PART I: PLANNING THE RESEARCH

Step 1. Select a subject
- determine what interests you
- understand the limits/requirements of your assignment
- understand the limits of your resources
  · consult the library’s catalog and databases

Step 2. Narrow the subject into a topic

Step 3. State the objective
- a question to be answered or argued
- a thesis statement

PART II: DOING THE RESEARCH

Step 4. Write a preliminary bibliography
- a list of materials you plan to examine
  · consult the library’s catalog and databases
  · look at other library catalogs
  · check the Internet (but not as your first source)
- evaluate what you find

Step 5. Prepare a working outline
- a plan for investigating the materials

Step 6. Take notes
- note cards listing the important ideas discovered in research
- include source information

PART III: WRITING THE PAPER

Step 7. Outline the paper
- introduction, body, conclusion

Step 8. Write the draft
- write the introduction
  · present the idea to be discussed
  · capture reader interest
  · state the thesis
- write the body
  · develop your main ideas . . support them with details
- write the conclusion
  · summarize your main points . . restate your thesis
- revise your draft(s)
  · check content and organization
  · check transitions

Step 9. Prepare the final paper
- document sources in the required format (e.g. MLA, APA)