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Information Literacy and the Academic Library Home Page: Why Design Matters

Virginia Feher
Augusta State University, GA

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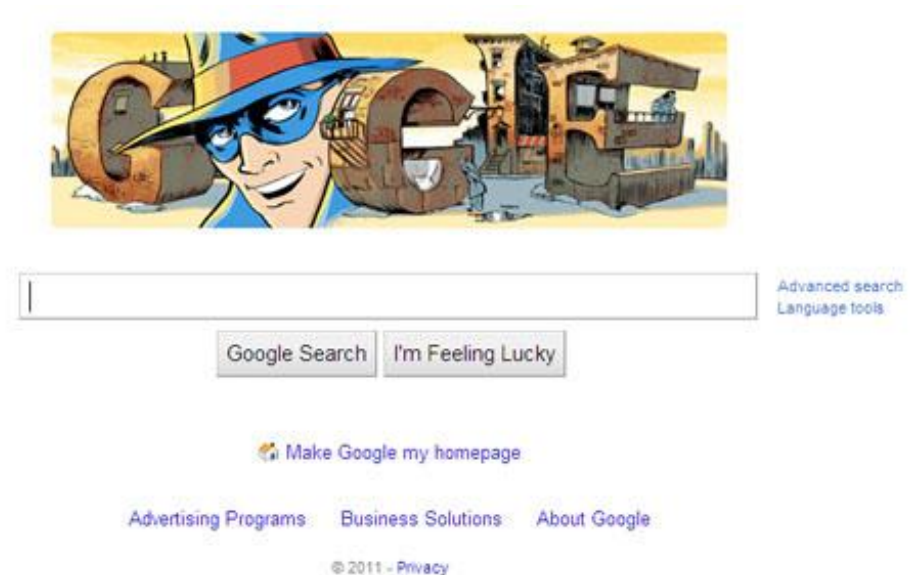
INFORMATION LITERACY AND THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY HOME PAGE: WHY DESIGN MATTERS

Virginia C. Feher, Government Information Librarian
Augusta State University

Georgia International Information Literacy Conference
September 21, 2012

Why is Library Home Page Design Important?

- ✓ Effective information delivery via the Web is dependent on design
- ✓ “Visual learners”
- ✓ Google has changed user expectations – one stop shopping



ACRL Information Literacy Standard 2

- ✓ The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.

Performance Indicator 1

- ✓ The information literate student selects the most appropriate investigative methods or information retrieval systems for accessing the needed information.
- Outcome D: Selects efficient and effective approaches for accessing the information needed from the investigative method or information retrieval system.

