Planning Checklist for Research Assignments
It is important to collaborate with librarians, anticipate student stumbling blocks, and have a list of resources ready to guide students successfully through the research process. Use this checklist to assist in the planning process:

Assignment Requirements
General Assignment Considerations
_____Relate Assignment to some aspect of course subject matter or learning objectives.
_____Increase understanding of both the subject and process for locating information with the structured assignment.

Encouraging Time Management
_____Scaffold assignment activities to build upon each other, culminating in the final project.
_____Provide a timeline for students; set deadlines that allow students sufficient time for exploration, research, drafts, and final product.

Alternatives to the Research Paper
_____Experiment with short, less-complex essays or projects instead of a term paper (research log, research proposal, annotated bibliography, research press release, poster presentation, etc.) and specify the number of sources required.

Modeling and Grading
_____Provide models of exemplary research projects.
_____Provide grading rubric so instructor expectations are understood.

Involve a Librarian in the Design and Research Guidance Phases
_____Confirm that published research exists to support the research assignment and recommended sources are available at the libraries (online or in-person).
_____Require each student to research a different topic to ensure the library offers enough print resources.
_____Suggest sources that align with students' levels (reading ability, knowledge of subject matter, and search skills).
_____Avoid strict and burdensome limits (too many restrictions at once such as publication date, word counts, materials type can make research nearly impossible for students).
_____Set reasonable expectations about the use of print sources versus online sources (sometimes, the most recent information is no longer in print, e.g. many of our academic journals are only available online).

Research Guidance   Provide the Miami University Libraries Link: lib.miamioh.edu
Getting Started (General Knowledge / Research Process and Questions)
_____Understand the Research Process (e.g. ACRL Information Literacy Standards)
_____Define research assignment terminology so that it does not create ambiguity (e.g. handouts state that students cannot use the Internet yet students must locate articles in the library's online subscription databases).

Searching for Information
_____Direct where to find a variety of resources including digital (library databases, catalog, blogs, websites, etc.)
_____Recommend and require specific sources (subject library databases, reference materials, scholarly sources, etc.)
_____Review search strategies (Boolean operators, brainstorming search terms, scholarly limiters, advanced search)
_____Permit students to change their topics based on the reality of their research experience.

Evaluating Information
_____Require appropriate authority, content, and timeliness (like CRAAP Test, Lateral Reading)

Using Information
_____Inform students how to avoid plagiarism
_____Address note-taking, paraphrasing, summarizing, and ethical scholarship.
_____Provide citation guidance
_____Give technical "how to" instructions for researching, using, creating, and evaluating digital sources such as blogs, wikis, or streaming videos.

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Support

_____Include links and contact information for Librarian(s), Tech Support, the HOWE Writing Center, and Tutoring services in addition to your own contact information.

_____Invite your college librarian to class (shows students that even you are asking the librarian for assistance).

_____Connect students to tutorials such as the libraries' Instructional Videos.

_____Demonstrate support services in class, such as the Ask Us! Chat Service.