

Encourage students to evaluate the quality of information sources

One strategy to use to encourage students to evaluate the quality of sources located in a data base search for an annotated bibliography is to require that students locate a larger number of potential scholarly sources for their annotated bibliography than will be required as the “minimum” number of scholarly sources cited in the final paper.

Additionally, you might require that each student identify 2-3 sources that they initially thought would be useful sources for the project but later decided that the sources were not relevant or were not useful. Ask students to explain in their annotated bibliography why the rejected source looked promising at first and then explain why the source was ultimately rejected as a suitable source.

When students identify and examine more materials than they are required to include in the final submission, they can break away from the habit of including every source they locate to meet minimum resource requirements for an assignment. Students can then begin to evaluate the merit of including these materials as cited sources. These decisions are an important component of the scholarly evaluation of source material.

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