**Purpose:** This assignment introduces you to some basic library skills and resources that will help you be a successful student at WNC. The significant point of this exercise is the process used to arrive at the answers rather than the answers themselves. If you have questions, please feel free to ask your campus librarian.

**Getting into research databases from off-campus:** When you click on any database link from off-campus, you will be asked to login using your “WNC Anywhere Account” information. (If you have forgotten your password go to https://www.wnc.edu/forgot/. If you need further help, call the library at 445-3229 or 445-3227.)

1. **Choose a topic that interests you**
   Write your topic as a thesis statement or question, whichever your instructor prefers. Highlight or circle the two or three words that characterize your topic.

   **Topic:** _________________________________________________________________________________

   *Example:* “Marijuana should be legalized.” or “Should animal experimentation be banned?”

2. **List keywords (synonyms, people or places) that relate to your topic**
   As you start your research, it may be helpful to think of other words or concepts someone might use to describe the topic. For example, if you are researching marijuana, use marijuana and various words/synonyms for the concept of legalization (legal, legalized, laws, court). If there is a key person, non-profit group, or government agency, associated with the topic, list that too. **List three to six concepts or keywords associated with your topic.**

   ________________________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________________

3. **Get background information: CQ RESEARCHER**
   *CQ Researcher* is a magazine which provides in-depth coverage and background information on many current and controversial topics. Because it is so comprehensive, it is an excellent place to start. It also includes a chronology on the topic; an assessment of the current situation; tables and maps; pro/con statements from representatives of opposing positions; and key sources (books, articles, reports and studies, etc.) for additional research.

   **A. Click on the “Databases A to Z” tab at the top of the library website.**  
   **B. Click on the link for the CQ Researcher in the “Select a Database” drop down box.**  
   **C. Search for a report in either “Browse Topics”, “Browse Reports”, or use the subject search box.**  
   **D. Find an appropriate article and fill in the following information.**

   **Name of report:** _______________________________________________________________________

   **Date written:** ________________

   **Pro/Con essay topic from report:** _________________________________________________________

   If there isn’t a report available, write the search terms you used below:

   ________________________________________________________________________________________
4. Get background information: ENCYCLOPEDIAS AND OTHER REFERENCE BOOKS

Encyclopedias are useful for background information on a topic. While general encyclopedias like *Britannica* cover many topics, there are many specialized reference books, such as the *Encyclopedia of Terrorism* or the *Encyclopedia of Immigration*, which focus on a specific subject area. For this assignment, you’ll look at the online encyclopedias available through *Credo Reference*, the *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. If you don’t find information on your topic in one source, try another.

E. Click on the “Research Guides” tab at the top of the library website. Then click on “Consult our Library Guides”.
F. Click on the link for the “Encyclopedias” Research Guide.
G. Choose one of the encyclopedia sources listed (*Encyclopaedia Britannica, Credo Reference, Gale Virtual Reference Library*).
H. Find an appropriate article and fill in the following information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credo Reference</th>
<th>Gale Virtual Reference Library</th>
<th>Encyclopaedia Britannica</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay title:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book title:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date written:</td>
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Circle the source you use.

5. Find a BOOK or eBOOK at the WNC Library using the online library catalog

Books are an excellent source for in-depth or historical information on a topic. WNC has 40,000 books in print and 200,000 books online. (Note: For additional information on eBook databases and tutorials, go to the eBooks only link ([http://libguides.wnc.edu/ebooks](http://libguides.wnc.edu/ebooks)) at the top of the page.)

A. Locate the “Multi-Search” box at the top of the library website, “Search ALL Library Materials” and type in the keyword or phrase you want to search.
B. Under “CONTENT TYPE” on the side menu, select “Book/eBook”.
C. Under “PUBLICATION DATE” adjust the date to encompass the most recent ten years.
D. To find a print book, click on “LIBRARY LOCATION” Fallon or Carson. (You may also choose an online book.)
E. Click on a book title that looks useful to get more detailed information about the book.

Is this book: in PRINT (library shelves) or ONLINE (eBook)? Circle one.

