

Research Practices Survey

This 15-minute survey explores the experiences and opinions of college students concerning academic research. Its purposes are to (1) study students' research habits, (2) use these findings to improve the ways we help students develop their research skills, and (3) determine what changes occur in research abilities as students progress through their academic careers.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and there are no penalties if you decide not to participate or if you choose to skip any questions. All of your responses will be kept strictly confidential. This means that at no time will your response to any question be publicly linked with your name or with any other identifying information.

In completing this survey you are giving permission for your responses to be used for research, and you understand that your institution agrees to keep your identity and your responses confidential.

For most of the questions below, you will be asked to select the response that best represents your experiences or opinions. A few questions will ask you to "check all that apply." The last question asks for a brief response in your own words.

Your Experiences with Research

1. How often in the past academic year did you use resources from each of the following kinds of libraries (whether in person or on the Internet) for course assignments, research projects, or other academic purposes?

	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
a. Public or community library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. College or university library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Response options:

- (3) Once a week or more
- (2) Once or twice a month
- (1) A few times a year
- (0) Never

2. People use libraries for many reasons. In the past academic year, which of the following was your MOST FREQUENT reason for using a library?

- Recreation or other non-academic purposes (leisure reading, checking out music or videos, checking e-mail, etc.)
- Conducting research for course assignments or projects
- Doing other academic work (studying, doing homework, doing a group project, etc.)
- Other
- I did not use a library in the past academic year

3. In the past academic year, did an instructor or librarian talk with one or more of your classes about how to use library resources, including Internet resources?

- Yes
- No

4. How many assignments, papers, or research projects have you completed in the past academic year that required you to include at least three sources in a Bibliography, References, or Works Cited list?

- Five or more
- Three or four
- One or two
- None

5. Which of the following PRINT sources have you used for research in the past academic year? Check as many as apply.

- Library books
- Encyclopedias, almanacs, dictionaries, etc.
- Academic or research journals
- Newspapers or magazines for the general public
- Other
- I did not use any print sources for research in the past academic year

6. Which of the following ONLINE sources have you used for research in the past academic year? Check as many as apply.

- Google, Yahoo Search or other general Internet search engines
- Online journals, magazines, newspapers or encyclopedias
- Online library catalog
- Online booksellers (such as Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, etc.)
- Online indexes or databases (such as EBSCO, JSTOR, Expanded Academic ASAP, etc.)
- Google Scholar
- Other
- I did not use any online sources for research in the past academic year

7. Which of the following have you used in the past academic year to organize or manage the information you gathered for your research projects? Check as many as apply.

- Paper folders, files, or note cards
- Computer folders or files (My Documents, Microsoft Word files, etc.)
- Online tools (bookmarks, blogs, MySpace, etc.)
- E-mail
- Bibliographic management software (Endnote, Refworks, ProCite, etc.)
- Other
- I did not use any tools for organizing or managing research information

8. In the past academic year, when you were given research project assignments, how often were you required to use a specific format (such as APA, MLA, Chicago, or some other style) for the sources in your bibliography?

- Almost always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never/not applicable

9. In the past academic year, when you were working on research assignments, how often did you seek help or advice from each of the following?

	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
a. Teachers or professors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Librarians	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Parents or other adult family members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Friends, classmates, or siblings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Writing labs, writing centers, or help groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Help screens, online tutorials, or other electronic resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Response options:

- (4) Almost always
- (3) Often
- (2) Sometimes
- (1) Rarely
- (0) Never/not applicable

10. Over the course of the past academic year, how often did you talk with a librarian about a research project you were doing?

- Five or more times

- Three or four times
- Once or twice
- Never

11. Which of the following best describes the way you pace your work on a research assignment?

- I do most of the work soon after an assignment is given.
- I divide the work pretty equally across the available time.
- I do a little work soon after the assignment is given, but do most of it toward the end.
- I do all of the work just before or on the due date.

