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## University of Tennessee Libraries Website Focus Groups 2009

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# **UT Libraries Website Focus Groups**

**June 16-18, 2009**

Prepared by:  
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June 26, 2009

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# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2009 the UT Libraries conducted focus groups with graduate students, undergraduate students, and faculty. The purpose of the focus groups was to help guide implementation of the Primo search and delivery platform and associated redesign of the Libraries homepage.

The following is a brief summary of the key recommendations based on the focus group input. Additional detail and recommendations are included in the full report.

Due to a condensed development timeline, only one focus group per segment was conducted. Because of the limited number of groups, the focus group feedback should be combined with input from UT Libraries staff and the Virtual Library Steering Committee as we can not assume that the opinions of the focus group participants represent those of all students and faculty.

## **Content**

Participants were asked to indicate the most important tasks/information for which they want to use the UT Libraries website. Based on this input, it is *recommended* that the following content be prominently featured on the website:

- A link to “My Account.”
- A link to subject librarian contact information.
- A “Contact Us” link that leads to more detailed contact information/options.
- A better way of finding out what department to contact for specific functions and associated contact information.
- Interlibrary loan information (with a short explanatory phrase).
- Hours could be listed on the homepage, listed on the homepage only during “special hours” times, or there could be a prominent link. Posting on the homepage was liked by many, but may not be “mission critical.”
  - Hours for ALL entities should be accessible in one place – branches, The Commons, The Studio, etc.
- Much less space should be devoted to News. People are also unlikely to sit and wait for the rotating pictures to cycle.
- Prominent links to segment-specific pages on the left navigation bar (or item lists).
- A prominent link to “Resources by subject” – many students are not aware of or using the current subject guides.

Not as critical, but *consider*:

- A “Today in the Library” box of events (and hours) as seen on the BYU site.

*Decisions* to be made:

- The prominent chat reference box was of interest only to undergraduate students. They recommended that it be moved to the right-hand side of the page to make room for a more extensive left navigation list. Graduate students and faculty felt it was a waste of space to have it on the homepage. Therefore, the UT Libraries needs to decide to which group(s) it most wants to serve in this area.

Consider for *future* development:

- A text messaging reference capability.
- Ability to reserve group meeting rooms.
- Ability to pay fines online or by phone with a Volcard or credit card.
- Ability to save searches.
- Account history (list of items checked out).

## ***Organization and Design***

Participants want to find the information they need at one glance on the homepage but do not want long lists or a “cluttered” looking design. Of the samples reviewed, they judged the Alabama Libraries website as striking the best balance.

However, it should be noted that undergraduates had a much different preference for the visual design than the other groups, preferring the warm, personal feel of the Syracuse site. Faculty, and to some extent graduate students, prefer a much more utilitarian design. Therefore, the design team must either try to balance the preferences of the groups or choose one segment as a priority target for the visual design.

It is *recommended* that the following design elements be used:

- A more extensive left navigation bar that is permanent on sub-levels. Additionally, it must graphically “pop” out more than the current UT Libraries left navigation.
- A search box near the top of the site, but it does not need to be as large as BYU’s
- A quadrant or similar graphical arrangement of lists of links, as seen on the Alabama site
- The labeling of each link section is critical, particularly if participants are to click on the section header to find more information. The topic heading “Services” was too broad for some participants. Participants were also confused about what was included under “Services” versus “Resources” on the Iowa site. At least one student liked the labels on the current UT Libraries site.

- There should be no more than four to five links per list. The link description should be short.
- A few additional descriptive words can be included next to the link in smaller font where helpful.
- Redundancy is welcomed and perceived as helpful.
- Some terminology may need to be explained or changed (such as interlibrary loan and reserves) to be clearer to undergraduates.

Not as critical, but *consider*:

- Listing branch names with live links to the branch library sites on the top of the homepage.
- A link to floor maps.

*Decisions* to be made:

- Students, particularly undergraduates, really like seeing a photo of the library at the top, but faculty do not. If a photo is used, it should be a real photo of the library and not a generic photo.

Consider for *future* development:

- The ability to build a personalized website (of most interest to graduate students).

## ***Search Box Tabs***

It is *recommended* that the following tabs be used for the search box:

- All (for future development)
- Catalog
- Journals
  - People want to easily find out whether the library subscribes to a journal and in what format it is available. Therefore, an overall Journals search would be preferred over an E-Journals only search.
- Audio/Video
- Databases
  - Also a link to databases by title and by subject.

*Decisions* to be made:

- An Articles tab was also popular, but there was not sufficient discussion held during the focus groups to know whether users really understood how this would work. Undergraduates just know they want to find articles. Graduate students and faculty want more advanced search options.

- There needs to be some method for searching the Libraries site, but there is no clear recommendation on where this should be placed.
- A fair number of students in each group were interested in a Google or Google Scholar tab (evenly split), but most faculty in the group were adamantly against this.



## II. BACKGROUND

### ***Purpose***

In 2009, the UT Libraries purchased the Primo information search and delivery platform from Ex Libris. As part of the implementation of this platform, changes will be made to the interface used to search library resources as well as the organization and design of the UT Libraries homepage. An internal Primo technical implementation team and a Virtual Library Steering Committee (VLSC), comprised of UT Libraries staff and other stakeholders external to the Libraries, are responsible for the design and implementation.

To help guide these efforts focus groups were scheduled with graduate students, undergraduate students, and faculty. The objectives of the focus groups were to gather information to help the design team determine:

- What information should be most prominent on the website homepage?
- What other design elements should be incorporated into the homepage design?
- What resources do users want to search from the main search box and how should those resources be labeled?

The results of the focus groups, along with feedback collected from library staff and the VLSC, will be used in designing an initial search box and homepage by August 1. We anticipate further iterations of design and usability testing following the initial implementation.

### ***Methodology***

One 90-minute focus group was conducted with participants from each segment—undergraduates, graduates, and faculty—on June 16-18, 2009. Eight to ten participants had been recruited per group with five to seven actually participating. (In the future, additional over-recruitment should be done to account for last-minute cancellations).

Students were recruited via a posting to the listserv for each UT-Knoxville college, and posters were sent to each college, the student center, and posted in the main library. Faculty were recruited via a targeted email that was sent to various faculty groups and a notice in the *Tennessee Today* online publication.

The focus group discussion consisted of three main parts:

1. A brainstorming exercise in which participants listed and prioritized the tasks/information for which they most want to use the UT Libraries website.
2. A review of homepage designs from five other academic library websites. These included the University of Alabama, Brigham Young University, Dartmouth, the University of Iowa, and Syracuse University. These websites were chosen from those that were preferred by the Virtual Library Steering Committee or selected to represent a diversity of design features.
3. An exercise in which participants designed their ideal search box tabs.

The focus groups were held in a media viewing room at the main library. Each focus group was streamed live to a separate observation room next door. The focus group was moderated by the UT Libraries' Assessment Analyst. Two other members of the Libraries' Assessment Planning Group assisted in the focus group room.

A primary note-taker was stationed in the observation room. The focus groups were also recorded via audio and video. Participants were asked to sign a 'consent to participate' form prior to the start of the focus group.

Pizza and beverages were provided to students for the noon-1:30 p.m. groups. Students were also given a \$10 Starbucks gift card as a thank you. Faculty were provided with snacks and beverages for the 3:00-4:30 p.m. group, but no further incentive.

## ***Project Team***

Thank you to the project team for their assistance with this project!

### *Project Advisory Group:*

Pauline Bayne  
Jill Keally  
Maribeth Manoff  
Linda Phillips

### *Project Team:*

Michelle Brannen  
Peter Fernandez  
Dan Greene, co-chair  
Seth Jordan  
Debbie Valine, co-chair

### III. IMPORTANT TASKS/INFORMATION

In order to help determine what information should be most prominent on the homepage, we wanted to learn for what tasks/information patrons most wanted to use the Libraries website. Participants were asked to respond to the following statement:

“I go/want to go to the UT Libraries website to \_\_\_\_\_”

Responses were recorded on two flip charts by the focus group assistants. Research information items were recorded on one flip chart and all other items recorded on the second flip chart.

After the group had generated a list of responses, they were given five sticky dots and asked to “vote” for up to five most important items from the list of “other items.” Research information items were excluded from the voting because we already know these are of high importance, and participants would have an opportunity to select their priority research resources as they designed their search box tabs at the end of the focus group. A complete listing of the items and number of votes is included in the Appendix.

