



GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERNET ASSIGNMENTS

Many students spend vast amounts of time on the Internet yet do not understand its strengths and weaknesses. The following guidelines will help you design a successful Internet experience.

- Be clear about the educational purpose of the assignment and why the Internet is a good resource for accomplishing this purpose.
- We often hear students say that they are not allowed to use Internet or Web sources for an assignment. Students are not always adept at making distinctions between resources accessed via the Internet and the Internet itself. The library subscribes to, and pays for, many databases that are *accessed* via the Internet but are not available on the *free* Web. The Library's subscription databases provide quality information that is much easier to find and more reliable than the hit-or-miss Web searching students often do. The majority of our journals are available full text online.
- Give advice on evaluating the authority of the site. Just as with written materials, there is information that is excellent and information that is not useful. (An outstanding guide is at <http://library.albany.edu/usered/eval/evalweb/>)
- If you know the Web site address, provide it to your students. Check that it is still working no more than a week before you make the assignment. Have students give the date when they access a website for their answers in case it is no longer available.
- Allow sufficient time because computer terminals are limited on campus. If possible, have a variety of web sites to choose from in case one is down.
- Encourage your students to plan ahead. Computers are not always available when they want them and printers are often busy. (It also takes longer than the students realize to do research.)
- Inform the Library's Reference staff of your assignment so that we can be prepared. (<http://www.plu.edu/~libr/get-help/assignment-alert.html>)
- Schedule a librarian to speak to your class on doing research on the Internet and evaluating Internet resources (<http://www.plu.edu/~libr/get-help/request-library.html>) or contact Gail Egbers at 535-8869 or email at egbersgl@plu.edu for more information.