

# **Faculty of Community Services**

## **Academic Support & Resource Centre**

### **Finding Credible Sources**

*Because writing papers is an essential part of university life, knowing what a credible source is and where to find credible sources is essential knowledge. Read on to learn how to identify and find credible sources!*

#### **What is a credible source? What makes it credible?**

- Simply put, a credible source is a source that you can trust. This means that you have reason to believe that the author knows what they are discussing.

| <b>Credible</b>  | <b>Non-Credible</b>   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Journals by authors respected and well-known in their specific fields</li><li>✓ Websites from credible institutions such as the Mayo Clinic, Department of Justice, and University-affiliated institutions</li><li>✓ Materials published in the last ten years (when more recent information is available)</li><li>✓ Websites: The more information available, the more credible the website. Look to see if there is a specific author, the audience is clear, the purpose is informative and not biased, and the information is regularly updated. Also look for websites ending in .edu and .gov.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Blogs, Facebook posts, or other self-authored sites</li><li>✓ Research articles without citations</li><li>✓ Websites with information not from an author or governmental department</li><li>✓ Materials published over 15 years ago or that include theories that are clearly out-of-date</li><li>✓ Websites: There is not much information available. If the purpose is not informative but may have other motives, such as to persuade, the site may not be credible. The website is not regularly updated or the author is unreliable.</li></ul> |

(Retrieved from: University Writing Centre at Appalachian State University, 2013)

#### **How do I know if the source is credible?**

*Here are some questions you can ask yourself to determine if the source is credible...*

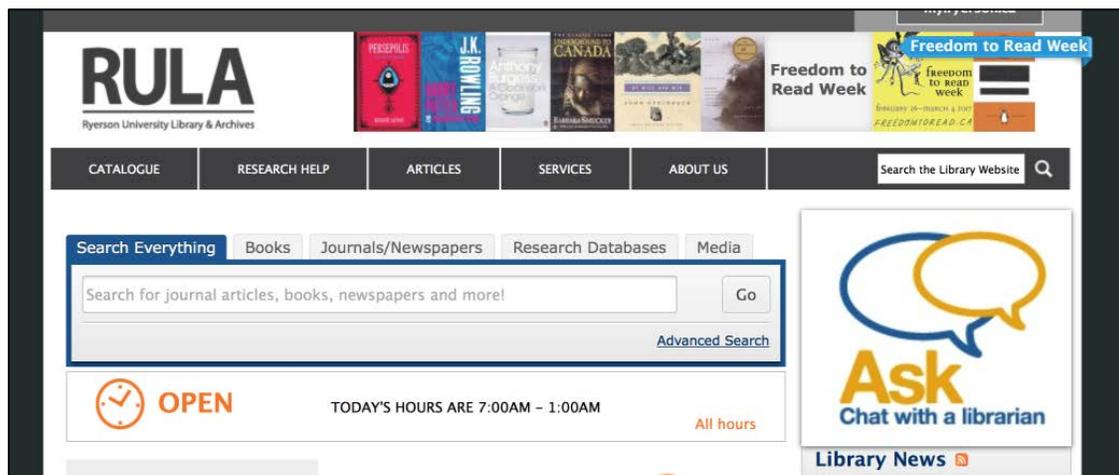
- Is there an author listed? Who are they? Are they known or respected in their field?
- When was the article published? It is almost always better to use up-to-date information.
- What is the purpose of this source? Is it an opinion piece, or does it state the facts?
- What is the proof? How does the source back up its claims? Does it provide support for the points it makes?
- Who published the source? Did an organization you trust publish the source (such as a scientific journal or government)?

#### **Where can I find credible sources?**

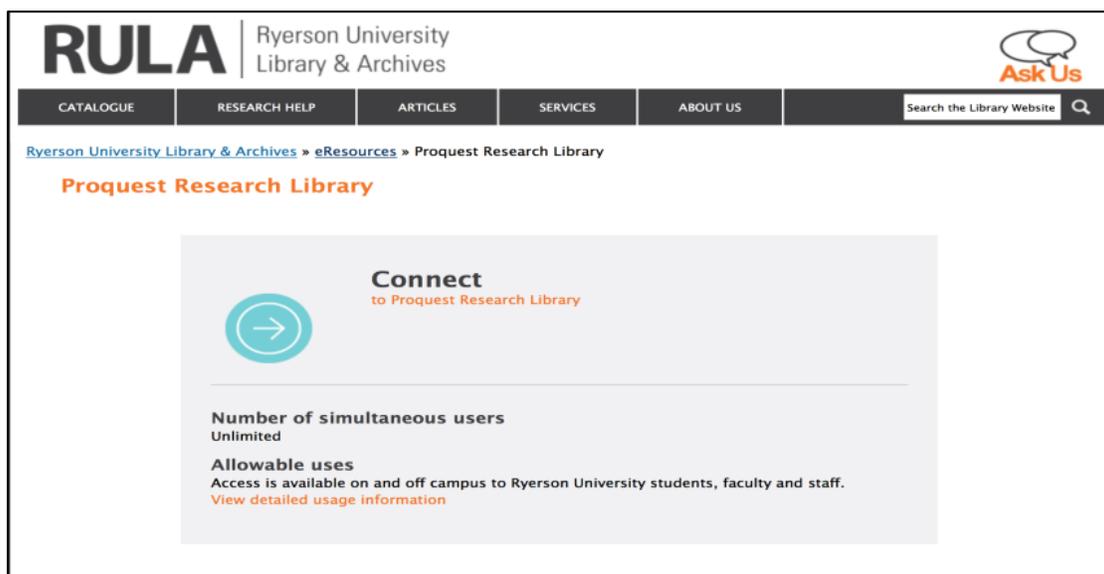
- As a Ryerson student, you have access to RULA (Ryerson University Library & Archives <https://library.ryerson.ca>). Ryerson's Library website has a built-in search function, as well as a helpful service called Ask a Librarian, which "is an online service that connects students, faculty and researchers from participating institutions with real-time research assistance" (pictured below):

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- Your student login through Ryerson also grants you access to ProQuest, which you can access through RULA (pictured below). ProQuest is another search engine for credible sources, but has My Research integration, meaning you can save sources as you go. It also has citations for all articles!



- Finally, you may also want to access JSTOR. JSTOR offers full-length journals, primary sources, and has recently incorporated books!

**For more information, check out these helpful links:**

- ✓ <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/02/>
- ✓ <https://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity-sourcecredibility>
- ✓ <https://uknowit.uwgb.edu/page.php?id=30276>

### **References:**

University Writing Centre at Appalachian State University. (2013). Credible vs non credible sources. <https://writingcenter.appstate.edu/sites/writingcenter.appstate.edu/files/Credible%20v%20Non-Credible%20Sources13.pdf>