

• **Checklist for Evaluating Web Resources**

Is the Web a good research tool? This question is dependent on the researcher's objective. As in traditional print resources one must use a method of critical analysis to determine its value. Here is a checklist for evaluating web resources to help in that determination.

Authority:

- Is the information reliable?
- Check the author's credentials and affiliation. Is the author an expert in the field?
- Does the resource have a reputable organization or expert behind it?
- Are the sources of information stated? Can you verify the information?
- Can the author be contacted for clarification?
- Check for organizational or author biases.

Scope:

- Is the material at this site useful, unique, accurate or is it derivative, repetitious, or doubtful?
- Is the information available in other formats?
- Is the purpose of the resource clearly stated? Does it fulfill its purpose?
- What items are included in the resource? What subject area, time period, formats or types of material are covered?
- Is the information factual or opinion?
- Does the site contain original information or simply links?
- How frequently is the resource updated?
- Does the site have clear and obvious pointers to new content?

Format and Presentation:

- Is the information easy to get to? How many links does it take to get to something useful?
- What is the quality of the graphical images? Do these images enhance the resource or distract from the content?
- Is the target audience or intended users clearly indicated?
- Is the arrangement of links uncluttered?
- Does the site have its own search engine?
- Is the site easily browsable or searchable?

Cost and Accessibility:

- Is the site available on a consistent basis?
- Is response time fast?
- Does the site have a text-based alternative?
- How many links lead to a dead-end?
- Is this a fee-based site? Can non-members still have access to part of the site?
- Must you register a name and password before using the site?