Performance Indicator 3

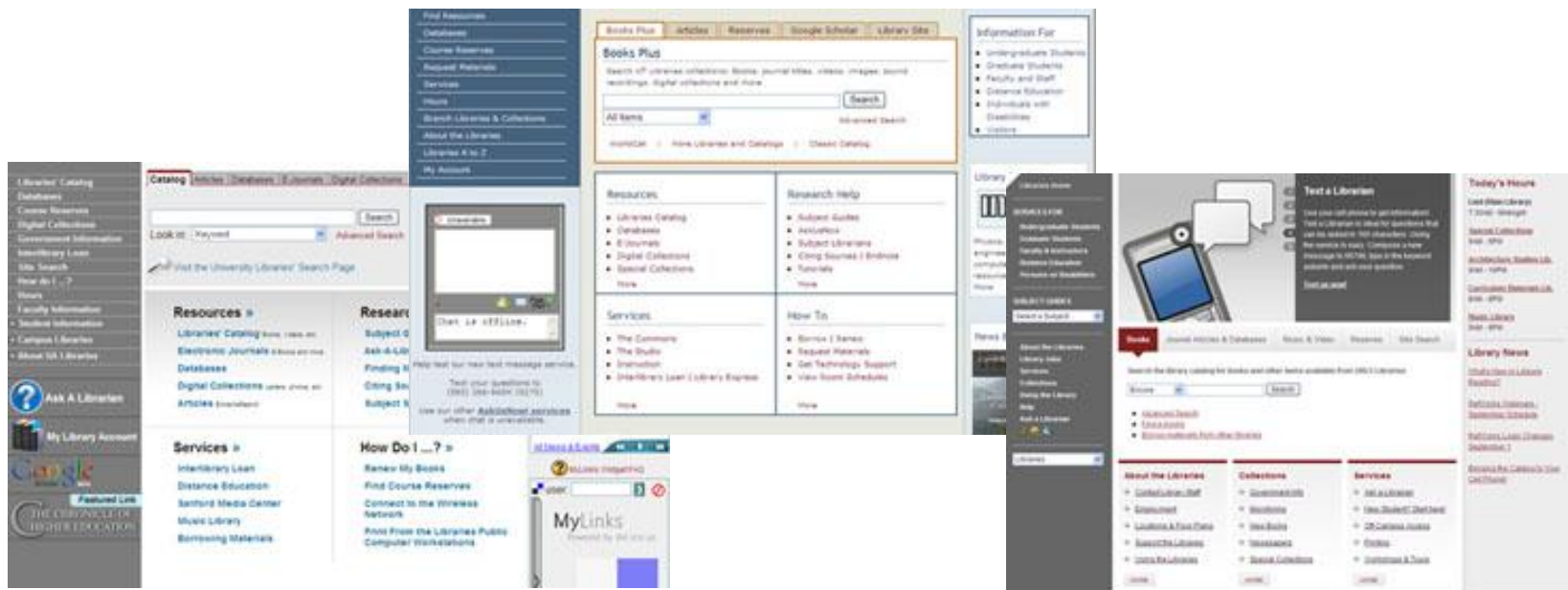
- ✓ The information literate student retrieves information in a variety of formats.
 - Outcome A: Uses various search systems to retrieve information in a variety of formats.

Performance Indicator 5

- ✓ The information literate student extracts, records, and manages the information and its sources.
 - Outcome D: Records all pertinent citation information for future reference.

Information Overload

“Is there a necessary relation between more information and more meaningful knowledge?” (Weintraub, 1980, p. 38).



Promotional Tool

“Rather than attempting to mimic search engines academic librarians should aim to differentiate their Web sites. They should devote the most eye-catching space to information that promotes the people who work at the library,...



...the services they provide and the community activities that anchor the library’s place as the social, cultural and intellectual center of campus” (Bell, 2009, para. 17).

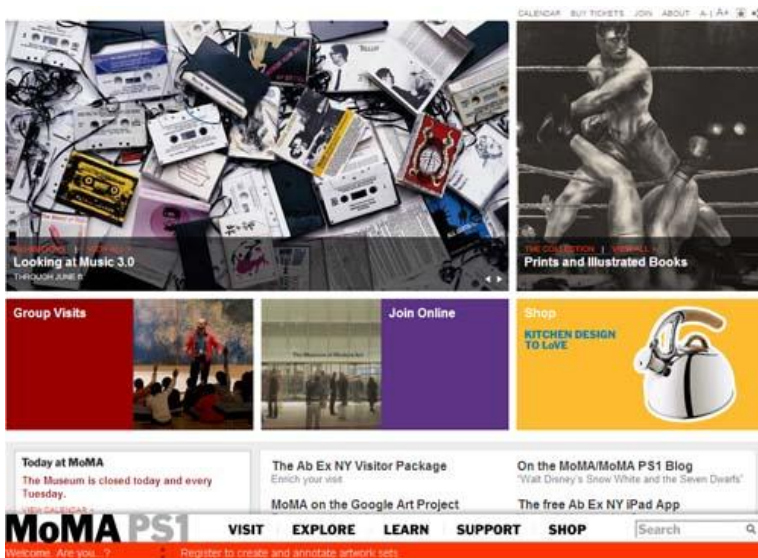
What to Include?



- ✓ Location
- ✓ Hours
- ✓ Contact Information
- ✓ Collections & Services
- ✓ Prominent Search Box
- ✓ Discovery Tool
- ✓ Interactive Chat Box
- ✓ Promotional Features

Inspiration from Museum Sites

Riley-Huff (2009) examined museum Web sites and found that academic library Web sites tended to be text based while museum Web sites were more visual, ..



