



Internet web sites must be evaluated just like any other resource. Most resources in a library have already been evaluated for you to some extent, but when using Internet web sites you become solely responsible for the evaluation of the resource. You will need to determine if the information on the web site is appropriate for academic research: Is the information current? Is the author qualified to write on the topic presented? What is the purpose of the web site? Is the web site objective? Is the information presented accurately? These are some of the questions you must answer when evaluating an Internet web site.

Criterion #1: CURRENCY

1. Is the information up to date?
2. When was the web site last modified?
3. Are there dead links on the web site?

Criterion #2: AUTHORITY

1. What are the credentials of the author and are they clearly presented?
2. What is the author's affiliation? Is the author affiliated with a university or other respected institution or organization?
3. Did the author cite the references he or she used on the web site?
4. Is information provided so that you may contact the author?

Criterion #3: PURPOSE

1. Is the information provided for commercial purposes? Informational purposes? Educational purposes? Persuasive purposes? As entertainment? Is it a hoax?
2. Is the web site on a preferred domain such as .gov or .edu? Government and educational web sites are preferred for academic research purposes.
3. Is the web site domain a .net, .org, or .com? Be careful and watch for bias when using information on these domains.

Criterion #4: OBJECTIVITY

1. Is the information on the web site biased? Does it only present one viewpoint?
2. Is the author associated with a biased institution or organization?
3. Is the web site free of advertising and "screen junk"? Advertising and screen clutter may indicate a bias.

Criterion #5: WRITING STYLE

1. Is the writing clear?
2. Is the website free of grammatical, spelling and other errors?