Research Fundamentals

Don’t worry: this only looks like the world’s longest handout.
1. Relax! it's stuff you probably already know
2. And it’s easier to DO than it is to describe
3. It’s easier to SHOW you how to do this than it is to describe on paper
4. Use this outline as a reference tool, a “step by step” if you get lost in space.

I. Research: by definition
   a. is to Search and Search Again (search, re-search)
   b. What are you looking for?
      i. The “truth”
      ii. Facts, statistics, data
      iii. Information and ideas
      iv. Other people’s opinions
   c. For an essay, you are entitled to your own opinion
      i. still needs FACTS
      ii. an essay devoid of facts is just a fantasy
   d. For a presentation or paper
      i. need FACTS
      ii. you may draw conclusions based on facts and substance

II. Sources for Research
   a. Library: BOOKS, Periodicals (Journals), newspapers
      i. advantage: longevity of information
      ii. disadvantage: you have to go there!
   b. OnLine
      i. advantage: fast, can cut/paste, broad assortment of material
      ii. disadvantage: can be suspect (source); easy to plagiarize ( tempting!); can be “shallow” and TOO contemporary
      iii. often 'predigested' for you which mitigates against critical thinking.
   c. Other: interviews, film, documentaries, television, radio (news or programs)
      i. all can and must be cited in your works cited page
      ii. all are legitimate, especially if have the time to track them down and ‘current’ information is needed (trends)

III. Maintaining Research Records
   a. most important factor in Research
      i. Why go to the trouble to FIND the information if you aren’t going to put in the effort to RETAIN it so you can access it for your paper later?
   b. Two methods:
      i. “real” cards (notecards/bib cards)
      ii. computer “cards”
   c. The GOAL of both methods is the same:
      i. to retain a record of each and every SOURCE that you use that provided you with quotes, information, idea, or data that you intend to incorporate into your paper.
d. Remember: YOU are not the expert! You are going to find the expert and quote him/her!

IV. Steps for Real Cards
a. Go to the Library (or Internet)
b. Find a source (book or website)
c. For a book, copy down the:
   i. Author, last name, first name
   ii. Title of the work (book or article)
   iii. City of publication (book)
   iv. Publisher’s name (book)
   v. Year published (book)
   vi. Do NOT need to jot down page numbers!

d. For an internet source, copy down the:
   i. Author, last name, first name (if available)
   ii. Title of the article
   iii. Website (including URL)
   iv. Date accessed.

e. For EACH source create ONE CARD. These are your BIB CARDS (bibliography as in works cited)
   i. as you do your research, make one card for one source.
   ii. assign EACH source (book or website) A NUMBER on the bib card.
      1. Keller, Helen. My Life. #1
      2. Shilms, Karen. Deaf Like Me. #2
      3. Baker, G. S. Challenges to Deafness #3
      4. Thompson, Peter. Overcomer. #4
   iii. Do NOT worry about alphabetizing your bib cards before assigning them a number.
      1. The number is JUST for the purposes of identifying your NOTE CARDS!
      2. You CAN create a preliminary bibliography (works cited) document if you want (on a word processor)
         a. but don’t worry about making it letter perfect yet.
         b. Concentrate on your research.

f. Note taking: NOW take notes out of your books
   1. on each NOTE card (4x6 or 3x5) write down one fact, idea, quote, data, information. Do NOT fill up the card.
   2. Do NOT put too many items on the same card. You need to be able to SEPARATE information unless it clearly all belongs in the same paragraph of your paper.
   3. On EACH note card, put the NUMBER of your source (the number you assigned to the Bib Card)
      a. For every note you take out of the Helen Keller book, write in the upper right corner “1” (instead of Keller, Keller, Keller)
      b. for every fact you put on a note card, CITE THE PAGE NUMBER! (lower left or lower right, in parentheses)

V. Writing your Outline:
   a. When you have ALL the research you want or need from your sources:
      i. assemble all your note cards.
ii. Read through them. AGAIN.