Your Attitudes and Beliefs About Research

12. How challenging are the different components of research for you? Please rate the difficulty of each of the following activities in your experience as a researcher, using the scale below:

	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
a. Narrowing your topic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Developing a list of sources to investigate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Revising your search strategy as necessary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Developing your main argument or thesis statement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Writing the paper	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Documenting your sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Response options:

- (4) Very easy (*"I can usually do this easily without assistance from a teacher, librarian, or peer tutor"*)
- (3) Somewhat easy (*"I can usually do this with some initial assistance"*)
- (2) Somewhat difficult (*"I need a fair amount of help to do this, but I can manage"*)
- (1) Very difficult (*"This is hard for me even when I've received help"*)
- (0) No experience (*"I have not had any assignments requiring this kind of activity"*)

13. How challenging is it for you to identify and retrieve sources? Please rate the difficulty of each of the following activities:

	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
a. Using a library catalog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Using an electronic index (Academic Search Premier, ProQuest Research Library, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Using a print index	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Using an Internet search engine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Physically locating sources in a library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Obtaining materials through inter-library loan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Response options:

- (4) Very easy (*"I can usually do this easily without assistance from a teacher, librarian, or peer tutor"*)
 (3) Somewhat easy (*"I can usually do this with some initial assistance"*)
 (2) Somewhat difficult (*"I need a fair amount of help to do this, but I can manage"*)
 (1) Very difficult (*"This is hard for me even when I've received help"*)
 (0) No experience (*"I have not had any assignments requiring this kind of activity"*)

14. How challenging is it for you to use sources? Please rate the difficulty of each of the following activities:

	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
a. Determining whether a source is appropriate for an academic project	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Deciding what information from your sources to integrate into your project	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Knowing <i>when</i> to document a source	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Knowing <i>how</i> to document a source	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Response options:

- (4) Very easy (*"I can usually do this easily without assistance from a teacher, librarian, or peer tutor"*)
 (3) Somewhat easy (*"I can usually do this with some initial assistance"*)
 (2) Somewhat difficult (*"I need a fair amount of help to do this, but I can manage"*)
 (2) Very difficult (*"This is hard for me even when I've received help"*)
 (0) No experience (*"I have not had any assignments requiring this kind of activity"*)

15. In general, how much do you enjoy doing research?

- Very much
- Quite a bit
- Some
- Very little

16. People have different beliefs about the research process. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following belief statements:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
a. Skillful researchers know the best way to				

- | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| approach any research question. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. A course in research skills would be useful. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. When two researchers disagree, one of them must be wrong. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Successful researchers understand things quickly. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e. Careful researchers can ultimately get to the truth. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f. If a researcher cannot understand something within a short amount of time, she should keep on trying. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g. Good research yields clear results; poor research yields ambiguous results. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| h. When it comes to research, some people are just naturally better at it than others. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Response options:

- (1) Strongly agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Disagree
- (4) Strongly disagree

Your Familiarity with Research Terms and Strategies

In this portion of the questionnaire, some of the terms and concepts may be familiar to you, but others may not. Please respond as accurately as you can, and feel free to use the "don't know" response wherever appropriate.

17. Which of the following searches would retrieve the MOST results in an online search?
- movies OR films
 - movies AND films
 - movies NOT films
 - movies INSTEAD OF films
 - Don't know
18. Which of the following is the correct way to truncate a search word?
- Typing in only the first syllable of the word as a keyword
 - Combining search words with "and," "or," or "not"
 - Using the * or ! symbol in place of the last few letters of the word
 - None of the above
 - Don't know
19. You retrieve the following information from a library catalog search:

Gothic modernisms / edited by Andrew Smith and Jeff Wallace.		
New York, N.Y. : Palgrave, 2001.		

Stacks	PR888.M63 G67 2001	AVAILABLE
xii, 232 p. ; 23 cm.		
Includes bibliographical references and index.		
English fiction -- 20th century -- History and criticism.		
Modernism (Literature) -- Great Britain.		
Modernism (Literature) -- United States.		
Gothic revival (Literature).		
Smith, Andrew, 1964-		
Wallace, Jeff, 1958-		

Which of the following would be the most efficient way to find a comprehensive listing of other books in the catalog on this topic?

- Identifying other books written by the same authors
- Examining the bibliography in the book
- Scanning the shelves where the book is located to see what books are nearby
- Searching again using the subject headings that most closely match your research topic
- Don't know

20. Researchers must distinguish between *academic journals* and *popular magazines*. Which of the following statements is LEAST ACCURATE?

- Academic journal articles provide objective facts; popular magazine articles do not.
- Articles in academic journals usually include a list of references to other scholarly works; articles in popular magazines usually do not.
- The intended audience for academic journals is mainly other scholars; the intended audience for popular magazines is the general public.
- Authors and editors for academic journals are usually employed in higher education; authors and editors for popular magazines are usually employed by the for-profit media.
- Don't know

21. You find the following entry in the References section of a recent article:

Erisman, H.M. (2002). The Cuban Revolution's evolving identity. *Latin American Politics and Society* 44(1), 145-153.

In what issue of *Latin American Politics and Society* will you find this article?