#### ***Recommended Homepage Features (Non-Research)***

Looking at the list of non-research tasks/information for which participants want to use the Libraries’ website, the following can be recommended based on trends across the focus groups. Differences by segment are noted where appropriate.

##### **1. My Account**

A prominent way to access “My Account” should be included in the UT Libraries homepage. While not important to faculty, it was one of the top vote getters among both undergraduate and graduate students. Undergraduate students are very interested in easily accessing their account information. They have trouble keeping track of when their materials are due and want an easy way of checking this, as well as any fines they may owe. Graduate students want an easy way to renew items.

A number of participants responded positively to the prominent “My Library Account” link on the Alabama left navigation bar, so this is a placement that could be considered. One person noticed the “My Account/Renew Materials” tab on the top of the BYU site. One undergraduate suggested having a Libraries website log-in that would then display on the homepage the books you have checked out, due dates, and any fines due.

## 2. Putting a Hold On Items

Both graduate and undergraduate students want to use the website to put a hold on items. One undergraduate was not aware that this could be done currently through the catalog. It's not clear that we need to change the way this is done currently, but we may need to make this easier to find or better promote/explain this process.

## 3. Contact Us -- Research Assistance

Preferences for contacting a librarian for research help were quite different by segment.

Generally, faculty see themselves as least likely to contact the library for research assistance. When they do, they want to get directly in touch with a specialist in that topic area.

*"I expect to do my own research, and quite honestly, I expect my students to as well."*

*Question if I click on "ask a librarian" -- What librarian am I getting? A student, a reference librarian, a field [branch] librarian? I don't want to send a generic thing that will be re-routed seven times. I want to contact the librarian that knows that topic."*

Most graduate students in this group were not interested in using the chat reference. One of the younger graduate students did use it and liked the prominent chat reference box. One older graduate student had used the chat, but didn't feel strongly about having the box prominently displayed. The group felt that text messaging would appeal more to undergraduates. The graduate students were more willing to pick up the phone and call or to contact a subject librarian.

Not surprisingly, undergraduates were most interested in using chat reference. One also liked the texting option on the BYU site and said that, among the people he knows, everyone has a text plan, but some might be reluctant to use their limited cell phone minutes to call. Some undergraduates seemed interested in having a subject librarian help them find material, but had not taken advantage of the subject librarian listing.

Given the above, the undergraduate students preferred having the chat box right on the homepage like the current Libraries homepage. Faculty and graduate students were more likely to feel this was a waste of space. They particularly didn't like it in the middle of the page as on the Iowa site. Therefore, there is a choice to be made on which segment the homepage should appeal to regarding this function.

There was only lukewarm interest in the small BYU "Ask A Librarian" box, probably because it did not meet the specific preferences of each group for either seeing a chat box

or contacting a subject librarian. However, the concept of having a prominent “Ask A Librarian” link itself was well-received, linking to more detailed contact options.

A listing of Subject Librarians should be prominent on the site or tied into the “Ask A Librarian” link. One undergrad said, “I need someone to help me find material.” Another wanted help finding works that are more “scholarly/authoritative.”

#### **4. Contact Us -- Services**

At least one or more participants in each segment expressed a frustration with trying to find the right department/person to contact for various services or issues such as donating a book, media questions, etc. (This is distinct from contacting a librarian for research help). Users would like a department or services listing with a description of what they do and who to contact.

*“It is hard to find which department to talk to and there’s usually no phone number” or the contacts keep changing.*

One graduate student also noted it is standard for websites to have a “Contact Us” link on the bottom or top of the site.

#### **5. Interlibrary Loan**

Interlibrary loan is a service that was of particular interest to graduates students and faculty and should be prominent on the homepage.

It was somewhat used by undergraduates, although not among their top items. When asked about interlibrary loan, two undergraduates said, “What is that?” One recommended that it be re-labeled as “book exchange from another school.” So, labeling may need to be considered for this item, particularly if there is a specific page for undergraduates.

#### **6. Hours**

There was definitely some positive response to seeing today’s hours posted on the homepage as on the BYU and Syracuse sites. Having today’s hours on the homepage is a convenience. It is not “mission critical,” but many patrons liked it. Among graduate students, for example, two strongly preferred to have it displayed, four preferred it, and one didn’t care if it was posted on the homepage. Graduate students and faculty were most interested in knowing the hours when they change from the regular schedule, such as at the end of the semester or in the summer. Undergraduates, interestingly, were least interested in having the hours posted. They seemed to have a general idea of when the library was open during the regular semester times, and at least one said the current Hours link was easy to use.

Participants cautioned to only post today's hours if we could guarantee it's accurate and up-to-date.

At least one patron who used one of the branch libraries prefers seeing the branch hours along with the main library hours from one click rather than having to click to main site, then to the branch library, then to the branch hours. Another mentioned wanting to see the hours for The Studio. Therefore, it is recommended to have a list of hours for all entities in one place (in addition to or instead of separate listings).

## **7. Events**

There was some positive response to the "Today in the Library" box on the BYU site, which lists both today's hours and events in the library. One patron would be interested in seeing upcoming classes for the week, so that he could take one if he had some free time. Students seemed to perceive this as a way of becoming informed about things that were happening in the library that would be of interest to them. One had the sense some would make a decision to attend something that day, as opposed to planning ahead. A couple of graduate students and one faculty also mentioned this as a way to publicize public events, films, and lectures:

*"If the library is more than just a collection of journal articles, if it's a place where you want people to consider as a gathering place, if that's part of the mission of the library, then I think you promote that by saying, hey, these are some of the cool things happening in the library today."*

## **8. News**

Participants were unanimous in their dislike for using a lot of space for news headlines. They felt too much space was devoted to this on the current UT Libraries website and several of the other websites reviewed. They preferred the small space devoted to this on the Alabama site. One faculty liked having a small link that you could click on to access more news if desired.

One undergraduate mentioned that no one would wait for all of the pictures to scroll through on the current UT site.

Several of the undergraduates were only interested in seeing items that pertained directly to them. For example, one suggested having a "What's coming new to the library" space, such as "We've got 30 new computers. We're remodeling this part of the library to do this."

The headlines must also be self-explanatory, but without being too long. For example, a current headline called "Library Web 2.0" did not clearly indicate to them what this topic was about. They also wanted the news to change frequently.

One undergraduate questioned why a specific business was being highlighted in the current news pictures. There was not an objection to this per se, in fact the person said “I’m proud that [this business] is a sponsor of the Libraries,” but he did not see this as relevant to him. He was also concerned that by clicking on that, he might be solicited by that company.

## 9. Segment-Specific Pages

While there were some similarities in information needs across segments, there were also differences. One option for addressing the unique needs of the different segments is to have a link on the homepage to segment-specific sub-pages. Examples of this can be seen on the Alabama and Syracuse sites. Both the graduate and faculty groups responded positively to this approach. This topic was not discussed in the undergraduate group, but could be useful for that segment, also.

*“Some questions you have as a faculty that students don’t have. You can be answering questions I have [on the faculty-specific page].”*

*“The next best [to a personalized site] is having a generic site that’s tailored to, for instance, graduate students. If I could click there and it would have focuses on journal articles, searching databases, and catalog, then...I would bookmark that one.”*

It is recommended that links to segment-specific pages be included in the left navigation list; otherwise, they are likely to go unnoticed.

Some of the topics specifically of interest to each segment that could be included are below. This is based on various comments made during the discussion, but this is not an exhaustive list.

### *Faculty:*

- Links to research information (including the catalog, databases, e-journals, maps, manuscripts, and government information)
- Course reserves (several mentioned calling the library a lot about this topic)
- Interlibrary loan
- Library Express
- Teaching & classroom support
- Copyright
- Statistical databases
- Blackboard integration

### *Graduate Students:*

Graduate students are interested in getting quickly to the research resources for their discipline and to specific ones they use most often. They are also interested in research support resources like contacting a subject librarian and citation management tools.

- Links to research information (including the catalog, databases, e-journals, maps, manuscripts, government information, and electronic theses and dissertations)
- Quick link to databases by subject
- MetaSearch
- WorldCat/Kudzu
- Course reserves
- Interlibrary loan
- Library Express
- Copyright
- Subject guides
- Subject librarians
- Citation management tools
- My Account link
- Technical support and software downloads

### *Undergraduate Students:*

Undergraduate students are often unsure about how to find resources for their discipline or topic area. For example, they are unsure about which databases to use. They were very interested in recommended resources by subject.

