

Criteria for Evaluating Web Pages

Use the following criteria and questions to evaluate Websites for use in your research:

Evaluation of Web Documents	How to Interpret the Basics
<p>1. Currency of Web Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When was it produced/updated? • How up-to-date are the links (if any)? 	<p>Currency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the information on the page current enough for what you are researching? • Outdated or dead Web links might be a tip off that the site is not updated regularly.
<p>2. Reliability of Web Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the information consistent with factual information from books and other print sources? • Who published the document and is it separate from the "Webmaster?" • Does the creator provide references or sources for data or quotations? • Is there an editor or someone who verifies/checks the information? • Is the information reliable and error-free? 	<p>Reliability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure author provides e-mail or a contact address/phone number. • Know the distinction between an author and a Webmaster. • Are there citations or a bibliography? • Reliable pages should look professional and be error-free.
<p>3. Authority of Web Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the credentials of the author or publisher? • Check the domain of the document, what institution publishes this document? • Does the publisher list his or her qualifications? 	<p>Authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The author(s) should list their credentials. • Where is the document published? Scholarly and academic journals are a sign of professionalism. • Check URL domain. (.edu/.gov/.org/etc.)
<p>4. Purpose/Point of View of Web Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What goals/objectives/agenda does this page meet? • How detailed is the information? • What opinions (if any) are expressed by the author? 	<p>Purpose/Point of View</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if page is a cover-up for advertising; if so, information might be biased. • Ask yourself why was this written and for whom?

Putting it all together:

- **Currency.** If your page is current and updated regularly (as stated on the page), the links (if any) are also up-to-date, and . . .
- **Reliability.** If your page lists the author and institution that published the page, provides a way of contacting him/her, is error free and . . .
- **Authority.** If your page lists the author(s) credentials and its domain is preferred (.edu, .gov,.org), and, . . .
- **Purpose/Point of View.** If your page provides accurate information with limited advertising and is objective in presenting the information (unbiased)....then

You may have a Webpage that could be of value to your research!