

LIB 004: Evaluating Information

Description:

How can you be sure that the resources you're using are appropriate for university-level assignments? This 50 minute workshop combines activities and discussions to guide you through the process of critically evaluating resources to determine their credibility.

Suggested Prerequisite: LIB 003 Searching: Databases

Outcomes:

By the end of the workshop you will be able to:

- Identify the characteristics of quality scholarly information
- Evaluate the credibility of different resource types, including articles, websites, etc.
- Evaluate the reliability of citation counts

Corresponding ACRL Frame:

- Frame "Authority is Constructed and Contextual". This frame focuses on the fact that "authority of information resources depends upon the resources' origins, the information need, and the context in which the information will be used." This workshop is intended to give students the skills to identify their information needs and match them with appropriate resources.

Audience Targeted:

- Aware Researchers, whether graduate or undergraduate, who have completed prerequisite LIB 003.

Topics:

This workshop includes the following topics:

- Determine the differences between academic research and non-academic research
- Evaluate the reliability of citation counts
- Determining the characteristics of scholarly resources using evaluative criteria, such as the CRAAP test (currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, purpose).
 - o How does currency differ, depending on your research field or topic?
 - o How do you determine an author's authority?
 - o How do the criteria change for different topics of study?

Activities:

Activity #1

The instructor will begin the class where LIB 003 ended; on the results page of a database, such as Web of Science or Scopus. The instructor will draw the students' attention to the Sort by Citation Feature, and pose the question "What Value Does a Citation Count Have?" to spark a discussion. Students may explore the idea of popularity vs. authority, citation counts to discount research ideas, etc.

Activity #2

The instructor will provide students with several print and electronic sources on a specific topic (e.g. religious studies) and pose the question "Would you use this resource for an academic assignment?" As a group, students will brainstorm a list of evaluation criteria for academic sources, which may include CRAAP criteria. Individually, students will use their criteria to evaluate sources before share the results with the group.

Type of Session:

Hands on, discussion.