...and she recommended using text prudently by "resisting the tendency to place a [link] to everything available on one page" (p. 86).

Principles of Art

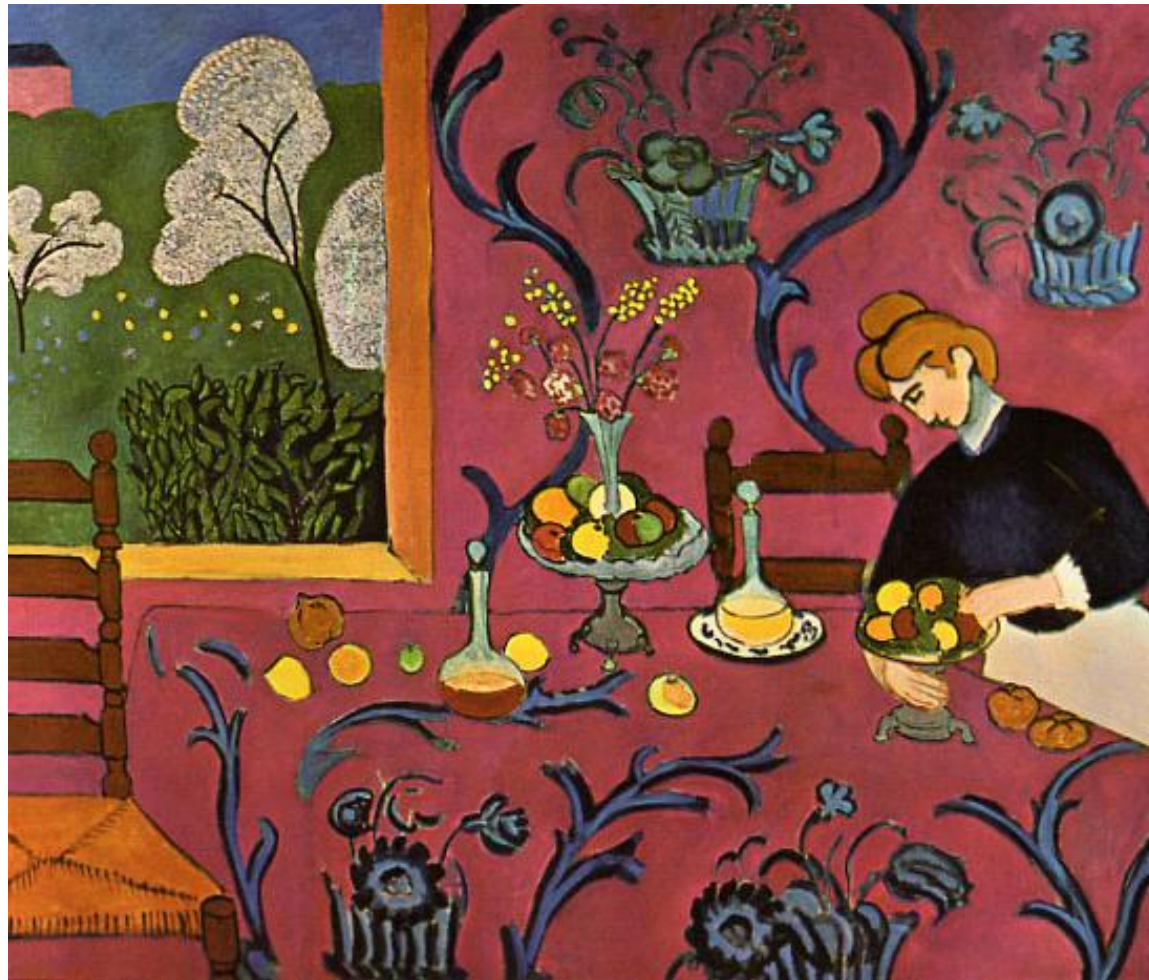
- ✓ Movement
- ✓ Unity
- ✓ Variety
- ✓ Balance
- ✓ Emphasis
- ✓ Contrast
- ✓ Proportion
- ✓ Pattern