- My Account link
- Chat box or link
- Links to research information (catalog, databases, e-journals)
- Recommended resources by subject
- Quick link to databases by subject
- Course reserves
- Interlibrary loan
- Copyright
- Subject guides
- Subject librarians
- How do I renew my books/items?
- How do I find out my fines and pay them?

## **10. Other Items**

Some of the following items were not as common among or across groups or are more appropriate for future development.



## Graduate Students

A few other items that were mentioned by at least one graduate student each included:

- EndNote support (graduate)
- OIT technology support (how to install wireless, etc.) (graduate)
- Accessing SPSS/software (graduate)
- Getting scans from closed stacks (graduate)

## Undergraduates

Undergraduates mentioned several items that were not brought up in other groups. Some involve ideas that may be considered for longer term development.

### **a. Reserve a room and a computer**

Some in the undergraduate group were interested in being able to reserve a group study room and a computer online. One mentioned the needing a place where a big group could meet to work on projects and being frustrated when there are one or two people in a group study room working individually at their computers. Another student suggested a system like the one at the new business school, in which you can slide your card and pick a time to reserve the room. Several noted the “Reserve a Group Study Room” bar on the BYU homepage, as did one person in the graduate student group.

### **b. Personalized account information**

As already mentioned, the undergraduates were particularly interested in personal account information, such as items checked out, due dates, and fines. One also mentioned having “if you checked out this book, you might also be interested in this” recommendations.

*“Like when I log into the Wall Street Journal, it has my name, my articles, a history of what I’ve done on website, and my subscription information.”*

*“You may want to go back to a book again, so I want a running history [of what I checked out].”*

Not only did undergraduates want personalized information for their own reference, they were interested in having this information available to a librarian who was assisting them with research (via chat or other means). They felt this would help establish a more personal connection with the librarian and enable the librarian to better understand their research and information needs.

*“It’s more personable. I’m not there, but they would know my name, rather than who am I talking to, where are these people?”*

*“It would help with the chat, so they would have your information there. Like when you go to a doctor’s office and they pull up your chart.”*

One person also mentioned being able to use chat and having the librarian being able to take their computer and show them where to find something.

**c. Fees/Fines**

Undergraduates had a couple of requests regarding fines. First, they were interested in a list detailing the fees/fines charged by the library. Second, they were interested in being able to pay their fines online using either their Volcard or a credit card. This was expressed strongly by one undergraduate in the group. Other undergrads voted for this as a top item, although it is possible they were influenced by the passion with which the original person argued for this service.

**d. Library employment**

- While not receiving a lot of votes as a high priority, some undergrads did like the link to library employment listed on the current UT Libraries homepage.

**Research Information**

When listing the tasks/information for which they want to go to the Libraries’ website, participants also listed research resources. The following shows the research information mentioned by each group. (Participants were not asked to vote for their priority items, because they would choose their priority research resources when designing a search box later in the focus group).

	<b>Undergrad</b>	<b>Graduate</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
Research articles/journal articles	√	√	√
Books/Catalog	√	√	√
Databases	√	√	√
Google Scholar	√		
Course reserves	√		
Electronic dissertations & theses		√	
MetaLib		√	
Audio/visual materials			√
Government information			√
Manuscripts			√
Maps (digitized)			√
Multi-library search (Kudzu)			√

Not surprisingly, all three groups mentioned the library catalog, databases, and journal articles among the research tools for which they want to go to the library website.

Undergraduates are particularly interested in information that relates to their classes, so they also mentioned finding course reserves. Undergraduates find it challenging to know which database to choose when researching a topic: “...it’s hard to figure out which one to use for what.” Therefore, the Libraries should continue to think about ways to assist undergrads in this area.

Graduate students are much more focused on getting right to the research resources they use most often. Journal articles figure prominently in their discussion of research information. They were the only group to mention wanting to access electronic theses and dissertations. A couple of graduate students had used the MetaLib search on the current UT website.

Because of the specific disciplines they are in, faculty also mentioned some more specialized resources such as accessing the manuscript and map collections. As mentioned elsewhere in the report, they are heavy users of the media materials, also.

## **Resources by Subject**

In addition to the above, finding resources by subject was of interest to both student groups.

As mentioned, undergraduate students are looking for guidance in locating resources for a particular class or subject discipline: “*If this is my major, give resources just for that major.*” One mentioned being interested in resources that other students who had taken a class would recommend.

Graduate students are also interested in accessing resources related to their discipline, although they are further along in identifying available sources than are the undergrads.

Some students were drawn to the Dartmouth website column entitled “Explore by Subject” that lists links to various disciplines. Many not aware of the subject guides on the current UT Libraries site, so some better approach is needed to direct students to subject-related assistance.

One faculty suggested putting a “*listing of the major journals faculty put together, what are the key journals you should be looking at,*” under each subject to encourage students to use appropriate resources.

Research resources will be further discussed in the Search Box section of this report.

## IV. DESIGN FEATURES

In the second part of the focus group, participants reviewed the homepage designs from five other academic library websites. These included the University of Alabama, Brigham Young University, Dartmouth, University of Iowa, and Syracuse University.

Participants were asked to comment on things they liked and disliked about each homepage. They were given color-copy screen prints of each homepage. Some limited exploration was done via the Internet when students had a specific question about the site. However, due to time restrictions, we were able to spend only five minutes or less discussing/exploring each site.

### ***Differences by Segment***

There are some design preferences that are common across all segments and others that are quite different, which makes it particular challenging to design a website that appeals to undergraduates, graduates, and faculty alike. In terms of the overall “feel” of the website, the undergraduates had a very different perspective from that of the other two segments.

The undergraduates we spoke to were very interested in having an inviting, personal connection with the library and its librarians. Several aspects of the Syracuse site appealed to them in this regard including the photo of students (or the Dartmouth library photo) and the Spotlight on a featured librarian. Overall, they perceived the Syracuse site as personal, warm, and most professionally designed. They like feeling that “*this is a place I want to go to.*” When questioned, they admitted that this site was not ideal for finding the information they need for research and gravitated more to Alabama and Dartmouth in terms of content. However, it was clear that they had a more positive emotional reaction to the Syracuse site.

*“I like the spotlight. It adds a human touch. Especially people that you deal with on a regular basis. Especially on a calling level. Just because you see them everyday. Getting a little more personal with them as far as maybe you know who they are, what their name is. Would help both you and them. Help you feel more connected to them and easier to help you out.”*

At the opposite end of the spectrum, faculty prefer a utilitarian site that focuses almost exclusively on research-related tasks. They have little interest in any “soft” content such as photos, news, and features. When asked to list tasks for which they want to use the Libraries website, they hardly mentioned any items that were not research-related, although some came up in later discussion. They have a strong desire to see everything they want on the homepage and perceive BYU’s site as having too much wasted space and the Syracuse site as having too little research-related content.

Graduate students were somewhere in between, although their preferences were closer to that of the faculty. The graduate students also want to quickly access research resources, such as the databases they use most frequently, the catalog, and journal articles. One asked whether cookies could be used to take him right to the Engineering databases he uses when he clicks on Databases. However, they have more interest than the faculty in some additional content such as contact information for services and subject librarians, interlibrary loan, and citation support.

## **Common Themes**

While some design preference differences exist, below are other design themes that were common across segments.

### **Amount/Organization of Content**

There is a tension between users' preferences for seeing the information they want on one page balanced against wanting a site that looks "clean" and not "cluttered." After a variety of debate and discussion, many users settled on the Alabama site as striking the right balance. There are lists of items, but the lists have no more than four to five items each and most of the links are one to two words long. People find it useful to look at lists of items to find what they need, but they don't want the lists to be too long. Many of the scroll-over lists on Iowa's site, for example, are perceived as too lengthy.

The lists are arranged graphically in quadrants with enough white space that the site looks clean and well-organized. In contrast, a number of participants think the current UT site is too cluttered. Participants also preferred the more extensive left navigation list on the Alabama site. They would shift the UT Libraries chat reference box (if kept) to the spot currently occupied by the MyLinks/Del.icio.us section on Alabama's site to make room for a more extensive left navigation list.

*"One thing I immediately liked on the Alabama page the left-hand bar with all the options because [of] the library's catalog, databases-I go to, interlibrary loan, hours. My library account is a big one, because that seems to be hidden on the UT website."*

How the sections and links are labeled is very important. Some participants have trouble knowing where to go to find information when a label is too broad. For example, the label "Services" is perceived as too broad by some.

