

Step 1 - Clarify Your Assignment & Select A Topic

Clarify Your Assignment

As soon as you are notified about an upcoming paper/assignment by your professor, **be sure you are clear about what is required.**



- **Take time to READ what is being asked of you.** Assignment instructions may be in your course outline. Some professors will post instructions about their assignments in your D2L course site. Does your professor note any specific requirements such as: due date, length, structure, content, evidence of critical thinking, citation style, references, is a presentation required? Often professors will allocate different percentages for each aspect of the assignment.
- **What types of sources are you expected to use?** Important to know what types of sources your professor expects you to read/use for your assignment. Your professor will expect you to cite these sources in your list of **References** at the end of your assignment (e.g. scholarly journal articles, books, magazines, newspapers, statistics, company or industry reports etc.)
- **Not clear about something?** Check with your professor or your Teaching Assistant (TA). The best time to ask is **BEFORE** you begin to research. It's common for students to ask for clarification; it's part of the teaching and learning process!

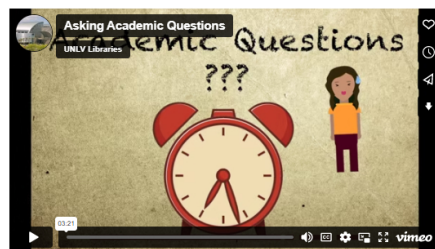
Once you understand what is required, you are ready to begin your preliminary research.

Selecting a Research Topic

When you begin to research a business topic for a paper or presentation, if the choice is yours, **try to choose a topic that interests you!** That way, research should be more interesting as you spend time reading and learning more about it.

Keep in mind that your professor's expectation is that **business students are researching a business-related topic.**

Please watch this short Vimeo video courtesy of the **University of Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries**:



Before committing to a topic, try undertaking a quick scan of the literature to ensure that there is enough information available to complete your paper.

If you already have a general topic in mind, **check your topic with your professor to be sure you're on the right track.** Ask if the topic you're planning to research is an appropriate choice for your business class. Remember that your professor will be grading your work and so ensuring your topic is appropriate is always a wise idea.

Need Some Inspiration?

Choosing a business topic may seem like an easy exercise but students can sometimes run into difficulty.

If you're in need if some inspiration, think back to discussions during your class that have peaked your curiosity. Perhaps you've come across a business topic you've read about online, in the news, or in your textbook and you'd like to learn more.

Not only should your topic be interesting to you, **the expectation is that your topic will complement the content your professor is covering in your class.**


Join the Scholarly Conversation!

It may surprise you to learn that other scholars will have already written and researched your topic.

As a student, you need to be aware that you're joining a scholarly conversation that is already underway, therefore you will need to read and acknowledge the previous research conducted by others **before** offering your own opinions. Professors expect students to engage with their sources first before carving out your own point of view.

Please take a few minutes to watch the following YouTube video about **joining the scholarly conversation** courtesy of **Clemson University Libraries**.



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