iii. Organize ideas by organizing your notecards into physical piles.
   1. Since all your notecards have their source number on them, so you
don’t care if they are ‘out of order’ now) them by topic.

iv. Look for a way for the information to FLOW in your paper.
   1. Think about transitions: does one idea transition smoothly into the
   next?
   2. Should you write your paper with cause and effect in mind?
   Chronological? General to specific?
   3. This is called your Method of Organization
   4. also called Pattern of Development

b. Write your OUTLINE
   i. This is the “skeleton” of the structure of your paper
   ii. Organize all your note cards in the ORDER in which you want to present the
   information they contain.
      1. you may have thrown out some note cards—you didn’t need or want
to use that information.
      2. don’t feel like you have to use ALL of your notes.
      3. Physically place your note cards in the order that corresponds to your
outline. Now you are ready to WRITE!

VI. Write your paper from your outline
   a. Look at your outline: this is your Road Map. This reminds you of how you
   intended to get from point A (introduction) to point Z (conclusion) and everything
   in between (information)
   b. As you come up to a fact from your note cards that you intend to include, type
   the information into your paragraph (incorporate the data) and CITE your source:
   (see example of contextual footnotes)
   c. As you finish using each note card, set them aside, face down in the order in
   which you used them. You may need to go back and double check a fact later,
   so you don’t want them scattered.
VII. Isn’t there a faster way to do this? YES. Electronic Note Cards

**ENC 4 ENC = Electronic Note Cards for English Composition**

a. The PRINCIPLES are the same:
   i. you need to record your bibliographic sources
   ii. you need to record your data (information, quotes, ideas) that you are taking from your bibliographic sources.

b. **Computer method** can be used for both internet sources AND for book sources.

c. Steps are the SAME but
   i. the speed of gathering information is faster
   ii. the speed of incorporating your research into your paper is significantly FASTER.
   iii. the speed of creating a works cited page is faster

**iv. Everyone can TYPE faster than they can hand write anything**

VIII. **Steps:** (we’ll do BOOKS first but you can mix and mingle books and internet with this method). You don’t have to do “all” your books, then all your internet research. You can go back and forth. Just remember to SAVE and email your file to yourself.

a. **CREATE a word document in your computer:** a laptop is NOT required for this method.
1. Although it works nicely if you have a portable laptop, since you’ll be doing library **research at the library**, you can use a desktop there just as easily.

2. **SAVE it as “UWF Comp II Paper 1 notecards”**
3. [Save to a flash drive if you are using a computer that isn’t yours]

b. **SIZE:** Make the PAGE 8.5 inches wide (standard paper size) but only 5.5 inches TALL (half a sheet of paper). Give the document slim margins.

1. **From your first BOOK take down the bib card information,(see above)**
   a. then hit CNTRL + ENTER. That is page one of this document.
   1. Yes: the bib and note cards can be in the SAME file.
   2. You can highlight bib cards yellow if you want them to stand out.

d. **On ‘page two’ of your document,**
   i. type the information from the book that you want to retain and cite.
      1. Do NOT put too much on one card (just because you have more room). Resist the urge to pile too much stuff on one card!
      2. Remember to ask yourself: **do you want ALL this in one paragraph,** or might you want to separate it into facts that are in different parts of the paper, in separate paragraphs?
   ii. **PUT the AUTHOR’s LAST NAME at the top of each card (page)**
      1. you can do a ‘bib card number’ if you want,
         a. but remember to keep your bib numbers consistent.
         b. Keller, Keller, Keller is 1, 1, 1
      2. Put the PAGE NUMBER of “where” you got this information on EACH CARD so you can use it in your contextual footnotes (citations).
   iii. **Keep working through the SAME book,**
      1. take all your notes from that book until you have exhausted all the information you want from this source.

