Research Plan

Name__________________________ Course/Project__________________________

This form is designed to help guide you through the research process from picking a topic to finding sources to constructing a thesis statement.

Stage 1: Topic
A. Possible topics (example: global warming)

B. Personal knowledge of topic (example: Al Gore, An Inconvenient Truth)

C. Keywords and subject terms for topic (examples: climate change, greenhouse gas)

 Remember to include synonyms and alternate spellings
 Additional keywords can be added throughout the research process

Stage 2: Deciding on Sources
A. Map out search strategy
Example:

Online encyclopedias/Gale Virtual Library → CQ Researcher/Opposing Viewpoints/Facts on File → Databases (EBSCO Host) → SCCC Book Catalog

B. What types of sources are required for assignment/project?

Subject Encyclopedias ___ Books___ Scholarly Journals___ Newspapers___
Magazines ___ Websites___ Professional/Trade Periodicals ___ Video___
Primary Documents___ Interviews___ Images/Other Media___ Other__________
C. List appropriate databases (examples: Academic Research Premier, GreenFile, Environment Complete)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Databases</th>
<th>Search Queries/Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For help with research databases, please go to the Library homepage [http://depthome.sunysuffolk.edu/Library/index.asp](http://depthome.sunysuffolk.edu/Library/index.asp)

Many of the features on the Library homepage require a pin number in order to use them from home. Your pin number is the same number that you use to access your MYSCCC information.

You can always come to the Library and get help from the reference librarians. This is your library, so use it!

Stage 3: Perform Searches and Retrieve Information

Don’t forget to use Boolean operators (and, or, not) and truncation for effective searching and to note citation information for bibliography
**Stage 4: Evaluate Information**

In addition to checking if information is useful and appropriate for assignment/project, critically examine each resource or piece of information for:

- Authorship
- Currency
- Quality
- Accuracy
- Bias
- Relevance

**Stage 5: Document Sources**

Note all necessary citation information as each item is incorporated into your research.

Required Citation Style (check with instructor):

APA  MLA  Chicago  CBE  Other__________

Often databases will offer a **How to Cite** option to generate citations. Consider using Refworks (http://www.refworks.com/) to help create bibliography or using Library citation guides at http://depthome.sunysuffolk.edu/Library/reference/citation.asp

**Stage 6: Categorizing and Classifying Information**

Once you have accessed a number of sources, start to classify and organize the information into categories that will help to structure your essay.

Examples:
- Background Information
- Scientific Explanations
- Environmental Issues
- Economic Issues
- Political Issues
- Evidence for Global Warming
- Evidence against Global Warming

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

**Stage 7: Constructing a Thesis Statement**

To move from a general topic to a critically informed thesis statement, ask the following questions to yourself as you look over your research:

Which side or sides are you presenting in this debate?

Which side or sides have the most valid and credible evidence?

What view or views are you arguing in this essay?

The answers to these questions will help you to focus on exactly what you are proving from the research you have done:

Example 1:
Global warming is a world wide phenomenon that requires urgent community and government action to address current and future environmental, health, and economic problems.

Example 2:
The issue of global “warming” is based on faulty science and unproven theories that are alarmist and counterproductive to dealing with more important global concerns.

Example 3:
Global warming has both its proponents and its detractors: some believe that climate change can be directly related to the “greenhouse effect,” while others believe that fluctuations in climate are normal and that global warming is a non existent problem.

For Additional Help:

Ask a Librarian a Question: http://depthome.sunysuffolk.edu/Library/question.asp
Note: this option is for questions on how to find and evaluate sources. Librarians will not find sources for you. Please give adequate turnaround time for librarians to contact you with responses.

Huntington Library
Ammerman Campus
Phone (631) 451-4830
http://www3.sunysuffolk.edu/Library/index.asp

Writing Center
Islip Arts Building Room 101
Phone: (631) 451-4150
We offer help with documentation, citations, using textual evidence, thesis statements, drafting, revising, bibliography, and editing/proofreading