Assignment Planner

Step 1 - Define Your Assignment

Due Date__________

☐ Decide on the Genre of your paper
☐ Note the length required for your paper.
☐ Plan your research strategy and due dates.
☐ Note any specific resource types needed (primary sources, books, articles, etc.)

Step 2 - Choose a Possible Topic

Due Date__________

☐ Choose a topic that you find interesting.
☐ Use personal and online resources to brainstorm.
☐ Know how to broaden or narrow your topic as necessary.
☐ Ask for help from your instructor, classmates or a librarian.

Step 3 - Refine your Topic

Due Date__________

☐ Ensure that there are enough resources for your possible topic.
☐ Make sure that your possible topic is the right scope for your paper length.
☐ Use your narrowed topic to direct your research with a Search Question.
☐ Make a list of keywords to help you begin your search process.
☐ You can use this handout to help narrow your topic.

Step 4 - Find, Review, and Evaluate Books

Due Date__________

☐ Use the Catalog to locate books and other materials on your topic.
☐ Set up a note taking system that works for you.
☐ Understand how to evaluate the information that you are finding.

Step 5 - Find, Review, and Evaluate Journal Articles

Due Date__________

☐ Understand the difference between popular magazines and scholarly journals.
☐ Search the LRC’s databases for articles that fit your topic. Make sure to limit your search to Full Text Articles.
Step 6 - Find, Review, and Evaluate Web Resources

*Due Date__________*

- Ensure that you are able to use websites (i.e. results found through Google, news sites, Blogs, Twitter, etc.) for your research.
- Remember that it is important to evaluate websites for currency, relevancy, authority, accuracy, and purpose.

Step 7 - Write Thesis Statement and Outline

*Due Date__________*

- A thesis statement clearly states what your paper is about.
- Use an outline format that fits your paper's genre.

Step 8 - Write First Draft

*Due Date__________*

- Always write down where you found your information so you can properly cite the sources later in your paper.
- Choose a note-taking method that works for you.
- Understand the citation style you are using for this paper (e.g. MLA, APA)

Step 9 - Understanding Issues of Plagiarism

*Due Date__________*

- Take steps to avoid plagiarism, such as taking accurate bibliographic notes and reading "copyright" or "terms" of use on web sites.

Step 10 - Find Additional Sources/Revise and Rewrite

*Due Date__________*

- Do multiple edits to your paper. Be your own editor then have another person look it over, if possible.
- Make sure that your paper follows the topic set by your thesis.

Step 11 - Final Paper and Citation Style Guide

*Due Date__________*

- Cite your sources
- Use the citation style required by your instructor, or choose one appropriate to the discipline.
- Submit your paper before the deadline! Many instructors do not accept late papers.