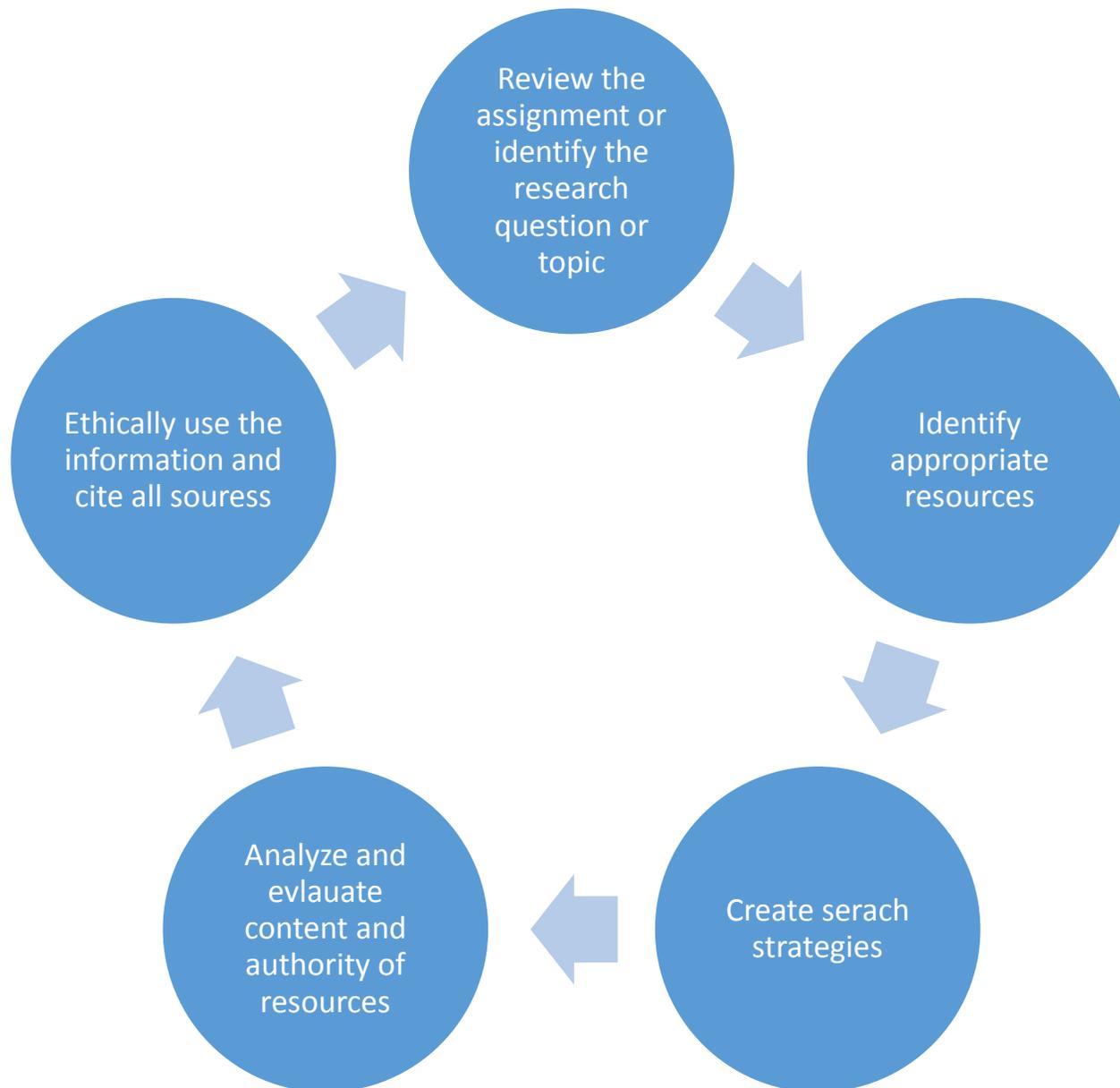


Five Step Research Process



Step 1: Review the assignment or identify the research question or topic

Start by fully reviewing all information in the assignment or research topic.

- If you have questions on the assignment or topic, please connect with the course professor for clarification. Asking for clarification at the beginning will help you avoid frustrations later.

Step 2: Identify appropriate resources

The topic you are researching will help determine where you look.

- The library's research databases are a great place to start searching. In the databases you can find peer reviewed publications, trade publications, e-books, and more.
- Do consider government resources (statistical and demographic information). As with the selection of any source, be sure to verify the assignment parameters.
- It is also a positive option here to remember to write down, or use a tracking mechanism, the sources you select. This will save time in the end when you are writing and citing.

Step 3: Create search strategies

Identify the search terms to use for your topic. Write down variations of pairings you can alternate if needed during your research.

- Review course materials for possible search term ideas.

It is recommended you start in a database by selecting the Advanced Search option. This provides an opportunity to select specific ways to search your keywords.

- Use quotation marks when you search around common phrases. This tells the database to find those search terms together, which can help refine the results. For example try searching: "college athlete".
- Review the many filters you can set, like peer reviewed, publication date range, document type, etc.
- Explore the Thesaurus or Subject area for related words to search.

Step 4: Analyze and evaluation content and authority

Always review the content of the material and authority.

- Some points to consider in reviewing: the type of publication (peer reviewed, newspaper, trade publication, etc.), date of material, author's credentials and specialty area, context of the information, etc.

Step 5: Ethically use the information and cite all sources

As a participant in the academic community, you have a duty to respect the intellectual property of others.

- Citing information correctly provides acknowledgement to the author, as well a trail for others to follow your research.