Slide 1 – Title: Evaluating Online Information
Graphic for MATC Libraries - Wolf and Book

Slide 2 - closed captions
To turn on the closed captions for this tutorial, click the "CC" button on the playback control.

Slide 3 - Intro Matt & Libraries
Hi, I'm Matt, one of the librarians at Madison College, where we help you find, access and evaluate the information you need for your assignments. Graphic: photo of Matt

Slide 4 - Internet Info. The internet provides easy access to some 8+ billion web pages. And although there are governing bodies for the architecture and infrastructure of the internet, web content varies from highly reliable and credible to unreliable and erroneous sites. Some sights even stray into hate speech. Graphic: screenshot webpage kids Koal corner

Slide 5 - Tutorial Info
This tutorial presents criteria for determining whether or not you ought to consider using a website for a college-level assignment. Graphic: photo of student in library

Slide 6 - Choose Web Sources. For some research assignments, instructors might choose to limit the number of web sources that you may cite. Instructors want you to expand your research beyond the web and to make you highly selective as you choose which web sources to use. Graphic: notecards image and web sources example.
Slide 7 - ABCDE of Web Evaluation. For that reason, Andy will use the A, B, C, D, and E method for evaluating Websites. Graphic ABCDE

Slide 8 – Authority. The first of these, A, stands for AUTHORITY. Why is this author or organization considered a reliable source for information on this topic? Graphic: A = authority

Slide 9 - Establish Authority. When you are searching for reliable and credible information on the web, the first consideration should be to establish the authority of the website. In other words, what can we determine about the website’s author or the organization behind the web page that suggests that this is a good source for information on our topic? Graphic: website screenshot

Slide 10 - About And Authors. In addition, what is the nature of the content that is presented and where did the authors of the site get that information? A good first step is to examine links on sites labeled ‘About us’, ‘Who we are’, or ‘Mission’. Graphic: Website Screenshot with links highlighted for information about the authors.

Slide 11 - About Locations. On some pages, for example, an ‘about us’ section will be located near the top of the page. Others, like this one, have information about the page and the organization located at the bottom. Graphic: website with About Us links and information.

Slide 12 - Authoratative Sites. Often, you will encounter one of two common problems: One, a web article or page might list an author, but there will be no information about that contributor. The other is that no author name is provided. This page on the Cuban Missile Crisis does give an author... ...and a brief author bio – and he happens to be a Harvard Historian. Text Captions: NO Author! Graphic: Cuban Missile Crisis website screenshots
Slide 13 - EPA Mission. More commonly, you will have an author without credentials. In those cases, find out what you can about the website or the organization or its mission. In other words, why is this information being offered? Graphics: EPA website screenshots.

Slide 14 – Entertain. Another consideration in determining authority is purpose. Is the primary purpose of the page to entertain those who visit? Or… Graphics: Screenshots of webpage with news about Prince William and Mary’s website

Slide 15 - Boost
Do those who created the website intend to inform readers?
Graphic: screenshot of Jimmy Carter Library and Museum website

Slide 16. If a site exists for information purposes, one way to boost authority is attribute the information to its source within the text. Source can also reference information using hyperlinks to their sources, and some provide a list of references at the end of pages. Graphic: Screenshot of website with hyperlinks and references.

Slide 17 - Considering each source
So with each site you consider as a potential source for your assignments… Graphic: Better Business Bureau website. Text Captions: Look for: About Us

Slide 18
Examine the organization's mission to discover why the site exists, and as much information as you can gather about those who offer the information and how their motives might influence the site's content.
Slide 19 - Click Quiz 1

Text Captions: QUIZ Question 1

Which of the two following websites do you think is more authoritative for information about Voter Fraud?

*see next slide*

Slide 20 - The first site is michellemalkin.com, a blog that covers politics and social issues by syndicated columnist Michelle Malkin.

Text Captions: Site ONE

http://michellemalkin.com

Slide 21 - Site TWO is the web page for the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University, brennancenter.org, named after the late justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, William J. Brennan. Here’s an excerpt from their mission statement. Text Captions:

http://www.brennancenter.org

Site TWO

Slide 22

Which would you consider to be more authoritative on the subject of 'Voter Fraud' and 'Voting Rights'. Which site do you believe is MORE authoritative?

Slide 23 - Authority Feedback

Therefore the Brennan Center’s authority in speaking on Voter Fraud is far more credible.

Slide 24 - Bias

Next on our list is bias.

B = Bias

Offers only that information that supports a particular point of view
Biased sources tend to:
- Omit facts that contradict the source’s conclusions
- Opinion as fact
- Emotion, rather than reason
- Stereotypes and exaggeration
- Little factual evidence

Even if a site, like this one from PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, does not intend to misinform or mislead page visitors, we have to wonder whether or not it will present different points of view on experimental uses of animals in its coverage of topics. Graphic: PETA home page with spoof ads for McDonalds, the olympics, and other organizations who PETA argues are cruel to animals.

Other webpages go further by deliberately misinforming or misleading site visitors. Look beyond these opinionated pages to see who might stand to gain from confusing the debate on important issues.

Least Biased. On the other hand, sites that are based upon research, those that offer conclusions based upon scientific evidence are the least biased. Sites like these should be your first choice for information from the web. TextCaptions: "...according to a report issued by Purdue University..."

