Guidelines for Evaluating Internet Sites
Indian River State College Libraries

Authority
Credibility of site
- Did you examine the headers, the footers, and the site address to locate the sponsor?
- Is the sponsor noted for expertise in the subject area?
- Did you note the site’s affiliation?

Be aware of misleading URL’s. For example, www.harvard.com is not Harvard University.

.aero - aviation, air travel
.arts - cultural
.biz - businesses
.com - commercial
.coop - business/cooperatives
.edu - educational
.firm - businesses
.gov - governmental
.info - libraries, newspapers, info sites
.int - international
.mil - military
.museum - museums, archives, exhibitions
.name - individuals
.net - networked organizations
.nom - individuals
.org - non-profit organizations
.pro - doctors, lawyers, licensed professionals
.rec - recreational
.store - companies selling
.web - World Wide Web

-Are the authors field experts with credentials?
-Is the site archived electronically?
-Does the site provide a link to the creator of the page so questions can be asked?
-Has the site has been rated or received awards? If so, what criteria were followed for the rating/award?
-Does the site provide a link back to a reputable home page?

Content
Availability of resource
- Is the site accessible via multiple Internet pages?
- Is the information reproduced in other formats (print, online, CD-ROM, etc.)?

Comprehensive or unique
- What is the purpose of the site?
- Who is the intended audience?
-Does the site provide new information?
-Is the information based on "fact" or "opinion"?
-Does the site cover the subject well?
-Is the information unavailable elsewhere?
-Is the information comparable to information found at similar sites?
-Is the source full-text?
-Is the Internet version the most current or the most complete version?
Currency
-Does the site provide links to newer content, if subject updated?
-Is the site updated on a regular basis?
-Is the site visited often?
-Does the site indicate when page created or updated?

Ease of Use
-Is the site easy to access? Use the 3-click rule.
-Can logon can be scripted?
-Are search techniques similar to other sites?
-Is user help available online?
-Is user support available?
-Are instructions easily grasped?
-Is the page logically organized?

Accessibility
-Is the site available on a consistent basis?
-Is there a text-based alternative?
-Does the site have a quick response time?

Search Engine
-Are clear instructions, Boolean capabilities, and keyword searching available?
-Is the output well formatted and understood?
-Are searches ranked by relevance?

Design
-Are the graphics well placed?
-Is the layout easy to follow?
-Is the layout uncluttered?
-Does the page have a sense of color and style?
-Does the site provide links to navigate throughout the page?
-Is the information displayed legibly?
-Do added features (graphics, sound, etc.) enhance or inhibit use of the site?
-Is there a text based alternative?
-Does the site have helpful design features?

Cost and Copyright
-Are subscription or access costs reasonable and justified?
-Is it easy to comply with restrictions on duplication and dissemination?

Hardware and Software
-Will you have to change your hardware and software?