

CS405: WRITING A LITERATURE REVIEW

JOANNE OUD, LIBRARY
NOV 2015



COURSE PAGE



Waterloo
8:00am - midnight

Library **Services** **Research materials** **Locations** **About** **Help**

- Course guides
- Subject guides
- Course readings (reserves)
- Manage citations
- Request from other libraries
- Scholarly communication
- Scholars Commons @ Laurier
- Video booking (faculty)
- Research assistance
- Instruction
- Research Data Management

View

Books & e-books **Primo search**

Databases

Journal titles

Subject & guides

Laurier Archives

Site search

Search Primo

books, articles, and more.

advanced search

WHAT IS IT & WHAT DOES IT DO?

- **Shows you know about your topic**
- **Demonstrates your skills in**
 - locating key resources
 - critically appraising them
- **Puts your work in context & justifies it**
 - What has/hasn't been done
 - Key debates & perspectives
 - Identifies gap

FORMAT & STRUCTURE

Good:

- **Thematic:** synthesize into themes/patterns
- **Analysis:** critical evaluation
- **Focused:** directly relates to your topic/question

Bad:

- **Sequential:** annotated bibliography or list
- **Description:** summary
- **Vague:** on your general topic

PROCESS & STEPS

- 1. Topic/research question**
- 2. Literature search**
- 3. Analytical reading**
- 4. Synthesis & themes**
- 5. Organization**
- 6. Writing**

TOPIC/RESEARCH QUESTION

- **Choose & focus your topic**
- **Create a research question**
- **Affects entire research project**
- **Can't do lit review before question**

LITERATURE SEARCH

- **Search systematically**
- **Construct a search strategy**
- **Decide where to search**
- **Repeat your strategies across databases**
- **Note results and modify strategies**

SEARCH TERMS

- **Experiment**
- **Find commonly used terms & variations**

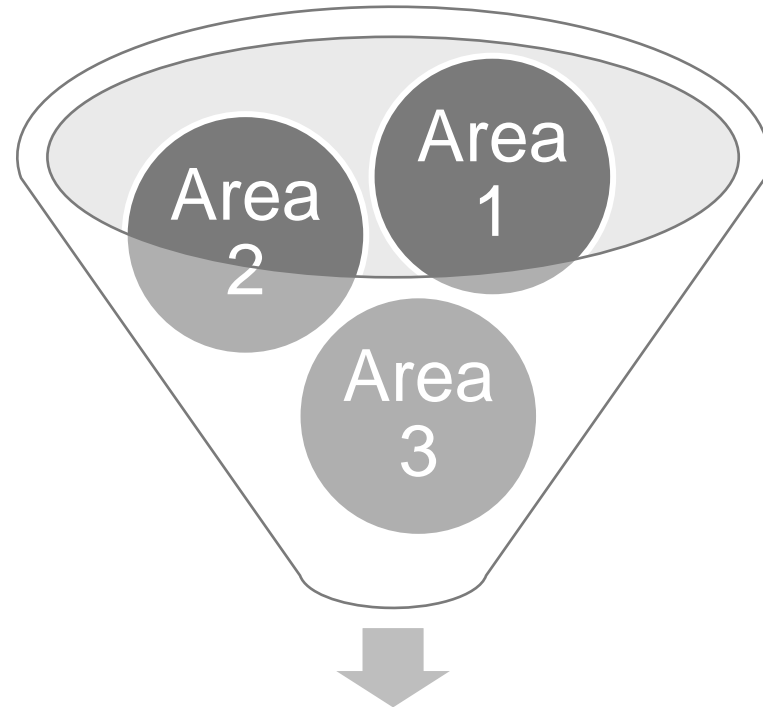
cultural workers OR artists

AND

labor OR labour OR working conditions OR
employment relations OR unions OR organizing
OR precarity OR neoliberalism