Which of the following two sites appears to be the least biased more trustworthy on the subject of the ‘Fiscal cliff’?
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Slide 31 - Tax Policy Site
Text Captions: Site TWO

Slide 32. Click on the site that seems less biased!

Slide 33 - Feedback on Bias Q
The tax policy center presents fact-based information and none of the inflammatory, emotional appeal of the first site from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Text Captions: Site Two Exhibits Less Bias

Slide 34 - The letter C in our model, relates to currency.
Text Captions: C = Currency
Is this information up-to-date?

Slide 35 - Time-sensitive topics. When researching some topics, like those in the news, for trends in health, or for technology topics, it’s important to make certain the information you find is up-to-date or has recently been updated. Graphics: website regarding Hurricane in New York.

Slide 36 - Tech Topics
A few years can seem ancient when it comes to the internet and tech topics such as video games. Graphics: Screenshot of Microsoft’s website
Slide 37 - Digitized Past Info. Whereas other sites, such as this one that offers digitized, historical information, or if you are researching a current topic, yet are in need of background information, like on this site that details the history of players identified in doping scandals. In those instances, older material serves your purposes quite well.

Text Captions: Digitized Documents of an Historical Event

Slide 38. It would be MOST important for which type of Website to have frequent updates?
A  A site that hosts content from the Ronald Reagan archives  
B  A site that provides census data from the last U.S. Census in 2002  
C  A fan site for Paris Hilton  
D  A site that gives updates on the progress of legislation  
E  A site that shows enrollment trends at Madison College from 2005-2009

Slide 39 - Domain

The 'D' in our model, refers to a Website's domain name.

Text Captions: D = Domain

Indicates the type of organization that sponsors the site

Slide 40 - Types of domains

More common examples of domain names include, .org, .gov, .edu, and .com


Slide 41 - World Wildlife .org is one example of the .org domain name. In general, .org's tend to be non-profit organizations, although this is not always the case.

Text Captions and Graphics: worldwildlife.org Photo Tiger

Slide 42. - Web addresses with .gov are reserved for state and federal governmental agencies and entities. Generally, you can use the facts, reports, and statistical information from .gov sites for your assignments with confidence.

Graphic; Web site, National institutes of health.
Slide 43 - Edu sites are sponsored by colleges and universities. Some of the content, like this page from UW-Madison's digital collection would prove extraordinarily useful for an assignment. Do check whether the site is a creation of a student or if comes from experts and their research. Graphic: pages from the UW Digital collection.

Text Captions: http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/

Slide 44 - .com domain. .Com is short for commercial. Some .com sites make it very clear that the site's purpose is to promote a product or directly sell products and services. Quite often, however, a site might provide information on the topic you're researching, such as this site, Web MD. It's probably worth being skeptical of a site that both informs us about and promotes a product at the same time. Graphic: IPhone web site with pictures from IPhones Text Captions: An advertisement for the medication www.apple.com www.webmd.com

Slide 45 - External verification. The last of our criteria is external verification. What tools does the Website provide so that you can check the information against other sources?

Slide 46 - Get the Facts – Texting. When you are searching for information on popular topics in the news, you may encounter advocacy sites like this one that offer relevant data on your topic. Text Captions: www.focusdriven.org Graphic: screenshot of webpage = get the facts focusdriven.org

Slide 47 - Data on Texting

This .org site does reference the source of its statistics through a hyperlink to another page. Graphic: screenshot of .org site as described above

Slide 48 - Ref but no links

The link leads to a page where more information is given, but it provides no direct link to the original source.

Text Captions: SOURCE Information! Graphic: screenshot of webpage
Slide 49 - Distraction Site
On the other hand, this .gov site provides large, ‘read the research’ button…. Text Captions: distraction.gov
Graphic: Screen capture of .gov website with large button “read the research”.

Slide 50 - Links from Gov. Where you find direct links to more than two dozen research articles on distracted driving. In other words, this site is very up-front about where it is getting its highly credible information and makes it very easy to link to factual information to back up its claims. Text Captions: WEALTH of links to research!
Graphic: Screen capture of gov web site

Slide 51 – Web. Better sites will provide references for the information presented. Check to make sure the site has used its source material faithfully and accurately. Next, what other sites does your site link out to and which sites link to it? Are those sites reputable and credible? Finally, check the web to be sure the authors and editors of this page have the necessary credentials, or that they are recognized as experts in their fields. Before you accept the content that they offer. Graphic showing references, links, and a picture of common internet search engines.

Slide 52 - References
Ultimately, when you are given a research assignment, it is your responsibility to select the best information available. Graphics: page from the CIA world fact book, and Andy.

Slide 53 - Here to Help
Of course, if you need assistance, check with the information experts of Madison College Libraries. We’re here to help! Graphics: Photos of our librarians

Slide 54 - Quiz External V. Multiple Choice. If a web site makes it difficult to easily identify the source of its information:A You can Google to verify what a site states as fact B You should always trust the information if it’s a .org C The information is incorrect D It is probably because the source information is password-protected.
Slide 55
Text Captions: Quiz Result

Slide 56 - 5 Criteria review
Remember to apply these five criteria as you explore the Web, for the best resources for your topic.
Text Captions: A = Authority B = Bias C = Currency D = Domain E = External verification

Slide 57 - concluding slide
Graphic: Closing slide with Howler Logo from MATC Libraries. Text Captions: Thanks for viewing this HOWLER tutorial!