Elements of Art

- ✓ Color
- ✓ Value
- ✓ Form
- ✓ Line
- ✓ Space
- ✓ Shape
- ✓ Texture





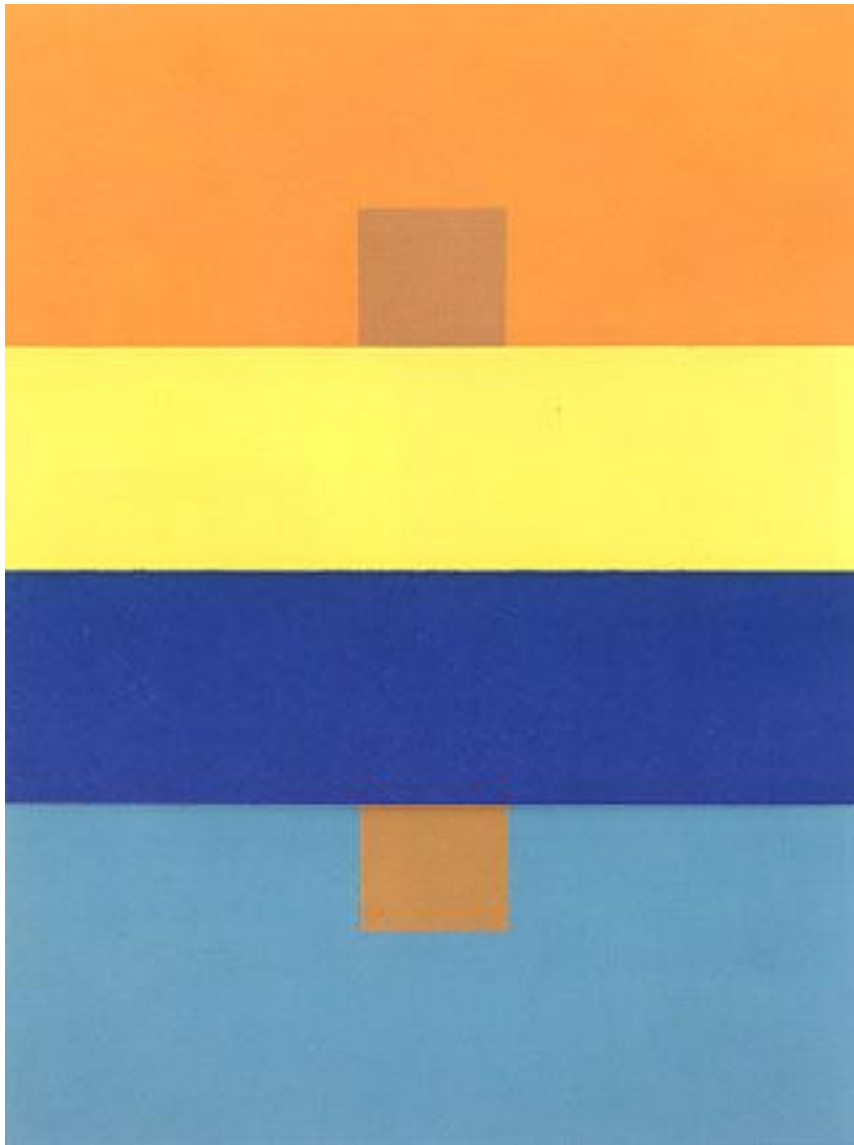
Henri Matisse, Harmony in Red, 1908-09

Composition: “...the art of arranging in a decorative manner the diverse elements at the painter’s command to express his feelings” (as cited in Flam, 1994, p. 36).



Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Madame Ingres, 1859

“...a home page, similar to Ingres' portraits, is successful when the viewer's eye comprehends the entire home page while at the same time recognizing areas of importance” (Feher, 2010, p. 13).

