

# Choosing Internet Resources

**WRITING SERVICES - UNCW - DEPAOLO HALL, 1ST FLOOR - 962-7857**

*While the internet can often provide you with an enormous amount of sources, some of the information can be incorrect or misleading. It is up to you to determine the difference between scholarly websites and deceptive imposters.*

## **Types of Search Engines**

If you use academic search engines like JSTOR or EBSCOHost, you are assured that the information is always scholarly. This means that the facts extracted from these sources are guaranteed to be legitimate.

If you use Google and Yahoo to search for your information, some sites are credible, but others are not. These Engines are not as specific or dependable as academic engines.

## **Website Credibility**

Before using an online source in your paper, you must first determine whether or not the website is credible.

Ask yourself: Is the page advertising something? Is the site political? These are signs that a site may be biased, dishonest or incorrect.

Homepages are not always a credible source. Any individual can paste false information on these sites.

Also ask yourself: Who is the author? Is it a credible scholarly source or someone who simply takes an interest in the subject? If a person is not a reliable expert on the topic, you will most likely want to avoid using information from his or her website.

There are ways of deciphering credible and misleading sources. For example, websites that end in **.edu** are posted by schools and universities. Sites ending in **.gov** are official government pages. By looking for this sort of official webpage, you will ensure that your sources are reliable.

## **Other Ways to Investigate the Validity of Source**

Look up links, references, works cited pages, and the biographical information of the author (if a source has no references or works cited, it is likely that it is **not** a credible source for an academic paper!).

Double check your information.

Do not use sources that you are not positive are correct.

If the information in one source is different than all other sources, investigate the material thoroughly.

Try to find more than one source on the subject. If possible, backup an individual's online claim by finding the same information in a scholarly source.