Author: __________________________________________________________

Book title: _________________________________________________________

Date: ________  City: ____________________  Publisher: ____________________

Call number (print books only):

*A call number is the specific address of a book on the shelf. Most college and university libraries use the Library of Congress system for organizing their books, while public libraries generally use the Dewey Decimal system.*
6. Find a MAGAZINE OR JOURNAL article
Journals and magazines provide more recent information about research topics and events. Journal articles are often peer-reviewed (a rigorous review by specialists in the field) and frequently have bibliographies that point to other relevant research.

| A. From the library’s home page, locate the “Databases A to Z” tab at the top of the page and click on the tab. |
| B. Click on Academic Search Premier in the “Select a Database” drop down box. |
| C. Find an article title relevant to your topic. Provide the information requested below. |

 Article title: ____________________________________________________________

Author of the article (if given): ____________________________________________

Source information: _______________________________________________________
(Journal or Magazine title)

Date: _______ Volume: _______ Page article starts on: _______ Number of pages: _______

Is this a (circle one): magazine journal peer-reviewed journal other

7. Cite the article
Citing your sources thoroughly and accurately isn’t just a good idea – it’s required. Every discipline has a system of citing sources. This documentation style specifies the order and format used in listing sources at the end of a research paper. Many library databases provide citations either at the bottom of articles or through “Cite” links on the page.

Directions: Cite the article you found for question 6, using one of the documentation styles listed below. (Click on the article title in Academic Search Premier, then look for the Cite icon in the right column.)

Style chosen (circle one): APA MLA Chicago/Turabian

Article citation: You can cut and paste it into a word document, print it out and attach it, or write it down here.

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

Remember that this “citation generator” and others like it on the web, may not be 100% accurate and you are responsible to cite the article correctly in your paper. Pay special attention to personal names, capitalization, and dates. Always consult your library resources for the exact formatting and punctuating guidelines. Check an outside source, like the library’s “Citing Sources” page at http://libguides.wnc.edu/citing-sources to verify that the citation is correct.
8. Find differing perspectives in OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS IN CONTEXT (OVIC)

*Opposing Viewpoints* provides information on current social issues and controversial topics. With over 19,000 viewpoint essays, thousands of topic overviews and court-case overviews, OVIC helps students explore issues from all perspectives. In addition to traditional resources like books, magazines and journals, OVIC includes links to evaluated websites as well as multimedia, like quality podcasts and video, national and global news sources, and much more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. From the library’s website, locate the “Databases A to Z” tab at the top of the page and click on the tab.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Click on <strong>Opposing Viewpoints</strong> in the “Select a Database” drop down box.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Click on “Browse Issues” near the top of the page to view a list of topics. You can further define the list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by choosing a category from the drop-down menu. Choose a topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. From the “Related Topics” box, identify at least one related topic and list it (them) below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Click into the “Viewpoints” box in the middle column.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Find a viewpoint from each “side” (two viewpoints total) and fill in the following information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identify at least one related topic: ______________________________________________________________________

**Viewpoint title 1:** ______________________________________________________________________________

**Viewpoint title 2:** ______________________________________________________________________________

9. Find a NEWSPAPER article

Newspaper articles provide the most recent information about current events and topics. If you are researching a recent topic you can search for local, national, and international newspapers in the Nexis Uni database.

| A. From the library’s website, locate “Databases A to Z” at the top of the page and click on the tab.     |
| B. Click on **Nexis Uni** (formerly LexisNexis) in the “Select a Database” drop down box.             |
| C. In the “Guided Search” box click on the "News" tab. Type your search terms in the "Search in all News |
| for" box and then click on the search button. (You can also restrict by publication date(s).)          |
| D. Type a topic in the search box and find an article title relevant to your topic. Provide the information |
| requested below.                                                                                       |

**Article title:** __________________________________________________________________________________|

**Author (Byline) of the article (if given):** ______________________________________________________________________

**Source information:** __________________________________________________________________________________|

**(Newspaper title)**

**Date:** ______________  **Page article starts on (if given):** ________
10. Find a reliable website on your own that may be useful for your research topic

Web site title: ________________________________________________________________ 

Web address: http://__________________________________________________________

Using the Applying the CRAAP Test (http://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval_websites.pdf) from California State University, Chico, provide four reasons why you think this is a quality website.

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

Note: The library maintains Subject Guides (http://library.wnc.edu/research_guides) which have gone through extensive evaluations. This may save you time in the future.

11. Find a statistical table that could be useful for your topic

If you want to prove a point with statistics, be sure the statistics are current and from a reliable source. The federal government is generally considered to be a trustworthy source for statistics. The Statistical Abstract of the United States gathers statistical data annually from federal agencies and is very easy to use. (Shelved behind the library’s reference desk.) The library has also compiled a list of statistical websites at http://libguides.wnc.edu/statistics. You can also search Google by adding the word “statistic” to your topic.

Name of statistical source used: __________________________________________________________ 

If it’s a website, give the URL: http://___________________________________________________ 

What agency or company published or gathered the statistic? ___________________________________

Date the statistic was gathered or reported: ________________________________________________

Why would you consider this statistic reliable? ______________________________________________ 

_________________________________________________________________________________________

If there are no statistics relevant to your topic, write the search terms you used below:

______________________________________________________________________________________