Internet Site Evaluation Criteria

Accuracy (Truthfulness)

- Is the information accurate? Is it reliable and error-free?
- Is there an editor or someone who verifies or checks the information?
- Is there evidence to support the conclusions? Can you find other sources that support the conclusions?
- Do the authors list their sources or references?

Authority (Expertise)

- Is there an author? Is the author qualified and credible? An expert in their field?
- Is there a sponsoring organization or institution? Is the sponsor of the page reputable and credible?
- Is there a link to information about the author or the sponsor?
- If the page does not have an author or sponsor, is there any other way to determine its origin?
  - Look for a header or footer showing affiliation.
  - Look at the URL. (http://www.fbi.gov)
  - Look at the domain. (.edu, .com, .gov, .org, .net)

Objectivity (Fairness, with all sides being presented equally)

- What is the purpose of the information? What does the author want to accomplish?
- Does the purpose affect how the information is presented?
- Is the information directed toward a particular audience (general public, scholars, etc.)?
- Is the information biased (show partiality or favoritism toward an idea)? Persuasive?
- Is the information fact or opinion?
- Does the site ask you to donate money or purchase something?
Currency *(Being up-to-date)*

- Is the information current? Does it need to be current, such as medical information or news items? Is it still valid?
- Is the page dated? If so, when was the last update?
- How current are the links? Have some expired or moved?
- Is there newer information on this topic available from another resource?

Coverage *(Important and necessary for your topic)*

- What topics are covered? Is the information relevant to your topic and assignment?
- Does this resource give you unique information? What does this page offer that is not found elsewhere?
- How in-depth is the information? Are there other sources that support this information?

Check for:

- **Spelling errors and bad grammar**
- **Important facts that are missing**
- **Angry, hateful or critical writing**
- **Information that cannot be proven**
- **Exaggerations, such as: “Millions of people die…”**
- **Links that take you nowhere**
- **Vague statements or generalizations with no facts or sources to back them up**