Oberlin College Library

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Research Paper Alternatives

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annotated bibliography

literature review

bibliographic essay

identify a primary and a secondary source relevant to a specific event or person

write an entry for a dictionary or encyclopedia

evaluate and edit an article in *Wikipedia*

for a given topic, compare & contrast one or more of the following:

- a reference book and journal article
- an article and a book
- a popular article and a scholarly article
- disciplinary approaches (e.g. psychology and sociology)

creative projects

- video
- photography
- performance
- painting/drawing/prints
- fiction/poetry
- creative non-fiction
- music/sound recording
- web site

grant proposal or research funding request

- identify appropriate agency/funding source
- conduct literature review
- assess current state of the field
- identify next steps

poster sessions

- students take turns presenting their findings and "making the rounds"

mini-conference

- program with abstracts
- panels organized by broad topic areas
- brief oral presentations
- question and answer period

curate an exhibit (actual or virtual)

- research objects in an given collection
- decide what to display
- write labels and/or wall text
- write catalog entries and/or essays
- create metadata

recommend the purchase of an object (work of art, book, manuscript, etc.)

- research an existing collection
- study current auction catalogs and market conditions
- justify recommendation

stage a debate

- teams research and argue opposing viewpoints

- read an article and identify a viewpoint that is not represented -- research the topic and argue from that perspective

predict the outcome of an election or auction

project the impact of new or proposed policies or legislation

develop a communications strategy for a political campaign or activist organization

analyze key journals and decide where to submit an article

- editorial board
- submission guidelines
- circulation/distribution
- indexing/aggregating sources
- trends in content

propose a new topic for the course

- suggest readings
- relate new topic to others in the course

consult data/statistical sources to support an argument

track reports/uses of scientific research in the popular press

collect original data and compare findings to results in relevant literature

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