*"A problem is you don't know what they put under 'Services' – too generic."*

*"[On Iowa site] Will 'Resources' be different than 'Services'? Some items they list under 'Services' are resources. Need a better label... 'Research Resources' or something. Things you can access online. Things other than that—Information."*

One feature students liked on the Alabama site was when more explanation was listed next to a link (using a smaller font to save space). For example, next to the “Digital Collections” link it says “Letters, photos, etc.”

No matter how the site is organized, sometimes users won’t find what they need. Several people mentioned they would typically try to search the library site if they can’t find something, meaning this function needs to be readily available.

## **Navigation**

A number of different navigation approaches were discussed during the website reviews.

The vast majority of participants did not like having to scroll down to a second page on the Dartmouth site. In general, most didn’t like using scrolling or scroll bars for anything, including any extensive dropdowns in the search box.

For most people, there is not a *strong* feeling about left versus top navigation. People wavered some when pressed to express a preference. There was positive reaction to the left navigation because it is familiar, they are more likely to look there and see it, and it provides a list of items right in front of them. Top navigation is viewed as a way to get in a lot of choices without cluttering up a page. Most people preferred mouse-over (like Iowa) to clicking on tabs, although one faculty liked the BYU concept where you click the top tab and the entire page changes.

There were a few who liked the expanding drop-downs on the left-hand side of the Iowa site, but the reaction was not overwhelmingly positive. One faculty recommended dropdowns or expanding bars be used for the Contact Us and News areas, however.

There was a slightly stronger preference for left navigation, but most people would be okay with either a left navigation or mouse-over top navigation approach, feeling that both are common enough. Each has pros and cons. It should be noted that one faculty assumed the left navigation would stay permanent when you went to sublevel pages.

Regardless of which is used, it is important that it stand out. One graduate student who liked the left navigation admitted he had not used it on the current UT site, because it is not as noticeable. Others criticized some of the top navigation bars for not being visible enough (e.g., yellow on yellow).

## **Redundancy**

Participants across all groups were generally in favor of having some redundancy. For example, the Alabama site provides access to the libraries’ catalog in three places. Patrons felt this approach increased their chances of finding what they needed. One faculty also suggested having priority information available on multiple “branches” so

that you would find it regardless of which path you followed down into sublevels of the website.

*“So, I did notice that redundancy and I thought, well, that’s good.”*

*“It [redundancy] just saves time.”*

## **Design Elements**

The following summarizes reactions to various specific design elements.

### **Photo**

It will be hard to please all segments regarding putting a photo on the homepage. Faculty don’t see a need for one at all, while it is an important element to undergraduates. For undergraduates and graduates who did comment on having a photo, they universally preferred a real photo of the library, as opposed to the “generic” books photo on the current site. Most don’t feel a photo should take up as much space as it does on some of the sample sites.

### **Quick Links to Branch Libraries**

There were a few participants who noticed and liked the list of branch library names on the top of Alabama’s homepage, which they assumed were also quick links to each branch library site.

### **Terminology**

Undergraduates were least likely to understand library terminology used on the site, saying:

*“They’re library terms, they’re not people terms.”*

*“Put it into plain English like Wikipedia style.”*

Some of the specific terms that were singled out included:

- Interlibrary loan. When the term was mentioned, two undergrads said “What is that?” One suggested calling it “book exchange from another school.”
- Course reserves. “Course reserves sounds like something you need to reserve” and suggested calling it “professor recommended resources.”
- Manuscripts. “Even ‘manuscripts’ is hard for people to understand...[they think] what is a manuscript?”
- Digital Collections. Some people don’t know what Digital Collections include.

As mentioned previously, it was recommended we put a two or three words description right next to terms, even in smaller font.

## **Personalized Library Page**

Graduate students expressed an unprompted interest in setting up a personalized library homepage that comes up when you log in. They also noticed the *MYbrary* section on the Syracuse site. For example, one brought up the ability in Blackboard to close items, move them around, and otherwise personalize your homepage.

In contrast, most of the undergraduates said they would not take time to build a personalized website. They feel they already spend enough time doing this on MySpace, Facebook, etc. When they think of “personalized” they go back to their personal account information, but not to building a personalized web page.

The idea of building a personalized homepage was not discussed with faculty.



## V. FAVORITE WEBSITE

After discussing the five sample library websites, participants were asked to vote for their favorite sites. They were also allowed to include the current UT Libraries site. Graduates were asked to rank their Top 2 favorites. In the subsequent groups, undergraduates and faculty were asked to rank their Top 3.

### ***Preferred Websites***

The following table shows the overall preference rankings.

- *Alabama* received more top preference votes (9) than the other five sites combined and the highest number of total votes (17). This was primarily due to a preference from graduate students and faculty. However, undergraduates also liked the content of the Alabama site.
- *Syracuse* received the second largest top and total votes. Undergraduates liked the visual appeal of the site. A couple of graduate students and a couple of faculty ranked this site 2<sup>nd</sup>. Some people liked the posted hours and left navigation Quick Links section.
- The existing *UT Libraries* site received only one top vote, but the third highest number of total votes. Some said they chose the site because of their familiarity with it. Others did like the list of links, although they felt the site was a bit too cluttered.

	#1	# 2	#3	Total	#1 Votes by Segment		
	Votes	Votes	Votes	Votes	Grads	Undergr	Faculty
Alabama	9	5	3	17	5	1	3
Syracuse	3	6	1	10		3	
BYU	2	1	2	5	1		1
Dartmouth	2	0	2	4		2	
UT	1	5	3	9	1		
Iowa	0	0	0	0			

## ***Likes and Dislikes by Site***

The following briefly summarizes likes and dislikes for each sample website. These were mentioned by some participants, but do not necessarily represent the opinions of all.

### **Alabama**

#### Likes

*“It’s clean, well-organized, and you can find everything you need on one page. And no extra features, no extra use of space.”*

*“It’s more condensed. Not scattered. Just four categories. And if you want more, I assume you click on heading. That’s really strong.”*

*“Alabama, just the way that they presented the four little boxes, it’s so much more helpful than the other sites.” “And it’s center—it’s like it’s right there.”*

*“It’s certainly cleaner. No big news blurbs or feature of week. This one is more business-like and devoted actually to getting you to things you’re looking for.”*

- Clean
- Visually appealing
- Left navigation – eye goes there; it stays stationary no matter where you go
- Prominent Ask A Librarian, My Library Account, Google Scholar
- Two to three word description after some links (e.g., Digital collections)
- Branch libraries listed under heading as a way to link to branches
- Small space for news and events with link to further information

#### Dislikes

*“No one uses Del.icio.us.”*

*“If Alabama had the Syracuse visual, it would be the perfect website.”*

- No one wanted the Del.icio.us link area
- Colors kind of weird
- Design not incorporated well – too plain
- Would not think the “?” was information on what databases you’re searching – associates that with “Help”

## BYU

### Likes

*“I like ‘Today in the Library’—it’s the first thing that jumped out at me. It has today’s events and today’s hours.”*

- Some liked the Today in The Library
- A few liked Reserve a Group Study Room
- One undergrad liked My Account/Renew Materials tab at the top
- One grad liked the Unique Collections – every library is trying to highlight what’s unique
- Modest top box – not wasting space with photo (faculty)
- A couple of the faculty liked the floor maps and the flashing star that indicates the location of the call number
- One faculty liked the tabs that changed the entire screen

### Dislikes

*“It’s awful...it seems difficult to find anything. Things aren’t clearly labeled.”*

*“It’s really simplistic—I don’t like it.”*

*“This site is too condensed. You may have a question that’s not on here.”*

*“It looks like it’s for students and not for faculty.” [Because of the large magnifying glass, large search box, don’t see categories that suggest a research library, scholarly resources on bottom seem ancillary]*

- Too simple
- Looks very bland
- No picture (undergrads)
- Wasted space
- Not strong preference for Ask A Librarian box, although some liked how immediate it was
- No unprompted mention/discussion of Databases & Journals box [perhaps the placement is bad]
- Find Other Materials – content good, but placement and small font size is bad

## Dartmouth

### Likes

*“The first thing that popped out was ‘Explore by Subject. If this is my major, it gives resources just for that major.”*

- Undergrads in particular and some grads liked the ‘Explore by Subject’ section (most had never looked at the Subject Guides on the UT site)
- Students liked the picture of the library
- A few liked all the information available on the homepage, but it doesn’t look as cluttered as UT site
- One grad liked the Library Site tab
- One undergrad liked the content in the ‘About the Libraries’ section. A faculty likes that Hours is listed first under this section.

