Evaluating the UMD Libraries' Website

Presented by Martha Kyrillidou (LBSC713 Spring 2014)
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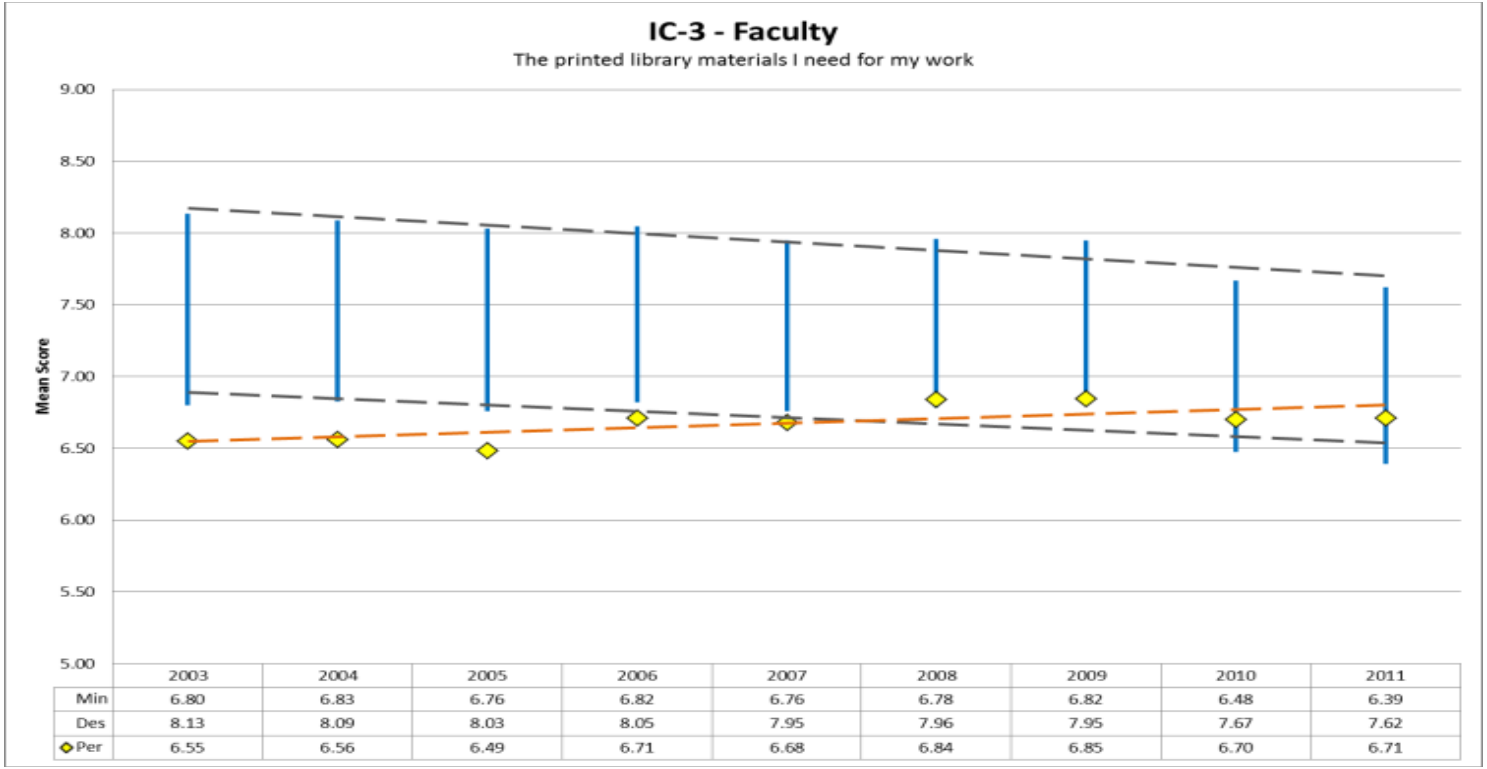
Reinventing Libraries: Reinventing Assessment Conference
Baruch College, William and Anita Newman Conference Center, NY, June 6

