



WRITING RESEARCH PAPERS: A GENERIC CHECKLIST

There are many ways to write research papers. These ways will vary with every writer and every writing assignment. The following list will give you a *general* idea of how to approach a research paper; but remember, your assignment may call for more (or less) than what appears below. Make sure that you know what your assignment calls for and what your instructor is asking you to do. While this list provides a generic order of research steps, you can modify them in any way you want—find a process that works for you.

Remember: *You can enlist the help of IUP Writing Center tutors as often as you like.*

GETTING STARTED

- 1. Choose a topic
- 2. Do some preliminary reading
- 3. Narrow the topic
- 4. Develop a working thesis statement
- 5. Discuss any questions you have at this point with an IUP Writing Center tutor

GATHERING DATA

- 1. Visit the library and/or the library's website <<http://www.lib.iup.edu>>
 - a. Search for books and articles on the library website
 - b. Ask the reference librarian for assistance
- 2. Compile a working bibliography
 - a. references style (APA, MLA, etc.)
- 5. Discuss any questions you have at this point with an IUP Writing Center tutor

TAKING NOTES

- 1. Develop a working outline
- 2. Evaluate your source material
- 4. Avoid plagiarism
- 5. Discuss any questions you have at this point with an IUP Writing Center tutor

WRITING THE PAPER

- 1. Develop the final outline; test your outline
- 2. Prepare to write:
 - a. put your note cards in the order that your outline is in
 - b. consider your (real and imagined) readers and how their expectations may affect your tone and style
- 3. Write the rough draft
- 4. Check your documentation carefully
- 5. Revise and rewrite
- 6. Check the format of the text, citations, notes, and bibliography
- 7. Proofread

Always proofread, revise, and, when possible, sit down with a tutor and talk about your writing.