### Dislikes

*“Almost like sensory overload.”*

- Most don’t like scrolling down to a second screen
- A majority felt the lists were overwhelming
- The faculty saw no need for the picture

## Iowa

### Likes

- Expanding bars on left are compact and not overwhelming
- Liked mouse-over feature on top tabs – can see all topics included

### Dislikes

*“I already hate this site.”*

*“Too blinding.”*

*“It looks like they just went to a website with templates—too generic.”*

*“The chat in the center...that doesn’t seem like the most important thing about the library.”*

*“I’m interested in research information, not news and events.”*

- Overall design and colors
- Grads and faculty thought too much space was wasted on chat and News & Events
- A few students thought the links under the expanding bars look like advertisement links
- Some of the lists under the top tabs are too long – if you’re in a rush, you don’t want to read them all

## Syracuse

### Likes

*“It looks like a real website. It looks more homey, something where you are ‘Oh, I don’t mind going here, because it just looks better.’”*

*“I like the left part. I like the search engine in the middle. It’s one of the first things you see. And then the hours.”*

- Undergrads liked the picture and featured librarian spotlight – its visual and grabs your attention
- Undergrads felt it looked more professionally designed - “like they took time to do it”
- Some participants liked the Today’s Hours
- One grad liked seeing all library hours from one page, rather than having to go to a branch library site to find their hours
- Some liked the left navigation/Quick Link
- Several faculty liked the Faculty Services page

### Dislikes

*“This feels like its designed more to entice prospective students, more promotional.”*

*“This looks like the university website, not a library site.”*

*“All these seem like filler items...it’s not what I go to library for...[I go] to look for research.”*

*“This is too folksy for a library.”*

- Graduates and faculty, in particular, felt there was not enough research content
- Undergraduates, when asked about the content, said it would be more difficult to find what you need and would combine the look of this site with the content of Alabama or Dartmouth

## UT

### Likes

*“I really like the design of it. I think the layout is really intuitive. But I guess it could have more identity like the Syracuse website.” Q: Why intuitive? “It has fewer categories [than Syracuse], but I think that they’re pretty fairly labeled.”*

- Some chose this site because they are familiar with it
- They like the list sections, although some students feel they are too long
- One faculty liked all the information that’s immediately available

### Dislikes

*“I like the sections, but there’s too many things that don’t need to be there. Like the service statement—we know you give good service. We just want the basics. We want what we need to get in and get out.”*

*“[the rotating pictures] are distracting. Who’s going to sit there and wait for all the pictures to cycle through?”*

*“None of those things [headlines] really have anything to do with us.”*

- Some students feel the site looks cluttered compared to others
- Undergrads did not like the rotating picture or felt some of the news headlines were irrelevant to them
- Missing an immediate search box
- Could better employ the left-hand column, like Alabama
- Not as visually appealing as some other sites
- Orange on white would “pop” better than white on orange for the top orange link bar

## VI. SEARCH BOX

In the last part of the focus group, participants were asked to design their ideal search box. They were given a drawing of a search box rectangle with one tab. They could add as many tabs as desired and were asked to label each tab. They were given a sample of search boxes from other libraries to spur their thinking, as well as directed to look back at the research tasks they had identified in the first part of the focus group.

### ***General Comments***

Graduate and undergraduate students like having a prominent search box, although we did not explore in depth how the search box works. To some extent, the faculty perceived the search box as a “quick search” appropriate for students, but not precise enough for their own searches.

In viewing sample search boxes, it was also not clear to graduate students and faculty what could be entered – e.g., author, title, keyword.

It was also not clear to participants in all segments what was being searched. Many participants recommended including a short description about what was being searched for each tab.

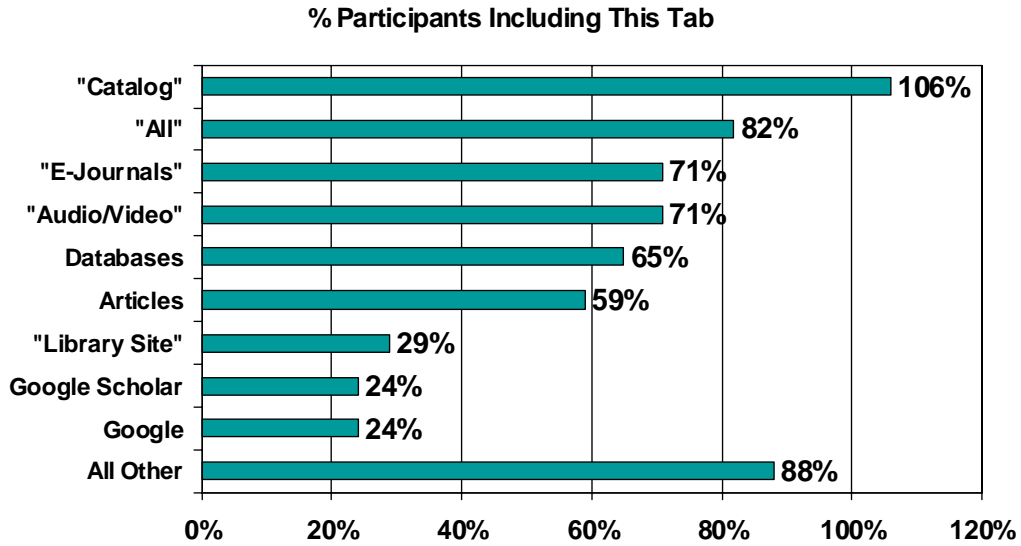
One graduate did like a simple search box if it were possible to use Google-like shortcut commands (like ti:) that would search both journal articles and the catalog, although admits he hasn’t taken time to learn all the Google commands.

### ***Resources Chosen***

A full listing of the search box tabs specified by all participants is included in the Appendix.

The following graph shows the percentage of all participants that included a resource as one of their search box tabs. The graph includes only the ten most-frequently mentioned resources. The resource names in double-quotes are ones that were labeled with various names.

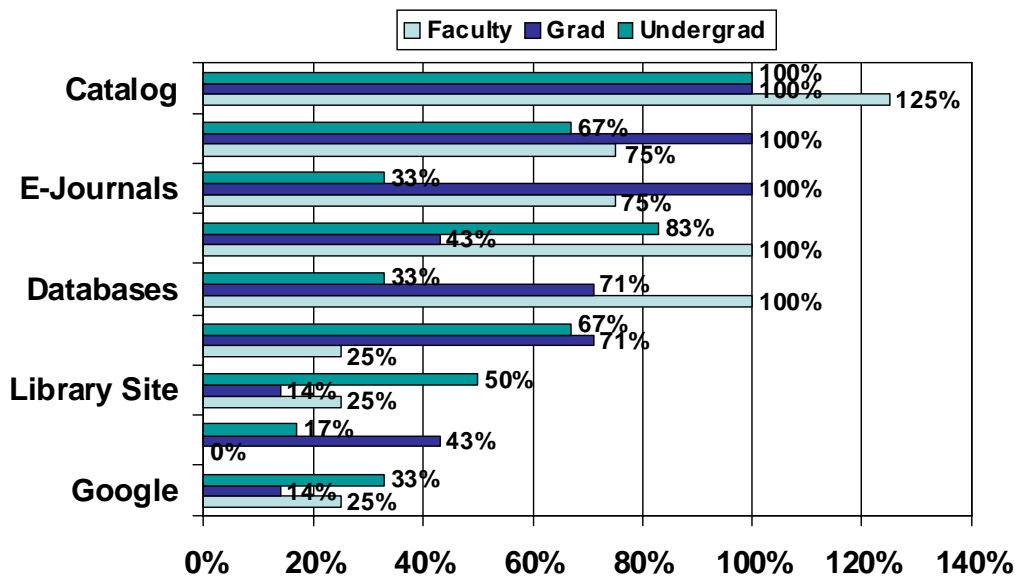
# Search Box Tabs



Based on 17 participants

The following graph shows the percentage of each segment that included the resource as one of their search box tabs.

## Search Box Tabs – By Group





The following chart shows the different labels that were applied to each resource and frequency of use.

