

# Research Project Guidelines

The Research Project asks you to explore the resources to which you are introduced in the early weeks of the term, to become more familiar with what each has (and doesn't have) to offer. You will report back to the class on the "best" resources for your topic (and how to find them), and you will submit a bibliography—properly formatted, with brief annotations—of the sources you find.

## Checklist

1. The topic you research will be up to you (but subject to my approval). Please submit a typed list of **three proposed topics** on **Tuesday, October 6**, ranking them as your first, second, and third choice, and explaining your interest in each topic. I will review your proposals for 'viability' and will ensure that no topic is duplicated by anyone else in the class. "We'll talk" if a proposal of yours has potential but needs refining.
2. A "good" **topic** is one that is neither too broad nor too restrictive. "Mozart" would be overwhelming; the "salping organum" would dry up pretty quickly. A lesser-known composer might make a suitable topic, as would a specific work by a better-known composer. You might find the evolution of your instrument an interesting research topic, or perhaps a specific performance technique (pizzicato, scat-singing). Stuck for an idea? Try browsing through a music appreciation textbook, such as *The Enjoyment of Music* (a copy is in the Music Department office). Feel free to run your ideas by me any time. Try to choose ideas that genuinely interest you.
3. You will submit **Research Progress Reports** as you go of the sources you check; these have specific due dates, and you will also re-submit them as an appendix to your final bibliography. (Forms for each Progress Report are located in this Reader.) [IF YOU DON'T EARN FULL POINTS ON A REPORT, YOU NEED TO GO BACK AND FILL IN ANY GAPS BEFORE THE FINAL PROJECT IS DUE!!] **Don't lose the Reports when you get them back; you'll turn them in again with the final project.**
4. Begin by using the **process** described by Bayne, chapter 1. Our library visits will introduce you to additional resources that you should peruse.
5. Keep excellent records! Be thorough in making your **bibliographic citations** as you go, so that you don't have to go back to sources repeatedly. Follow the proper *Chicago Manual of Style* model for each item; you may have to go consult the manual yourself if your item is not a common source.
6. Write down your observations and comments (in complete sentences) to create your **annotations** while your ideas are 'fresh' in your mind. A good annotation
  - a. summarizes how the item is organized,
  - b. explains how the item is relevant to and/or useful for your topic,
  - c. is written in complete sentences, and
  - d. does not use the first-person voice.If an item is NOT useful to you, do not include it in the bibliography!!!
7. Remember that **one source often leads to others**. Check to see if there is a bibliography that suggests other references. If there's no bibliography, see if there are footnotes containing useful information.

Sometimes you have to go back to earlier sources a second time in order to look up a new lead—that's okay! You'll get to know the source better and better that way.

8. Physically **look at** your sources, so that you will be able to make meaningful comments in your annotations. This means that you will be checking other libraries—via Link+, Melvyl, Worldcat, and so forth—to see if books you need are available elsewhere. The same thing is true for articles that look helpful: if Cal Poly doesn't subscribe to the journal, you are expected to get a copy of the article via Inter-Library Loan. Remember: when it comes to getting off-campus materials, procrastination is your enemy!
9. If you begin to find substantial amounts of information, think about **categories** into which you could put your sources.
10. At least **a week before the project is due**, start assembling your bibliography—which should be simply a matter of reorganizing the Citation Lists you created each week (See the Progress Reports.) Decide on a way of presenting your sources—one long list? Grouped under subheadings? Start arranging (and proofreading) early! Correct any citations that need fixing. Read any book reviews you found for Progress Report 6 and review each annotation you wrote early in the quarter to see if your opinion about the item has changed; rewrite accordingly (**using complete sentences!!**) If you were unable to look at an item first-hand, explain why not, and also explain why you are confident that the item would be a valuable resource for your topic (otherwise, omit it from your bibliography). Please double-space the annotations in your bibliography.

Note that it is customary to alphabetize CMS bibliographies by authors' last names. If you use subheadings, then each section is alphabetized separately.

11. Your bibliography should begin with an **introduction** that
  - 1) explains how your bibliography is organized, and the rationale behind that organization, and
  - 2) explains what led you to choose this topic. [It is okay to use first-person voice for this discussion]
12. Making an **outline** to guide your thoughts, plan a 10-minute presentation. You will tell the class a little bit about your topic, the best methods for finding information about your topic, and the most valuable resources that you encountered (at least 2, no more than 5). (Remember to make a **separate copy** of your outline for me.)

**NOTE: the emphasis of this presentation is on *how* you found your best materials—not the subject matter of your research topic**

13. Make a **handout** for the class that summarizes the points you will make in your presentation. Decide on the **3 "best" sources** you found, and put their complete citations on your handout (along with your annotation for each item, but it does not have to be double-spaced on the handout).

To summarize: this project consists of three main components:

1. The **annotated bibliography itself**, containing your introduction and an alphabetized list of sources (with your double-spaced annotation about each), and with **ALL** your **research progress reports** appended
2. A **ten-minute class presentation** (you will give me **one copy of your outline before** you speak)

3. A **hole-punched handout** for the class, listing your name, your presentation's main points and the 3 most valuable resources (with annotations) for your topic. (Please give me **two copies of the handout**)

**Grading** - The point distribution for this project is:

<b>Research Project Reports</b> (5 pts each x 5 = 25)	<b>Point Scale:</b>	A	90-100 points
Thoroughness of search (2)		B	80-89
Items ordered (2)		C	70-79
Citations (1)		D	60-69

**Bibliography** (40)  
 Introduction (5)  
 Breadth of Sources (20)  
 Annotations (15)

**Oral Presentation** (25)  
 Content (9)  
 Organization (8)  
 Delivery (8)

**Handout** (10)  
 Content (5)  
 Clarity (5)

**Score Busters**

Errors in citation format	= -.5 each
Errors in grammar, punctuation, proofreading	= -.10 pt. each
Proposed topics turned in late	= -1 pt/day
Research Project Reports turned in late	= -2 pts/day
No outline for presentation	= -10
Not ready to give presentation when assigned (unless excused)	= failure of course
Materials not turned in on due date	= -20