Website Evaluation Form

Instructions: Follow the URL provided by your instructor and evaluate the site with the given criteria (Accuracy, Credibility, Objectivity, Currency, Scope of Coverage, Stability -- see section 15d "Evaluating Internet Sites" in your Wadsworth Handbook for more detail on each of these.) keeping in mind the above scenario. Write out your responses in the space provided. You do not necessarily have to answer every question, but you should address the main points of each criterion. Then provide a ranking of the website for each criteria.

URL:

Accuracy: Is the site free of basic grammatical errors? Does it contain factual errors? Are there any references? Can the information be verified by other sources?

| Rating (1= not very accurate 5= very accurate): |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | n/a |
| (if n/a count as 5 in your final tally) |

Credibility: Who is responsible for the website? What are their credentials? Are their credentials relevant to the content? Is there a sponsoring organization and are their credentials relevant to the site’s content?

| Rating (1=not very credible 5=very credible): |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | n/a |
| (if n/a count as 5 in your final tally) |

Objectivity: Does a business or political organization sponsor the site? If so, what is their political affiliation? Who do they link to and what are their viewpoints? Is there any advertising?

Rating (1=not very objective 5=objective)
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1 2 3 4 5 n/a
(if n/a count as 5 in your final tally)

Currency: When was the site last updated? Are the links still working? Is the information on the site up-to-date?

Rating (1=not current 5=current):
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
(if n/a count as 5 in your final tally)

Scope of Coverage: How deeply does the site cover the topic? Does it provide information not available elsewhere? Is there a target audience and is this appropriate to your needs?

Rating (1=inadequate scope 5=adequate scope):
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
(if n/a count as 5 in your final tally)

Stability: How long has the site existed? Is it regularly updated? Is it sponsored by a reputable organization committed to financing it?

Rating (1=inadequate scope 5=adequate scope):
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
(if n/a count as 5 in your final tally)

This document prepared by Philip Smith, Nov. 2009
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Add up your ratings. How does this site score?

1-14 _______ Do not use
15-24 _______ May be okay, but consider finding a better source
25-30 _______ Acceptable source

Popular or Scholarly?
Overall, would you rate this website as more popular (1) or more scholarly (5)?

Rating:
1 2 3 4 5

Popular          Scholarly

Journalist, nonspecialist — Author — Specialist, PhD, Researcher

General Reader, Broad — Audience — Specialists, Focused

Flasy, colorful, pics/multimedia — Appearance — duller, few ads, dense text, charts

News, entertainment, more opinion — Content — Research, jargon, more objective

Few if any references — Documentation — lots of references and footnotes

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