	<b>% Labeling</b>
Catalog	41%
Library Catalog	18%
Books	29%
Books & More	6%
Books/Videos	6%
Books & Monographs	6%
<b>"CATALOG" TOTAL</b>	<b>106%</b>
All	47%
All Resources	24%
All Search	6%
Search All	6%
<b>"ALL" TOTAL</b>	<b>82%</b>
Journals	18%
E-Journals	35%
E-Journal	18%
<b>"E- JOURNALS" TOTAL</b>	<b>71%</b>
Media	35%
Audio/Video	18%
Digital Resource	6%
Books/Videos	6%
DVD/Video	6%
<b>"Audio/Video" TOTAL</b>	<b>71%</b>
Databases	65%
Articles	59%
Library Website	6%
Library Info	6%
Lib Site	6%
Library	6%
Library Site/ Reserves	6%
<b>Library Website TOTAL</b>	<b>29%</b>

Note: The Catalog Total exceeds 100% because one person included a tab for both the Catalog and Books.

Based on input from the focus groups, it is recommended that the following tabs be included in the UT Libraries search box:

## 1. Catalog

All participants included some variation of the library catalog as a tab, so this resource should definitely be included as a tab in our search box. About six in ten labeled the tab as “Catalog” or “Library Catalog,” while the remainder used a label that included some variation with the word “Books” in the title.

## 2. All

About 8 in 10 participants included an “All” tab. Therefore, this is a feature we should work toward for the future. Most labeled the tab “All” or “All Resources.”

The “All” tab on the Syracuse site was demonstrated during the focus group. In general, participants liked having “All” as a choice, but still wanted the option to search other resources individually.

Many said they would use the “All” tab when they wanted to do a broad search and didn’t know where to start. They would use the individual resource tabs for more focused searches or when they were on a slower connection, since they recognized the search may take longer. One also wanted to have progress bars to show that the search was still working.

*“Sometimes you want to drill down deep and focus narrowly and sometimes you want to see a broad spectrum.”*

Some felt the results screen looked too “overwhelming.” Faculty also thought students might be overwhelmed by all of the information. Some undergraduates did not understand why some sections came back with no results. They thought the search was not “powerful” enough, not understanding that there was no database name that contained that search term, for example.

At least one faculty expected an “All” search to integrate all resources into one list, in reverse chronological order, rather than segmenting it by resource type like Syracuse’s. Another felt it makes sense to segment the resources for a newer topic, but for a broad search with lots of information, a combined list in reverse date order would be better.

*“It’s too much. Students already don’t understand difference in resources. For faculty, we know better than to want all this. We’re more narrowed.”*

*“I like it, but it’s a lot. It would blast students away. I already had “Search All,” but I didn’t know it would do that. Thought it would pull from everything and combine it.”*

*“That’s good...especially if you could build a string and narrow it down, like with an advanced search. Or search within the 5-bar relevant items [in the catalog portion] with another term.”*

### **3. E-Journals/Journals**

Another important resource, included by 7 in 10 participants, was an “E-Journals” or “Journals” tab. Undergraduates were not as likely to include this, but their focus is on getting an article, which they design as an “Articles” tab.

There were a lot of questions about whether this type of tab would find print as well as online journals. Some suggested that you be able to search for a journal title and it would tell you whether the library subscribes to it and in which format(s). This particularly came up in the faculty group.

*“It would be nice to know the journals the library is subscribing to and what format...Have a searchable database by keyword within title. Most of us know the approximate title. So it needs to be not exact.”*

One faculty put an ‘online only’ choice for each tab on his search box.

One ancillary issue that came up in the faculty group was frustration that students only use material that they can easily find online and in full text.

*“The stuff I get from the students, it’s so limited by anything they can just download from our website. There may be 70 articles and maybe 3 of them are available in pdfs. So, those are the 3 articles that everyone cites. And nobody goes any further.”*

*“It actually becomes a very peculiar thing sometimes...if the article is easily available electronically, it doesn’t matter what kind of journal it appears in – or if it’s any good. That’s all out the window. Maybe in the past we thought, well, we subscribe to the best journals. Well, sometimes electronically, that’s some of the most awful stuff; there’s wonderful stuff, but there’s awful stuff and the students just use it indiscriminately.”*

Therefore, directing students to resources beyond electronic, full-text ones was also important to faculty.

### **4. Audio/Video or Media**

“Audio/Video” or “Media” was tied with E-Journals for third most-frequently included tab. This was primarily driven by interest from undergraduates and faculty. Faculty mentioned using these resources frequently for their courses. In fact, one mentioned building a course around the media resources available. There was an almost even split between those labeling the tab as “Media” and those using some variation of “Video.”

## 5. Databases

About two-thirds of participants included a Databases tab in their search box.

Since many want to go right to a specific database or to find databases by subject, those capabilities should also be prominently featured. Graduate students wanted a big expanding list of databases, but don't want to scroll down a big list.

One faculty mentioned that, due to a lot of interdisciplinary work, he wanted a list of databases by title rather than grouped under subject headings.

*"I'm not exactly sure where each database is going to be subject cataloged... The cross-boundary stuff I do, may not always appear under one subject... Kind of hard doing metasearches, which stuff are you going to pick up? A better subject search of different databases to know which one(s) to search. Like a bibliography of bibliographies."*

There was a lot of interest across all segments in having the ability to search across all databases.

*"It's hard to know which database has what. If you had a mega-search across all of them, it would save students so much time."*

Participants in all groups were also very interested in having the capability to save specific searches. Students also expressed an interest in having their search history automatically saved.

## 6. Articles

About six in ten participants included Articles as a tab. It should be noted that time was not spent discussing how this tab would work. Students just want it to search "everything and across all databases."

*"If I was able to with one click to put in an article I want and bring it up, it saves me from having to dig through a few layers. [Q: What do you want to search on?] Article title, keyword, author, something."*

Faculty, who are more sophisticated searchers, really didn't understand how this tab would work or what it would search. The quick search of a limited set of databases is not likely to be something they would use.

## 7. Library Website Search

About three in ten participants included searching the Libraries' website as a tab. Therefore, this tab was not viewed as high a priority as some others. However, as mentioned previously, undergraduates in particular said they were likely to search the site

when they could not find the information they were looking for. Therefore, it is important that this function be prominent somewhere, although it may not need to be a search box tab.

## 8. Google/Google Scholar

About one in four (24%) participants included Google as a tab and the same number included Google Scholar as a tab. Undergraduate students were more likely to include Google, while graduate students were more likely to include Google Scholar.

One graduate said a problem with the catalog is that it only searches titles and author. He wants to search “key words” within the full text of the book or resource. With Google Scholar and Google Books, he can search entire text to find materials, then goes back to the catalog to find the item. A couple students recognized that they could access UT Libraries items they find in Google by going through the UT domain.

*“When I do a research paper, I’ll go to Google Scholar and link back to the library’s website with the numbers punched in already.”*

*“Sometimes I search for article in Google, get full name of it, then come back to the library website. Probably could go straight to catalog, but I’m not as polished in that as I’d like to be.”*

One faculty who does not teach students, but uses Google Earth for research, did include Google as a tab. However, all other faculty did not want any Google or Google Scholar tab included.

*“I really didn’t want it at all. Because I get more crap feedback from the students who are using that.”*

*“Sometimes students say ‘I googled it and this is all there is. You go to the library and you do the kind of search I want you to do and you will not end up with what you got from Google. They have lots of access to Google. The UT website already is set up to use Google. Why not have the library focus on what the library offers?’”*

*[Q: What about Google Scholar?] “That’s some of the worst experience I’ve had with students, they say, well, I looked it up on Google Scholar and this is all there is.”*

*“They think if that mouse click didn’t bring it, they’re done.”*

*“I don’t want to show it as a research tool.”*

## **9. Other Library Catalogs (WorldCat, Kudzu, etc.)**

No participant included a tab for WorldCat or any other union catalog. Some students had used WorldCat, but infrequently. Two of the six undergraduates had heard of WorldCat and had used it once. After hearing it described, one other also said she had used it. One undergraduate said “most people would use Google, not WorldCat.” A couple others nodded in agreement.

While not included as a tab, one faculty asked if were “possible to get access quickly to multi-library search.” He was more interested in a regional search, like Kudzu. “Trying to pin something down for inter-library loan--it helps to know if it’s in Nashville or wherever.”

## VII. OTHER ISSUES

A variety of other issues surfaced during the focus group discussions. These items are summarized below.

### Frequently Used Websites

As a warm-up exercise, graduate and undergraduate students were asked to list a website they use frequently and one thing they like or dislike about that site.

