

## Evaluating Web Sites

Regardless of your topic, you will likely find many web sites devoted to it—the challenging part is finding a good web site with quality information. When doing research, especially academic, it is *your* responsibility to evaluate the web sites you use. This chart gives you concepts—as easy as ABC—to keep in mind when looking at web sites.

A	Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Who is the author?</li> <li>▪ Is there information on the author’s credentials and expertise?</li> <li>▪ Is the author an expert or knowledgeable on the topic?</li> <li>▪ Does the author use facts and numbers appropriately?</li> <li>▪ Can they be verified?</li> <li>▪ What sources are they from and are they used accurately?</li> </ul>
B	Bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the intent of the page?</li> <li>▪ Is it to educate? Or, is to sell something?</li> <li>▪ Do you see unscrupulous motives behind the website?</li> <li>▪ Is more than one side of the topic presented?</li> <li>▪ Are the various views given equal treatment?</li> <li>▪ Who or what organization maintains the web site?</li> </ul>
C	Currency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When was the topic written about? (which is not always the same as when the page was updated)</li> <li>▪ Are they using recent information or is the supporting data out of date?</li> <li>▪ Is the site still maintained and is new information added on a regular basis?</li> </ul>

### Getting Help

The library **Reference librarians** can help you with these questions and offer other resources, such as books and library databases. Evaluating web sites can be challenging, but Reference librarians are available to help you in a number of ways:

- In person at the reference desk
- By phone at (501) 569-8806 or (800) 340-9367
- Online at <http://library.ualr.edu/services/askreference>

There are also resources on the library home page: <http://library.ualr.edu>.