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Northwestern College
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Evaluating Your Sources

Students must make wise choices when they are conducting college-level research. Not all sources are credible, valuable, timely, or relevant. Both print and online research sources must be evaluated. Use critical thinking skills to choose resources and use information correctly.

Start your research by using the Edward G. Schumacher Memorial Library's print and online resources. Librarians have evaluated and chosen the resources that will be useful for all academic programs. Use the Oasis online catalog and the online databases to find Library books and [scholarly articles](https://nc.edu/explore-nc/library/): <https://nc.edu/explore-nc/library/>.

Be very careful of the credibility of internet resources that you find while using the Google search engine. Wikipedia is an example of an online source that is not an appropriate research source. A 'wiki' site is one that may be edited by anyone. Your research sources should be written by scholars or others who are recognized as being knowledgeable in their academic fields.

When evaluating a website, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who is responsible for the website? What are their credentials?
- Is the website current?
- Can you contact the website's creator?
- Are there links to further information? Do the links work?
- Is the information biased?
- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Is the information compatible with other reliable sources?
- Is the website humorous or satirical? If so, question its validity.
- Is the information as credible as the resources in your Library?

For more information and examples, try these resources:

- Book: *Student guide to research in the digital age : how to locate and evaluate information sources* (025.5 STEBBINS)
- Tutorial: [Evaluating Resources: Is your research CRAAP?](#)
- Tutorial: [Evaluating Information](#)

If you have any doubts about your resources, ask your instructor or librarian for assistance.