Graduate students mentioned the following websites:

- Google – 3 mentions
  - Don't know enough about all the Google products
  - Not sophisticated enough to know all the filters you can apply to search
  - “You can really get information very quickly. Just like in one second you can get everything. But you have to look careful at each website to determine if they really include the information you want.”
- Google Scholar – 2 mentions
  - Likes accessing through utk domain, can access document (super helpful)
- Gmail – 2 mentions
  - Has a good search feature
- Wikipedia
  - Downside is you don't know if it's true or not
- Library databases

Undergraduates mentioned the following websites:

- Facebook – 2 mentions
  - Can connect with people I haven't seen in a long time
- A design blog
- Youtube
  - Listen to whatever random song you're interested in that day
- Wikipedia
  - Easy to understand explanations of law cases
  - Anyone can go in and put in untruths
- ESPN
  - Hourly information updates
  - Downside is lots of info, hard to find the article you want

## Facebook

When the undergraduate group was asked if they'd be interested in searching the library catalog through Facebook, only one expressed an interest. One other said this might be a good way to be on Facebook and get work done at the same time, but others said "you're not going to be doing work if you're on Facebook." Several undergraduates said they were not interested in this option.

## Mobile Device

Undergraduates and faculty were asked to what extent, if any, they were interested in using the Libraries' search box via a mobile device. (The question was not asked of the graduate group).

Among undergraduates two immediately said they would be "very" interested. One additional person said they would if there was an iPhone app. Another agreed they would use an iPhone app. Two said they were not likely to search on a mobile device – one doesn't use her cell phone for much and one always has a laptop with her.

Among faculty, two said they have no interest. One said he might when he gets an iPhone. One was interested in accessing digitized maps and Google Earth, but not general library resources. One faculty predicted students would be interested, but another faculty didn't think most use their mobile devices for "serious research" and wouldn't for the foreseeable future.

## Integration with Blackboard

When asked whether/how the library could more closely integrate with Blackboard, one faculty was not a Blackboard user, but a couple faculty were. One said if there were an easy way to could create a list of links to recommended databases and other library resources, he would be interested in including that in his Blackboard site. It was then recommended that information on how to integrate library resources into Blackboard be included on the faculty-specific page.

## Information Literacy

One faculty asked the others if students are as prepared as they used to be about how to use the library? The responses were: "Not even close." "No." [Shook head] "no." Comments were made about how they don't know how to search and don't know how to try/substitute different terms as well as:

*"The way the students see this [the library] now, it's a meeting place...I'm delighted they're back in the building...but the idea this used to be the center of campus...everyone had to be in stacks...high schools used to emphasize how to use resources...don't anymore...we are fighting a battle here with disappearance of [?????]...basically this is a computer center."*



## Library Express/ILL

Library Express: *“That’s like an “unsung hero,” it’s like an untold story. It’s an excellent service that most people don’t know about.”* (graduate student who is also a UT staff person).

One faculty wondered if Library Express was still active. He thought it was going to be eliminated.

ILLiad log in: One graduate student mentioned that when you go to the initial ILLiad log in screen, you are not on a secure website (http instead of https). You’re putting in netid/password on an unsecured site. He then showed that if you just click log in without putting in the information, it then takes you to a secure website.

## Catalog Issues

*“Databases have improved so much, but library books searching still seems a little archaic...always have to start over.” “Back and forth, back and forth. It’s very time-consuming.”*

*“When you’re in the catalog and limit a search by format, it doesn’t seem to do anything. It looks like it didn’t work, so you don’t know if the limit worked.”* [Note: the limit does appear in an orange box at the top, but perhaps this isn’t noticeable]

## Journal Issues

*“Find at UT”—have to remember what page number, issue, volume number. It populates the title of the journal, but doesn’t populate rest of it.*

*“Searching for particular issue of a magazine. It bounces you through several different screens. Then goes someplace completely different. It’s not always real straightforward. But most of the time it works and it’s just great; it’s wonderful.”*

*“Go into Compendex, sometimes try to find text and it says the article year is too early (for our electronic subscription); but then when I search for that journal in library’s catalog, I click on electronic link, and I can access it.”*

## Other Issues

Some faculty agreed the Library should be more prominent on the main UT website. *“Sends wrong message to students to not have it prominent. It’s under Libraries & Technology, then Libraries. So it’s already two levels away.”*

One faculty used library for data for her academic program review and was happy with the “great service.”

## APPENDIX A

### Non-Research Tasks Brainstorming List - # of Priority Votes

Non-Research Tasks	Graduate	Undergrad	Faculty	TOTAL
Renew items (g); Library account (fines, renew) (u)	4	4		8
Contact librarians or services	6	0		6
Interlibrary loans/Kudzu	4		1	5
Hours/Branch hours	4	1		5
Hold request	3	2		5
Pay fines online		5		5
Personal login, so librarian knows who you are; acct history; recommendations		5		5
Research Assist	3			3
Library Express-delivery	1		1	2
Meeting space/classrooms (reserve)	0	2		2
Services, ie. About Studio	2			2
Reserve computers		2		2
Search history		2		2
Department listing - descriptions and contacts		2		2
Info for academic program review			1	1
List of databases			1	1
Subject search to find databases			1	1
List of journals & format they're in/ searchable database of journals			1	1
Chat reference	1			1
EndNote resources	1			1
News headlines	1			1
Scans from closed stacks	1			1
Recommended resources by subject		1		1
Library employment		1		1
Site search of library site		1		1
OIT computer help/support	0			0
SPSS	0			0
Events	0			0
Reference shelf		0		0
List of library fees/charges		0		0
Catalog format indicators			1	1

\* Faculty were not asked to vote, so all items are marked with a "1."

\* A "0" means the item was mentioned, but received no priority votes.

## APPENDIX B

### Search Box Tabs

	Tab 1	Tab 2	Tab 3	Tab 4	Tab 5	Tab 6	Tab 7
G1	All	Catalog	E-Journal	Databases	Articles	Google Scholar	
G2	All Resources	Catalog	Articles	E-Journals	Databases	Library Website	
G3	All	Library Catalog	Databases	E-Journals	Google	University Digital Collections	
G4	All	Articles	Catalog	E-Journal	Digital Resource	Google Scholar	
G5	All Resources	Books	Articles	E-Journals	Databases	Google Scholar	
G6	All Search	E-Journals	Articles	Catalog	Databases	Audio/Video	
G7	All Resources	Books & More	Journals	Media	Gov't Information	Digital Collections	
U1	All	Books	Articles	Media	E-Journal	Library Info	Google Scholar
U2	Catalog	Articles	Subject Guides	All	Google	Audio & Video	
U3	All	Library Catalog	Audio Video	Reserves	Lib Site		
U4	Catalog	Databases	Articles	Scholarly journals, essays, etc.	Hard to Find		
U5	All	Books/ Videos	Subject Guides	Articles	Databases	Reserve Computer & Room	My Account
U6	All	Books	Media	E-Journals	Library	Google	My Account
F1	Library Catalog	Books	E-Journals	Databases	Media	Library Site/ Reserves	
F2	Search All	Books & Monographs	Articles	Databases	Media	Reserve	Other Maps, Manuscripts, etc.
F3	All	Catalog	Databases	Journals	DVD/Video		
F4	All Resources	Maps	Books	Journals	Media	Databases	Google & Google Earth

\* One faculty had to leave early and didn't complete this exercise.