THERE'S NOTHING ON MY TOPIC

**Working
conditions for
women in the
video game
industry**



**Your
topic/question**

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

- **Depends on your topic**
- **Include the key people/studies**
- **Works cited/bibliographies**
- **Stop when you keep seeing the same references**

TRACK YOUR SOURCES

- **Keep track as you go along**
- **Saves lots of time later**
- **Use a citation management/research organization tool**

MENDELEY: RESEARCH ORGANIZATION TOOL

The screenshot displays the Mendely Desktop application window. The title bar reads "Mendely Desktop". The menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "View", "Tools", and "Help". Below the menu bar is a toolbar with icons for "Add Files", "Folders", "Related", "Share", and "Sync". A search bar is located in the top right corner with the text "Search...".

The main interface is divided into several sections:

- Left Panel (My Library):** A tree view showing folders such as "All Documents", "Recently Added", "Favorites", "Needs Review", "My Publications", "Unsorted", "customer service", "Public Services Review", "SI article" (expanded to show "collaboration", "intro", "learning commons", "library & peer instruction", "library & students", "peer & collab learning", "SI"), and "Filter by Authors" (listing "All", "Adams, W", "Astin, AW", "Bridges, Brian").
- Center Panel:** A list of documents under the folder "peer & collab learning". The list has columns for "Authors", "Title", "Year", "Published", and "Added". One document is selected and highlighted in grey.
- Right Panel (Details):** A detailed view of the selected document. It shows the "Type" as "Journal Article", the title "Piecing together the student success puzzle: research, propositions, and recommendations", authors "G. Kuh, J. Kinzie, J. Buckley et al.", journal "ASHE Higher Education Report", year "2007", volume "32", issue "5", and pages "1-182". There is also an "Abstract:" section and a "Tags:" section.

At the bottom of the window, a status bar indicates "1 of 13 documents selected".

ANALYTICAL READING

Read strategically:

- How does this relate to my topic/question?
- How does it relate to other studies?
- How is it useful?
- What are the main findings, arguments, etc?
- What is the theory & framework?
- What are the strengths & weaknesses?

Keep notes

SYNTHESIS & ANALYSIS

Group into themes, patterns

Code or annotate

Think about:

- Most significant findings, themes
- What areas have researchers focused on (or not)?
- What theories/methods are used?
- Changes/developments over time?

SYNTHESIS STRATEGIES

- **Note cards or sticky notes**
- **Searchable notes (e.g. Mendeley)**
 - Use controlled vocabulary
- **Synthesis matrix**
- **Concept map**