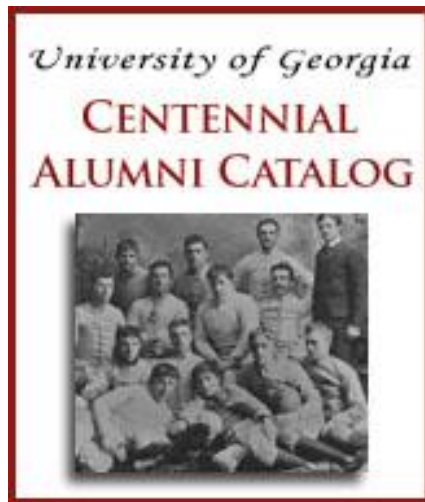


Albers' experimentations with color “sought to engage rather than merely inform” (as cited in Albers, 2006, p. xi).

A color has many faces – the relativity of color; CHAPTER IV. Color paper experiment from: *Interaction of Color*.

Visuals Support Information Delivery

Gibbs (2005) emphasized that "if users are to reject the pages at the homepage because the visuals fail to stimulate an interest in them, then the quality and appropriateness of the content and ease of use become irrelevant" (p. 43).



Functionality on the Home Page

- ✓ Move towards greater functionality on academic library home pages, including tabbed search boxes and discovery tools, such as EBSCO Discovery Service



Functionality and Ease of Use



“User expectations for complete and immediate discovery and delivery of information have been set by their experiences in the Web 2.0 world” (Diedrichs, 2009, p. 79).

Functionality and Ease of Use

- ✓ Discovery tools, such as EBSCO Discovery Service and Summon Web-scale Discovery Service



“Students were less concerned about the downstream issue of the quality of results than the front-end problem of ease of use” (Newton & Silberger, 2007, p. 20).

“Successful” Designs

CU Home > Libraries Home Search | Site Index | FAQ | Help

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Libraries & Collections | Catalogs | E-Resources | Request It | Ask Us | Using the Libraries



News [Joseph Urban Exhibition On Display](#)
The exhibit will run until August 27 in RBML ... >>

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FEATURED RESOURCE

[Ethnic American newspapers from the Balch collection, 1799-1971](#)

More than 130 fully searchable newspapers.

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“Successful” Designs

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Henry Madden Library at Fresno State. At the top left is the Fresno State logo with the text "Henry Madden Library" below it. To the right, it displays "Today's Hours: 7:45 A.M. - 11:00 P.M." and a "QUICK LINKS" dropdown menu. A navigation bar contains a home icon and links for "RESEARCH", "SERVICES", "COLLECTIONS", "ABOUT", and "ASK US!". The main content area features a large search bar with the text "Search library materials" and a "SEARCH" button. Below the search bar are links for "Library Catalog", "Databases by Subject", "Databases A-Z", "Journals & Newspapers A-Z", and "more →".

Tour the Library

Get to know our collections and services through a walking tour or online.

[Learn More](#)

Explore & Discover

The Library has a rich variety of collections, both print and electronic.

[Learn More](#)

We Can Help

Not sure where to start? Ask us! Get assistance in person, by email, phone, live chat, or text message.

[Learn More](#)

Events in the Library

The Library hosts meetings and events throughout the year. See what's next.

[Learn More](#)

Find What You Need

Connect to specialized search options and research guides.

[Learn More](#)

Support Your Library

The Library provides vital resources to advance knowledge and enrich our region. Help us provide a legacy of learning for future generations.

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Giving  *to the*
MADDEN LIBRARY

“Successful” Designs

The screenshot displays the University at Buffalo Libraries website. At the top, a blue header contains the university logo and the text "University at Buffalo The State University of New York | REACHING OTHERS". Below this, the main heading "University at Buffalo Libraries" is centered. A horizontal navigation bar includes links for "FIND LIBRARY MATERIALS", "MY ACCOUNTS", "GET HELP", "LIBRARIES & COLLECTIONS", "ABOUT US", and "ASK A LIBRARIAN".

A secondary navigation bar features "Everything" (selected), "Catalog", "Articles+", "E-Journals", "Reserve", and "Databases". Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text "Search for articles, journals, books, media and more..." and a green "SEARCH" button. To the right, a blue box displays a clock icon and the text "Library Hours Fall 2012".

