



The Craft of Research Fifth Edition*

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About & Contents

New edition of the classic text - released June 25, 2024

First edition (1995) - written by Booth, Colomb & Williams

Fifth edition - prepared by Bizup & FitzGerald, to “[preserve] the book’s proven approach to the research process, as well as its general structure and accessible voice” †

“...this fundamental work explains how to choose significant topics, pose genuine and productive questions, find and evaluate sources, build sound and compelling arguments, and convey those arguments effectively to others” †

Introduction

what is research?

considering the audience

Part I: Asking questions, seeking answers

making research problems matter to others

identifying & developing a research question

connecting research to consequences

topic-question-significance

answering ‘so what?’

Part II: Sources and resources

sources: primary, secondary, tertiary evaluating sources

systematic note taking on sources annotating

quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing

Part III: Making your argument

elements of an argument

predictable disagreements

objectives & alternatives

acknowledging weaknesses

claims, reasons, evidence, warrant, acknowledgement & response

Part IV: Delivering your argument

planning & drafting

avoiding flawed patterns

context, problem, response

types of abstracts

quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing

using sources

avoiding inadvertent plagiarism

citations

selecting graphics, tables & charts

presentations

structuring introductions & conclusions

Part V: Some last considerations

ethical obligations

social responsibilities

advice for teachers

New & expanded in this edition:

- Generative artificial intelligence (AI): when/how to use
- Expanded ethics section: obligations to self, others, and society
- Effective presentations

Takeaways:

- All authors are (or were) professors of English, but they aimed to present the material so that it **would apply to research and researchers across fields** (coming from a science background, I felt some information was more relevant to humanities, but this did not detract from my understanding of concepts)
- The book is **geared toward a range of readers**, “...from high school students...to advanced graduate students and researchers...” †; I found some of the information to be rudimentary, especially in Part I, so some sections could be less engaging for those more advanced in their career
- I’d likely revisit **Parts III & IV** frequently when drafting text
- The book could be used to **create a guide or checklist** to use when making a research argument

Pick up this book if:

... you are new to working with research grants: this would be a great resource to learn about communicating research

... you want a book that is easy to navigate: the structure of the book and clear table of contents make it easy to find and to jump to the topic of interest—while the book does build on information presented earlier, it isn’t necessary to read it through from start to finish

... you want to improve your research communication skills: the book offers information that is applicable at different career stages and across research fields

... you are looking for an affordable resource: the paperback can be purchased for about \$25 CAD (similar price for e-book versions)

Avoid this book if:

... you are not communicating research: if your role does not include writing/editing text about research projects, the book may be of limited use (no focus on e.g., project management, research contracts)

... you are looking for a comprehensive guide to AI use in developing research questions/arguments: there are 2 pages on generative AI, with several mentions of its use throughout the book, but much of the information will not be new to many of those working in an academic setting

... you are looking for information on human ethics or animal care in research: the ethics section is only 7 pages and focuses on high-level ethical considerations (e.g., do not plagiarize or misrepresent data)

... you own a previous edition: the authors generally maintained the structure, content, and writing style of previous editions (I noted few substantial changes compared to my copy of the third edition)

* Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.G., Williams, J.M., Bizup, J., & FitzGerald, W.T. (2024). *The Craft of Research, Fifth Edition*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 9780226826677 (paper) ISBN: 9780226833880 (cloth) ISBN: 9780226826660 (ebook)

† Quotes and book image taken from the publisher: The University of Chicago Press. *The Craft of Research, Fifth Edition*. <http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/C/bo215874008>. Accessed 6 October 2024.