

WEB PAGE EVALUATION

Five Criteria for Evaluating Web Pages

Evaluation of Web Documents	How to Interpret the Basics
1. Accuracy of Web Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Make sure the author provides an e-mail or contact information ❖ Know the distinction between author and Webmaster
2. Authority of Web Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Who published the document and is it separate from the “Webmaster?” ❖ Check the domain of the document, what institution publishes this document? 	Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ What credentials are listed for the author(s)? ❖ Where is the document published? Check URL domain - preferred domain (.edu, .gov, .net, .org)
3. Objectivity of Web Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ What goals/objectives does this page meet? ❖ How detailed is the information? ❖ What opinions (if any) are expressed by the author? 	Objectivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Determine if page is a mask for advertising; if so information might be biased. ❖ View any Web page as you would an infomercial on television. Ask yourself why was this written and for whom?
4. Currency of Web Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ When was it produced? ❖ When was it updated? ❖ How up-to-date are the links (if any)? 	Currency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 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 ❖ Is the information on the page outdated?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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Accuracy - If the page lists the author and institution that published the page and provides a way of contacting him/her ❖ Authority - If the page lists the author credentials and its domain is preferred (.edu, .gov, .net, .org, etc.) ❖ Objectivity - If the page provides accurate information with limited advertising and it is objective in presenting the information ❖ Currency - If the page is current and updated regularly (as stated on the page) and the links (if any) are also up-to-date ❖ Coverage - If information can be viewed properly – not limited to fees, browser technology, or software requirement 	

* Document courtesy of Prairie State College Library

* Kapoun, Jim. “Teaching Undergrads Web Evaluation.” College & Research Libraries News, v. 59, N7 (July/August 1998):522-523