

Checklist for Evaluating Web Pages*

Accuracy

- Who is the author? Is there contact information for the author? Email address? Contact address? Phone number?
- Does the information provide enough detail?
- Is the author different from the Webmaster?
- Is the page well organized? Does it load well? Are the ideas clearly stated? Is the language used appropriate to the purpose of the page?

Authority

- Who published the page? What kind of institution is hosting the page?
- What are the author's credentials or qualifications?
- What kind of activities is the hosting institution engaged in?

Objectivity

- Is the information presented balanced? Is it free from bias?
- Does the information represent fact or opinion? If opinion, whose? If fact, how can you be sure it's reliable? Where did the facts come from?
- Is there evidence that the information is well researched or documented?
- Why was the page written? For whom was the page written?
- Is there any bias in the information? Is there any reason to suspect a bias, i.e., the business of the publishing institution or the author?
- Is the page trying to persuade you in any way? If so, how?
- Is the page trying to sell you anything? If so, how obviously?

Currency

- When was the page published? Has it been updated?
- Is the page (or the update) recent enough to be useful to your topic?
- Are the links current? Is there evidence that the links are checked and updated regularly?
- Are there any dead links? Does this suggest anything to you?
- Is the information on the page current and still relevant?

Coverage

- Does the information focus on a geographical area or a specific time period?
- Is the information well focused around a topic?
- Do the links found on the page complement the page theme? Were they carefully chosen?
- Are there any annotations for the provided links?
- Is the information presented in an appropriate balance of text and images?
- Is a fee required to obtain the information? If so, why?

*Adapted from the following sources:

Five Colleges of Ohio Research Tutorial, <http://www.denison.edu/ohio5/infolit/efaluate> and
<http://www.densison.edu/ohio5/infolit/b5webresearch/web8.htm> , <accessed 9/25/00>

Kapoun, Jim. 1998. Teaching undergrads Web evaluation: a guide for library instruction, *College & Research Libraries News*, v. 59 (July/Aug.), 522-3.

Web Site Analysis, <http://www.hamline.edu/library/bush/handouts/webanal.htm>, <accessed 5/12/99>