The main content area features a large blue banner for "Delivery+ We'll Get It For You!". To the right of the banner, under the heading "FEATURED RESOURCE", is the text "Delivery+ We'll Get It For You!" followed by a bulleted list of service details:

- Journal articles and book chapters delivered electronically.
- Items delivered to departments (faculty & staff only).
- Materials retrieved and made available for pick-up at the UB library of your choice (students, faculty & staff).

Below the list is a link for "All Library News". At the bottom of the page, there are three small images: a "Delivery+ We'll Get It For You!" logo, an "ePay" logo, and a photograph of three people.

“Successful” Designs



Auburn University Libraries

[HOME](#) [FIND](#) [SERVICES](#) [ABOUT](#) [HOURS](#) [CONTACT](#) [GIVE](#) [ASK A LIBRARIAN](#)

CATALOG **ARTICLES & DATABASES** SUBJECT GUIDES E-JOURNALS

Search the Catalog

Find by: **All Fields**

Catalog Classic Catalog

Keyword Search

[My Account](#) [Renew Books](#) [Reserves](#) [Interlibrary Loan / AUBIExpress](#) [ALLIES](#)

Availability: [Study Rooms](#) [Laptops](#) [Textbooks](#) [MDRL](#)

TAILGATE
@ THE LIBRARY
Friday, September 14
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Auburn University's Libraries

[Architecture, Design, and Construction Library \(LADC\)](#)
[Charles Cary Veterinary Medical Library \(Vet Med\)](#)
[Ralph Brown Draughon Library \(RBD\)](#)

Featured Collections



Quick Links

[Dean's Corner](#)
[Digital Collections](#)
[Diversity at the Libraries](#)
[How-to @ the Libraries](#)
[Library Instruction](#)
[Library Student Advisory Council](#)
[Request Materials](#)
[Special Collections & Archives](#)
[Subject Specialist Librarians](#)
[Tests & Trials](#)

What's New

- Home Football Game Parking
- Sept. 13 Lecture: Latino Immigrants in the Southeastern States
- The Encyclopedia of War
- Measures of Effective Teaching: Section-Level Analytical Files, 2009-2011
- Seminars on EndNote, Advanced EndNote, and Zotero
- Labor Day Holiday Hours
- National Addition and 4th Grade Reading

Survey Questions – Open Ended

- ✓ What do you think are the most important items to have on our library home page?
- ✓ For what reasons have you come to the library web site in the past?
- ✓ What do you think are the most important items to have on our library home page?
- ✓ How could we improve the library home page to make it more useful to you?

Survey Questions – Close Ended

- ✓ How often do you use the library web site? (Daily; Weekly; A few times per semester; A few times per year; Never)
- ✓ Have you bookmarked the library home page?
- ✓ Do you often access information from the library web site without starting at the library home page, for example via a Google search?
- ✓ Would you find it useful to get library information and services through social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter?

Usability Questions

- ✓ You need to use the MLA style for your paper. Does the library have information about how to format your citations?
- ✓ You're writing a paper about the civil war in Georgia and your professor said you must use some primary sources. He said that primary sources are things like documents and photographs that were written or created at the time the historical events happened. How would you find what the library has? Are there some that have been digitized for online use?
- ✓ Find a book on the Korean War

Usability Questions

- ✓ You need to find information on Victorian mourning customs for a paper you are writing. Where would you look?
- ✓ A professor has suggested that you search something called JSTOR for articles about your research paper topic. How would you get to JSTOR?
- ✓ You need to use Galileo resources from off-campus and you need a password. Where would you find it?

Usability Questions

- ✓ Are there any parts of the page that you find distracting or hard to understand?
- ✓ Is the page visually attractive? Why? Why not?
- ✓ Overall, what don't you like about the page?
- ✓ Overall, what do you like about the page?
- ✓ What do you think about the way the information is organized? What would you change?
- ✓ What terms, if any, are unfamiliar or unclear?

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<http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2009/02/17/bell>

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Questions?