Log in using the EMS
- **Offsite**: Select E-library then “ACM Digital Library”
- TYPE in ID [Fname] + Pswd [Lname]
- Don’t have login? email: Email at [library@itu.edu](mailto:library@itu.edu)
- Select “Advanced Search” feature
- Apply your strategy by combining keywords (with Boolean operators)
RESOURCES FOR SELF STUDY

Information Literacy Why Is It Important (ACRL)
5 Components of Information Literacy
Why can’t I just Google?
Developing a Research Question
Data Information and Knowledge
Determine Website Credibility (“The Hood”)
Credible websites (Detailed)
Eli Pariser: Beware online “filter bubbles” (Ethics)
LIS 665 Information Literacy Copyright Fair Use
What is information literacy? [Video]. ACRL, 2015
What is plagiarism anyway?

See APA Style Guide for correct formatting
RESOURCES FOR SELF STUDY

Virginia Tech Library [Research] Tutorials
Virginia Tech Library: Plagiarism
Johnson & Wales University APA Style Guide and J&W APA Examples.
Wikipedia's comprehensive comparison of reference management software
Dartmouth College Videos [for] Student Success
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library. Start your research
ITU Library Website
Georgia Tech: Finding raw data

See APA Style Guide for correct formatting
RESOURCES FOR SELF STUDY

1. Digital and information literacy in undergraduate teaching. London School of Economics (LSE), 2015
2. Assoc. of College Research Libraries (ACRL) 2000 Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education
3. Williamette University: Scholarly vs. Popular Website
4. Uni of CA, Santa Cruz: Primary vs. Secondary Website
5. Georgia Tech: Finding raw data Website
6. Copyright or wrong? A brief guide to copyright images video by Kyle Stedman. Video (YouTube)
7. Information Literacy Copyright Fair Use by Kim Allman, Youtube video by Powtoon
8. Publishing Your Graduate Work with UMI® by Proquest/UMI
9. Student’s Guide to Copyright & Fair Use by Univ. of Illinois
10. Copyright Basics for Graduate by Univ. of Oregon Website

See APA Style Guide for correct formatting