IX. **Computer method for Internet research** (collecting notecards on the computer)

a. Find the internet source. Be sure it is “scholarly” if that is the requirement of this paper or presentation!

b. Find the information or quote you want and HIGHLIGHT.

c. COPY and PASTE from the website onto one of your notecards

d. Remove “boxes” that transfer. Put QUOTATION MARKS around what you have copied so you know it is not “your” own words.

e. Highlight, copy and paste the URL from the address bar.

f. Type in the date you accessed the information.
g. Be sure to look for an author’s name. If there is one, YOU NEED IT. If not, don’t worry.

h. If there is a page number on an article, include that information on your notecard. If there are no page numbers, don’t worry.

i. If there is a long article that you find with a lot of information, you may want to download and download/save the article in its entirety.

j. Go back and forth from the internet (sources) to your note cards.

k. When EACH card has the information, data, facts, quotes or ideas that you want, CNTRL + ENTER and make a new card.

l. When you are DONE with your research (at each ‘session’) SAVE and email a copy to yourself.

X. PRINT: When you have finished ALL your research (books and Internet)

a. Go through all your note cards.

b. Highlight ALL the pages and make them ALL the same font:

   i. 12 p Times New Roman, ss.

c. Double check for author’s names on each card

   i. (or your own name telling you these are your own ideas).

d. If you find a card with too much information, CNTRL + ENTER and create a new card. Split the information up and copy the author’s name onto the new card.

e. PRINT the first half of your note cards:

   i. note the NUMBER OF PAGES in your note card document

   ii. Put HALF your number of cards into in the printer as full size pages (letter).

      1. If you have 100 cards, put 50 pages into the printer

   iii. When the printer runs out of paper, take your printed note cards, turn them around and print on the other half.

f. CUT the note cards from two printed on a full sheet into half-sheets.

   i. put them all face up. They should each have information and the author’s name (or url for internet research).

   ii. Follow the writing steps (above): read through them all, sort and organize the cards into how you want your information to flow, create an outline, write your paper off the outline.

XI. WRITE your paper using your computer note card file:

a. Open a CLEAN NEW document (full size)

   i. name it “UWF Comp II Paper I Draft 1” and SAVE.

      1. some people include the DATE on their file: Comp II Draft 9.15.2011

b. Create your header and page numbers (with your last name)

c. Keep your notecard document OPEN

d. Write your paper from your outline
i. When you get to a portion of your paper that uses data from your notecard document, simply CUT + PASTE from that document onto your paper.
ii. Put the author’s last name and page number after each quote (or idea or information or data cited). (Thompson 44).
   1. Remember the period goes AFTER the close-parenthesis.

e. As you are typing, SAVE.
f. Done typing your paper? EMAIL it to yourself

XII. CREATE your Works Cited page
a. Create a NEW DOCUMENT in your computer
   i. Save as “UWF Comp II Paper I Works Cited”
b. Using your bib cards (real cards):
   i. Alpha your bib cards by author’s last name
   ii. type up your works cited n MLA format
c. Using your computer “note card” system:
   i. Find each bib card in your note card file.
   ii. Highlight, COPY + PASTE the information onto your Works Cited document.
   iii. put your entries into alphabetical order
       1. you can do this as you go along or when you are finished.
       2. follow MLA format: double space, hanging indent.

• SAVE your documents as you go along;
• EMAIL a final copy to yourself. ALWAYS.
• Do not ever leave a computer without SAVING and EMAILING the document to yourself!
• Using a flash drive is fine….but!
   o Computer’s crash, systems go down,
   o flash drives get lost or
   o files become corrupted.
• Email is a “safe,” free, and easy way to protect all your hard work. You can even create a gmail account (they’ll give you up to FIVE) that is JUST for your homework. Use it as a repository for all your work for all your classes.
Mrs. Rodgers’ Research Paper Metaphor: Let’s Make Applesauce!

Step One: Go to the Orchard (the Library)

Step Two: Go to the Trees = source of apples (i.e. books, journals) Keep track of which trees you get your apples from (bib cards)

Step Three: Gather the Apples (facts, data, statistics, ideas, opinions) = make note cards!

Step Four: Peel, Core, and cut up your apples (take NOTES)

Step Five: Put your apple pieces into a big pot. Add water, your own spices (ideas) and stir over heat. Blend. This takes some time.