Guide to Evaluating Web Pages

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| **Evaluation of Web documents** | **How to interpret the basics** |
| **1. Accuracy of Web Documents**   * Who wrote the page and can you contact him or her? * What is the purpose of the document and why was it produced? * Is this person qualified to write this document? | **Accuracy**   * Make sure author provides e-mail or a contact address/phone number. * Know the distinction between author and Webmaster. |
| **2. Authority of Web Documents**   * Who published the document and is it separate from the "Webmaster?" * Check the domain of the document, what institution publishes this document? * Does the publisher list his or her qualifications? | **Authority**   * What credentials are listed for the author(s)? * Where is the document published? * Check URL domain. |
| **3. Objectivity of Web Documents**   * What goals/objectives does this page meet? * How detailed is the information? * What opinions (if any) are expressed by the author? | **Objectivity**   * Determine if page is a mask for advertising; if so information might be biased. * View any Web page as you would an infommercial on television. * Ask yourself why was this written and for whom? |
| **4. Currency of Web Documents**   * When was it produced? * When was it updated? * How up-to-date are the links (if any)? | **Currency**   * How many dead links are on the page? * Are the links current or updated regularly? * Is the information on the page outdated? |
| **5. Coverage of the Web Documents**   * Are the links (if any) evaluated and do they complement the documents theme? * Is it all images or a balance of text and images? * Is the information presented cited correctly? | **Coverage**   * If page requires special software to view the information, how much are you missing if you don't have the software? * Is it free, or is there a fee, to obtain the information? * Is there an option for text only, or frames, or a suggested browser for better viewing? |
| **Putting it all together**   * **Accuracy.** If your page lists the author and institution that published the page and provides a way of contacting him/her, and... * **Authority.**If your page lists the author credentials and its domain is preferred (.edu, .gov, .org, or .net), and... * **Objectivity.** If your page provides accurate information with limited advertising and it is objective in presenting the information, and... * **Currency.** If your page is current and updated regularly (as stated on the page) and the links (if any) are also up-to-date, and... * **Coverage.** If you can view the information properly-not limited to fees, browser technology, or software requirement, then...   **You may have a higher quality Web page that could be of value to your research.** | |