- Volume 2002, Number 44
- Volume 44, Number 1
- Volume 1, Number 145-153
- The issue cannot be determined

22. For each of the following, indicate whether the item is an entire book, a journal article, or a portion of a book.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
a. Jorgenson, Lars W. "Reinterpreting Navajo Rites." <i>Navajo Culture</i> 6 (1946): 469-78.	○	○	○	○
b. Allen, Glover Morrill. <i>Bats</i> . Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939.	○	○	○	○
c. Tanaka, Kazuko. "The New Feminist Movement in Japan, 1970-1990." In <i>Japanese Women</i> , edited by Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow. New York: Feminist Press, 1995.	○	○	○	○

Response options:

- (1) Entire book
- (2) Journal article
- (3) Portion of a book
- (4) Don't know

23. Researchers must distinguish between *primary* and *secondary* sources. Which of the following statements is MOST ACCURATE?

- Primary sources are more scholarly than secondary sources.
- Primary sources are old; secondary sources are new.
- Primary sources examine subjects first-hand; secondary sources examine the findings of other scholars.
- Primary sources are more appropriate for academic projects than are secondary sources.
- All of the above are equally accurate.
- Don't know

24. Which of the following is likely to yield the most comprehensive list of relevant scholarly articles for a research project?

- Searching an electronic index or database in a specific academic field (History, Biology, Music, etc.)
- Using a general Internet search like Google or Yahoo

- Paging through print volumes of an academic journal in a specific academic field
- Searching the library catalog
- All of the above are equally effective
- Don't know

25. A *peer-reviewed* or *refereed* journal is BEST described as:

- A journal that publishes reviews of other articles
- A journal that publishes articles that have been approved by other scholars
- A journal that includes only articles written collaboratively by peers
- A journal that includes references for each article it publishes
- Don't know

26. In a scholarly article or research paper, a *citation* is:

- A direct quotation from someone else's written work
- Source information for any ideas or text from someone else's written work
- The physical location of a source (book, journal, etc.)
- All of the above
- Don't know

27. A citation is NOT required when:

- You are paraphrasing, rather than quoting, a source
- More than one source says the same thing
- You are describing your own findings or analysis
- All of the above
- Don't know

Your Approach to Evaluating Sources

28. Among the challenges of research is determining whether a source is scholarly. Below is a list of source characteristics. For each characteristic, if

this were the only information you had about a source, what conclusion would you draw about whether the source is likely to be scholarly?

If a source...

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
a. Is available online	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Is translated from another language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Is published in a peer-reviewed journal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Is posted on a political blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Was recently published	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Has a lengthy list of references	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Was published by a university press	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Was published in <i>Time</i> , <i>Newsweek</i> or <i>US News & World Report</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Response options:

- (1) Scholarly
- (2) Non-scholarly
- (3) Cannot be determined
- (4) Don't know

29. You are required to write a research paper for your American History class examining the roles of women in the American Civil War. An initial search turns up the following sources. Which one is LEAST likely to be appropriate for your paper?

- Edwards, L. F. (1980). *Scarlett doesn't live here anymore: Southern women in the Civil War era*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Heidler, D. S., & Heidler, J. T. (Eds.). (2000). *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A political, social and military history* (Vols. 1-5). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- Schultz, J. E. (2002). Seldom thanked, never praised, and scarcely recognized: Gender and racism in Civil War hospitals. *Civil War History* 48, 220-236.
- Wilson, B. A. (2006). Women in the Civil War. Retrieved July 1, 2006, from <http://userpages.aug.com/captbarb/femvets2.html>

30. On what basis did you select your response to the preceding question?

- Whether the source is likely to be scholarly
- How recently the source was published
- Whether the source was a print or Internet source
- The number of pages with information about this topic
- All of the above equally influenced my response to the preceding question

31. Suppose you have more relevant sources than you can use in a short research assignment. Which of the following is the best way to determine whether to use a particular source?

- Whether the source is a print or Internet source
- How recently the source was published

- How easily you can get the source
- Whether the source is scholarly
- Whether the author is highly respected
- All of the above are equally valid criteria for choosing among sources

32. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

33. What is your ethnicity? Check as many as apply.

- White/Caucasian
- African American/Black
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Asian American/Asian
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latino
- Other

34. Is there anything else about your research practices or attitudes that you would like your course instructors or campus librarians to know, or something specific you are hoping to learn about doing high-quality academic research? If so, please write a brief statement below:

Thank you very much for taking time to complete this questionnaire!