



# Evaluating Web Pages

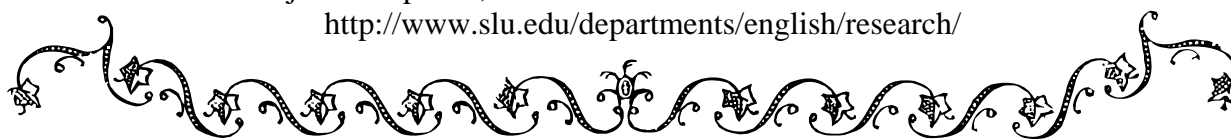
Bismarck State College Library Pathfinder

Web Address: <http://www.bismarckstate.edu/library/>



The World Wide Web has a lot to offer, but not all resources are equally valuable or reliable. Here are some points to consider. For additional points regarding Web sites for subject disciplines, see "A Student's Guide to Research with the Web."

<http://www.slu.edu/departments/english/research/>



Five criteria for evaluating Web pages	
Evaluation of Web documents	How to interpret the basics
<p><b>1. Accuracy of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who wrote the page and can you contact him or her?</li> <li>What is the purpose of the document and why was it produced?</li> <li>Is this person qualified to write this document?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accuracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure author provides e-mail or a contact address/phone number.</li> <li>Know the distinction between author and Webmaster.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Authority of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who published the document and is it separate from the "Webmaster?"</li> <li>Check the domain of the document. What institution publishes this document?</li> <li>Does the publisher list his or her qualifications?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Authority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What credentials are listed for the author(s)?</li> <li>Where is the document published? Check URL domain.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Objectivity of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What goals/objectives does this page meet?</li> <li>How detailed is the information?</li> <li>What opinions (if any) are expressed by the author?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objectivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine if page is a mask for advertising; if so, information might be biased.</li> <li>View any Web page as you would an infomercial on television. Ask yourself why was this written and for whom?</li> </ul>

<p><b>4. Currency of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When was it produced?</li> <li>• When was it updated?</li> <li>• How up-to-date are the links (if any)?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Currency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the information on the page outdated?</li> <li>• Are the links current or updated regularly?</li> <li>• How many dead links are on the page?</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Coverage of the Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the links (if any) evaluated, and do they complement the document's theme?</li> <li>• Is it all images or a balance of text and images?</li> <li>• Is the information presented cited correctly?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Coverage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If page requires special software to view the information, how much are you missing if you don't have the software?</li> <li>• Is it free, or is there a fee to obtain the information?</li> <li>• Is there an option for text only, or frames, or a suggested browser for better viewing?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Putting it all together</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accuracy.</b> If your page lists the author and institution that published the page and provides a way of contacting him/her, and;</li> <li>• <b>Authority.</b> If your page lists the author credentials and its domain is preferred (.edu, .gov, .org, or .net), and;</li> <li>• <b>Objectivity.</b> If your page provides accurate information with limited advertising and it is objective in presenting the information, and;</li> <li>• <b>Currency.</b> If your page is current and updated regularly (as stated on the page) and the links (if any) are also up-to-date, and;</li> <li>• <b>Coverage.</b> If you can view the information properly—not limited to fees, browser technology, or software requirement, then;</li> </ul> <p><b>You may have a higher quality Web page that could be of value to your research!</b></p>	

("Five Criteria for Evaluating Web Pages" Source: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/undwebev.html>)

[www.better-whois.com](http://www.better-whois.com)

**Search for registration information for a domain name (i.e. web address).**

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Registrant             | • Record's last update     |
| • Domain Name            | • Record's expiration date |
| • Administrative Contact | • Record's creation date   |
| • Billing Contact        | • Database's last update   |
| • Technical Contact      | • Background Information   |

**Selected BSC Library resources:**

**ODIN: Online Dakota Information Network: <http://odinlibrary.org/nbj.html>**

The following resources were located by searching ODIN. ODIN is Bismarck State College's online library catalog. You can use it to search for books, videos, compact discs, and other library materials.

Writing Research Papers: Investigating Resources in Cyberspace  
Web Wisdom: How to Evaluate and Create Information Quality on the Web

Reference  
Main Collection

LB 2369 .W66 1999  
TK 5105.888 .A376 1999