	<b>% Labeling</b>	<b>Grads</b>	<b>Undergr</b>	<b>Faculty</b>
	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>
Catalog	41%	57%	33%	25%
Library Catalog	18%	14%	17%	25%
Books	29%	14%	33%	50%
Books & More	6%	14%	0%	0%
Books/Videos	6%	0%	17%	0%
Books & Monographs	6%	0%	0%	25%
<b>"CATALOG" TOTAL</b>	<b>106%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>125%</b>
All	47%	43%	67%	25%
All Resources	24%	43%	0%	25%
All Search	6%	14%	0%	0%
Search All	6%	0%	0%	25%
<b>"ALL" TOTAL</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Journals	18%	14%	0%	50%
E-Journals	35%	57%	17%	25%
E-Journal	18%	29%	17%	0%
<b>"E- JOURNALS" TOTAL</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Media	35%	14%	33%	75%
Audio/Video	18%	14%	33%	0%
Digital Resource	6%	14%	0%	0%
Books/Videos	6%	0%	17%	0%
DVD/Video	6%	0%	0%	25%
<b>"Audio/Video" TOTAL</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Databases	65%	71%	33%	100%
Articles	59%	71%	67%	25%
Library Website	6%	14%	0%	0%
Library Info	6%	0%	17%	0%
Lib Site	6%	0%	17%	0%
Library	6%	0%	17%	0%
Library Site/ Reserves	6%	0%	0%	25%
<b>Library Website TOTAL</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>25%</b>
Google Scholar	24%	43%	17%	0%
Google	24%	14%	33%	25%
Reserve(s)	18%	0%	17%	50%
(Univ) Digital Collections	12%	29%	0%	0%
Subject Guides	12%	0%	33%	0%
All Other Items	47%	14%	83%	50%

# APPENDIX C

## Discussion Guide

### PRE-GROUP (12:00 - 12:05)

1. Have participants sign consent form. GIVE THEM A COPY.
2. Make sure pizza and beverages have arrived.
3. Have participants put FIRST NAME on table tent and turn toward me.
- 4. CUE: - START CHAT**
- 5. CUE: - START RECORDING AUDIO & VIDEO**
- 6. CUE: HAVE ASSISTANT TURN ON PROJECTOR & BRING UP UT LIBRARIES HOMEPAGE**

### INTRODUCTIONS/WARM-UP (12:05 - 12:15)

1. To make sure we're not interrupted, please make sure your cell phones are off.
2. Introductions:
  - a. First name
  - b. What is a website you use a lot?
  - c. Briefly name one thing you like or dislike about that website.
3. Introduce staff
  - a. Myself, Assistant – Names
  - b. None of us are responsible for the design of the library's website, so nothing you say will hurt my feelings.
  - c. We also have other library staff observing in another room who are also interested in what you have to say.
  - d. As you see, we are also recording the session. This is primarily for my note-taking, so that I can listen to the discussion instead of taking notes.
4. The library will be making some changes to its search system and the design of the website homepage. We are interested in user input to help with this redesign. I'll be asking you some specific questions during our discussion. But, before we get to those, I'd like to go over some general ground rules for our discussion today.
5. Ground rules for discussion:
  - a. No right or wrong answers to any questions – we just want your opinions
  - b. We don't all need to agree – not here to come to a consensus. Different individuals may have different opinions.
  - c. If you don't agree with something that's said, it's important to speak up, otherwise I leave thinking everyone agreed. You are here representing others who have opinions similar to you.
  - d. As a courtesy, please listen to what others are saying. No side conversations or more than one person speaking at the same time.

- e. We have a lot to get through, so please don't be offended if I cut off discussion and move on.
- f. Feel free to replenish your lunch or take a bathroom break anytime you need to. Restrooms are right across the hall.
- g. Any questions?

LIBRARIES WEBSITE TASKS (12:15 – 12:35)

**DISPLAY UT LIBRARIES WEBSITE**

(12:15 – 12:20)

1. The first question we'd like to discuss is: What are the tasks/information for which you want to use the library's website?

The current website is there to jog your memory, but there may be things that aren't on the current website. There is also a copy at the top of your packet that looks like this.

I'd like you to answer the question that's posted on the flip chart:

**“I go/want to go to the UT Libraries website to...”**

Think about what information you need about the libraries, library services, and library resources.

Seth and Michelle will capture your answers on flipcharts.

(12:20 – 12:30)

2. Who'd like to get us started?

**HAVE ASSIST. WRITE RESPONSES ON FLIP CHART – LEAVE MARGIN SPLIT INTO RESEARCH TASKS AND OTHER TASKS ON FLIP CHARTS**

**DEB – IF RUN OUT OF TIME, ASK FOR ANY LAST PRIORITY ONES**

3. Need to combine any that are similar?

(12:30 – 12:35)

4. Now, you have some colored dots. I'd like you to take those and put them next to UP TO FIVE items that are most important to you -- **ON THE “OTHER TASKS” PAGES ONLY**. We'll come back to the research information topics later. You don't have to vote for 5, but no more than 5.

(To 12:35) (PROBABLY WON'T HAVE TIME)

**COUNT UP TOTALS OF MOST POPULAR**

5. Let's talk about why these were most important to you.
  - Who voted for ITEM A. Why is that important?
  - Who voted for ITEM B. Why is that important?

## **CUE – CHANGE VIDEORECORDER TAPE!!!**

### WEBSITE SAMPLES (12:35 – 1:00)

Now, we'd like to show you samples of some library websites and talk about what you like and don't like about them. Particularly think about the important tasks you just identified, and how easy or difficult it would be to find that information from each website.

We're mainly interested in your first impressions. We won't have time to use and explore each site indepth.

Take out your packet that looks like \_\_\_\_\_.

## **ROTATE ORDER FOR EACH FOCUS GROUP**

### Sample 1 – Alabama (12:35-12:40)

1. What are things you like about this website?
2. What are things you don't like?
3. You can access the same information from several places (e.g. Catalog). Is THAT helpful or not necessary?
4. What do you think about the search feature?

### Sample 2 – BYU (12:40-12:45)

1. What are things you like about this website?
2. What are things you don't like?
3. Contrast BYU/Alabama
  - a. BYU has search databases or journals on homepage, but fewer links to other things listed. Pros/cons.
  - b. BYU – top tab navigation vs. Alabama left side navigation?

### Sample 3 – Dartmouth (12:45-12:50) **CUT THIS ONE IF NO TIME**

1. What are things you like about this website?
2. What are things you don't like?
3. There are a lot of items on the homepage, but you have to scroll. Like/dislike?

### Sample 4 – Iowa (12:50-12:55)

1. There are two screen prints to show expansion bars.
2. What are things you like about this website?
3. What are things you don't like?

4. What do you think of the dropdowns (under Find...)?

Sample 5 – Syracuse (12:55-1:00)

1. What are things you like about this website?
2. What are things you don't like?
3. Demonstrate ALL tab. Combines sources, but a little slower.
  - a. What do you think?
  - b. How often do you want to pick your source, e.g., books or articles vs. searching lots of sources?
4. Like displaying hours vs. a link to a list of hours?

Sample – Tennessee (If before 1:00)

1. What are things you like about this website?
2. What are things you don't like?

Choosing Favorite (1:00-1:10)

(1:00-1:05)

1. Using the sheets of sample websites you were given, I'd like you to vote for your Top 3 out of the six websites. You can include the current UT website. Write the number 1 in the top right corner of your favorite and a #2 in the top right corner of your second runner-up and a #3 on your 3<sup>rd</sup> favorite.

(1:05-1:10)

2. Read out and record choices. Discuss if time.

DESIGNING SEARCH FEATURE (1:10-1:25)

**CUE: OBSERVERS TO LIST 2-3 QUESTIONS**

Before we begin our last section of the focus group, I'd like to alert our Observers in the other room that I will be coming in a few minutes to pick up any last questions they have.

The last thing we'd like to talk about is how the search feature on our website should work. We've seen various examples of search boxes on the websites we've reviewed. Here is a reference sheet of those and some other examples.

Take out your packet that looks like \_\_\_\_\_.

(1:10-1:20)

1. Take out the packet with the sheet of paper with a blank search box and a 2<sup>nd</sup> sheet with examples of search boxes from other universities.
2. We'd like you to design YOUR ideal search box for the UT Libraries homepage.



- a. What sources do you want to search right from the search box?
- b. How would you label each source? (e.g., Catalog, Books, Books and more)
3. Draw your ideal search box on this sheet.
  - a. We've started you with one tab – what do you want to be the first, default tab
  - b. You can add as many tabs as you think necessary
  - c. Draw your tabs in and label what you want to search from each one
  - d. You can use the reference sheet for ideas, but you can add other things that aren't on the reference sheet
  - e. If not on tab, you can still get to it from other links on the site. We want to know what you want to have most prominent and obvious.
4. Any Questions?
5. I'm going to step out for a moment to get any last questions from our observers, and I'll be back in a few minutes.

## **DO: GO GET QUESTIONS FROM OBSERVERS**

### OBSERVER QUESTIONS (1:20-1:25)

1. Discuss questions from observers.
2. If time, can discuss search box drawings.
  - a. How many added a Google-related tab?

### CLOSING (1:25-1:30)

1. Thank you for participating. Your input will help us in redesigning our homepage.
2. Leave all materials at desk.
3. Hand out Starbucks gift cards (if students).