EVALUATING WEB PAGES CHECKLIST

QUESTIONS TO ASK WEB SEARCH RESULTS

WHAT'S AT STAKE? HOW RELIABLE DOES MY INFORMATION HAVE TO BE?
- "Good enough" is good enough ✍ Involves money, laws, health ✍ Acceptable to my instructor

WHAT CAN THE URLs TELL YOU, IN THE SEARCH RESULTS LIST?
- Who "published" it? Look at the URL up to first /
- Is it a personal page? Look for **~ % members aol geocities users**
- What type of organization is behind it? Would limiting to certain types help? **site:org OR site:gov**
- non-profit (**org**) univ/college (**edu**) gov/t (**gov, mil, us**) a business (**com**) foreign (**uk, jp,** etc.)

WHAT CAN THE PERIMETER OF THE PAGE TELL ME?
- Who or what agency is the **author**?
- What **values** do they stand for?
- What are their **credentials**? What right to offer an opinion? Why believe them?
- What is their **bias**?
  "About us" "Sponsors" "Philosophy" "Biography" "Who am I" No background info
  If none of the above, truncate back the URL one / at a time.
- Is it current/recent enough?
  Last updated date old   Date in a news site too old   Date in URL may help   No date

DOES THE CONTENT APPEAR GOOD QUALITY?
- Are **sources documented** in footnotes, or links outside that work?
- **Links to more information**? Any **dead links**?
- Links to **other points of view**?
- Black/violent background or other evidence of **hype/trash/ranting**?

WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT THE PAGE?
- Who links to it? Who owns it?   Paste the URL into **http://alexa.com**
- **Google the author's name** and see what company you're in

WHY WAS IT PUT ON THE WEB? WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PAGE?
  inform with facts/data? share/disclose? entice/sell? explain/persuade? dupe/rant/satire?

OTHER SEARCH ENGINES FOR SECOND OPINIONS:
- **search.yahoo.com**
- **ask.com**

TRY IN SUBJECT DIRECTORIES – SMALLER, CHOSEN BY HUMANS, NOT COMPUTER ROBOT PROGRAMS
- **Infomine** (http://infomine.ucr.edu)
- **Librarians' Internet Index** (http://lii.org)
- **Google Directory** (http://directory.google.com)