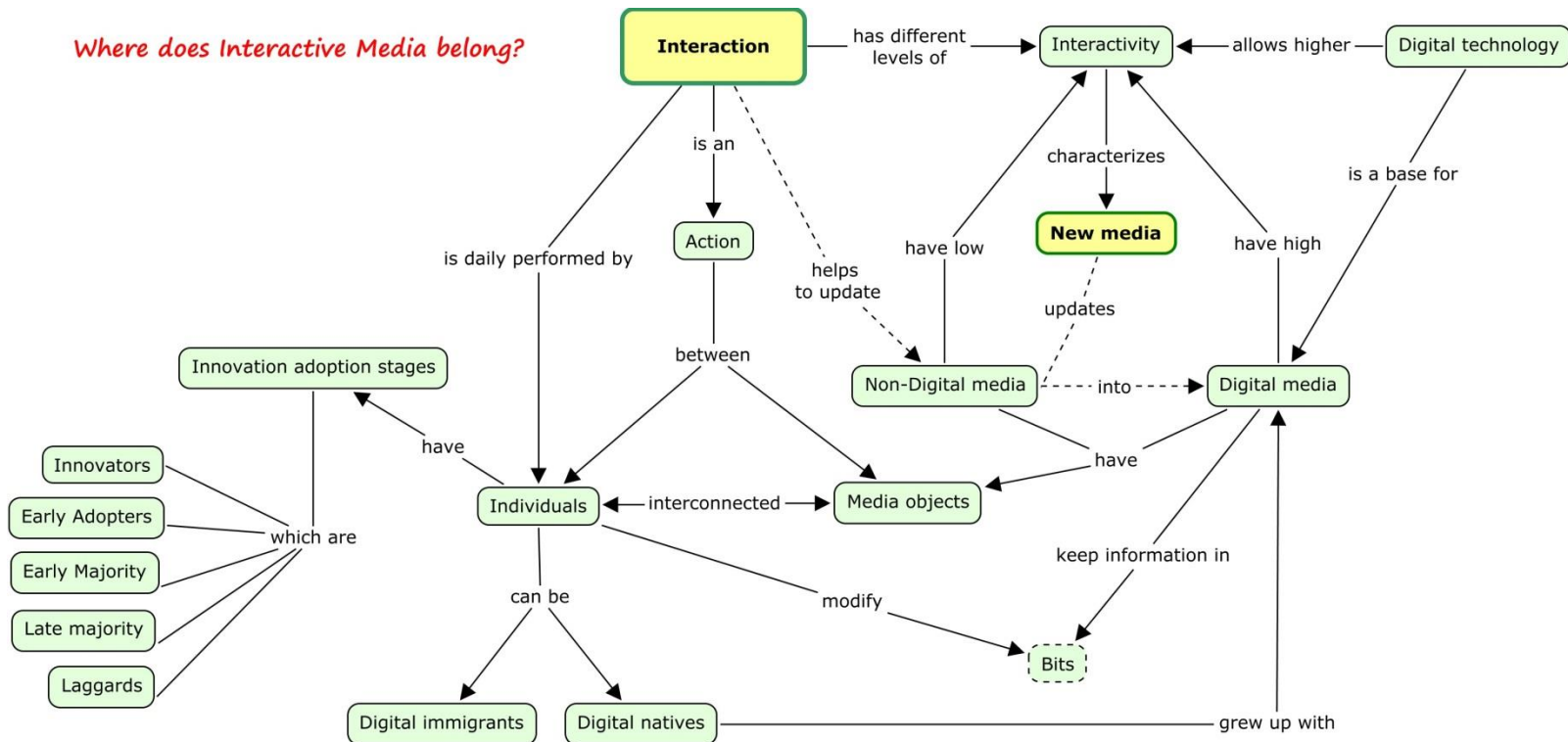
SYNTHESIS MATRIX

Example: Education reform

	<i>Source 1</i> Stewart (2011)	<i>Source 2</i> Potts (2002)	<i>Source 3</i> Watts (2004)	<i>Source 4</i> Gable (2010)
<i>Theme A</i> Role of out-of-school factors	"Schools cannot be reformed without reform without reforming the community." (p.35)	Students do not care about their neighborhoods as much as they care about quality teaching. (p.39)	"Without ensuring that their most basic needs are taken care of in the home, a student cannot succeed while in school." (p. 2)	While out-of-school factors may play a role in a child's academic achievement, it ultimately depends on a parent's involvement. (p.45)
<i>Theme B</i> View of standardized testing	Standardized testing only serves to harm students in the long run. (p. 40-42)	Standardized testing holds teachers to high standards. (p. 12-29).	Standardized testing is inherently discriminatory and harmful. (p. 6)	n/a

CONCEPT MAP

Where does Interactive Media belong?



ORGANIZE & WRITE

- **Structured around research question**
- **Provides rationale for your study**
- **How do you build on/depart from existing work?**

Purpose: situate/justify your work

TYPICAL ORGANIZATION

- **Intro**
 - Introduce your topic/question & mention main trends
- **Body**
 - Thematic discussion related to your question: what there is & where the gaps are
 - Individual studies if important
- **Conclusion**
 - Summarize most important points
 - Connect to your research explicitly, show gap

QUESTIONS?

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