

Linscheid Library User Information Beware of Internet Resources!!



In the course of your research you will encounter an infinite number of Internet resources. They can be wonderful resources for research papers, but the fact is anyone can publish **ANYTHING** on the Web, so don't believe everything you read. It is up to you to critically evaluate the quality of material on the Web. Use the following criteria to make sure an Internet source is appropriate for your research:

Accuracy

- How reliable and error free is the information?
- If the information is presented as factual, what kind of documentation or references are provided?

Authority

- Is the author of the source identified?
- What kind of qualifications does the author have?
- Are they an expert in the field?
- Is a credible sponsoring institution cited?
- Is there a link back to the sponsoring institution's home page?

Objectivity

- Is the site designed in to inform, persuade, or sell?
- Is personal bias apparent?

Currency

- How recently was the site created or updated?
- Are links updated in a timely manner?

Types of Web sites

- There are many different types of Web sites. Some Web pages provide information or news; some attempt to influence public opinion or sell products; some are meant to entertain; other are simply personal pages.

- Many Web pages may blur the line between entertainment, information, and marketing/advertising.
- Below are several broad categories of Web sites which can be distinguished by the letters at the end of the Web address. These letters are a clue as to what type of Web site you are visiting:

.edu -----refers to a U.S. college or university

.cc.(state).us -----refers to a community college

.k12.(state).us -----refers to a school with grades K-12.

.gov -----refers to a government agency, official or organization

.com -----refers to a business or commercial enterprise

.org -----refers to a non-profit organization or trade association

.mil -----refers to a military site

.net -----refers to a network administration organization

If you need further assistance, please see a reference librarian.

Sources:

Betsy Richmond, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire

OASIS, Courtesy of San Francisco State University