Evaluating Internet Resources

Authority

- Be sure there is an author and that he/she is qualified to speak on the subject.
- Know the difference between an author and a compiler or webmaster.
  1. Who wrote the page?
  2. Can you contact the author?
  3. Are the author’s credentials listed?
  4. Do the credentials suggest a bias?
  5. Do the credentials qualify the author?

Accuracy

- Be sure the information/facts presented are documented.
- Check that the information/facts presented can be backed up or supported by other sources.
  1. Are the links relevant, current, and working?
  2. Is the information cited?
  3. Has the author utilized correct grammar and spelling?

Bias/Objectivity

- Be sure the page is not a mask for advertising.
- Be sure the author distinguishes facts from opinions.
  1. What is the purpose of the document? To inform? To sell? To persuade?
  2. How detailed is the information?
  3. Who is the intended audience?

Currency

- Check at the end of the document to verify that the page is recently/regularly updated.
  1. When was the document created/last updated?
  2. Are there dead links?
  3. Is the information outdated?

Design & Site Navigation

- Check the overall organization and usefulness of the site.
- Be sure that all of the site’s features are usable and not limited by browser capabilities or software requirements.
  1. Is the site logically arranged?
  2. Is the text easy to read against the background?
  3. Do the pages load in a reasonable amount of time?
  4. If special software required to view the information on the site?