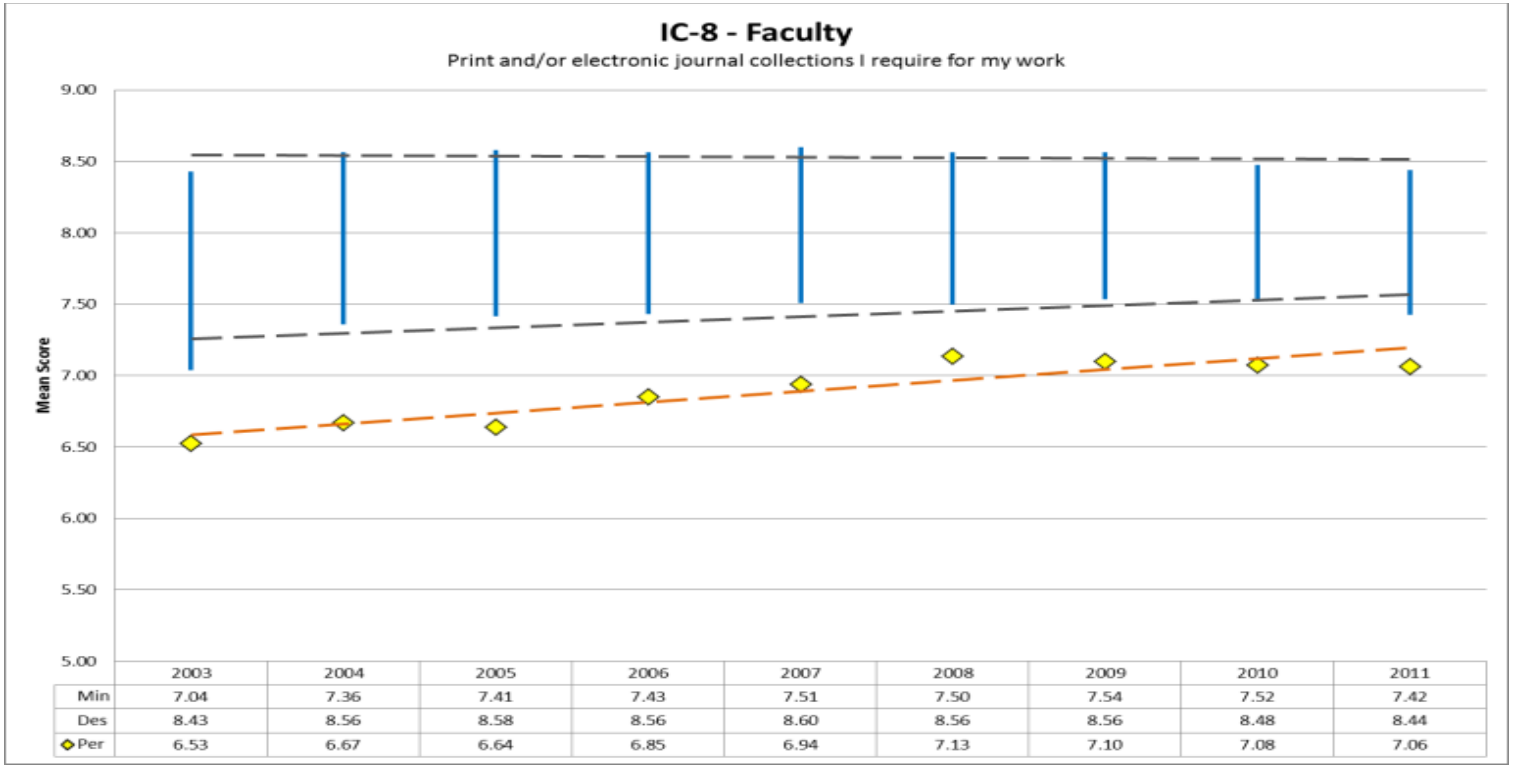
My motivation as an instructor ….

The Printed Library Materials I Need for My Work



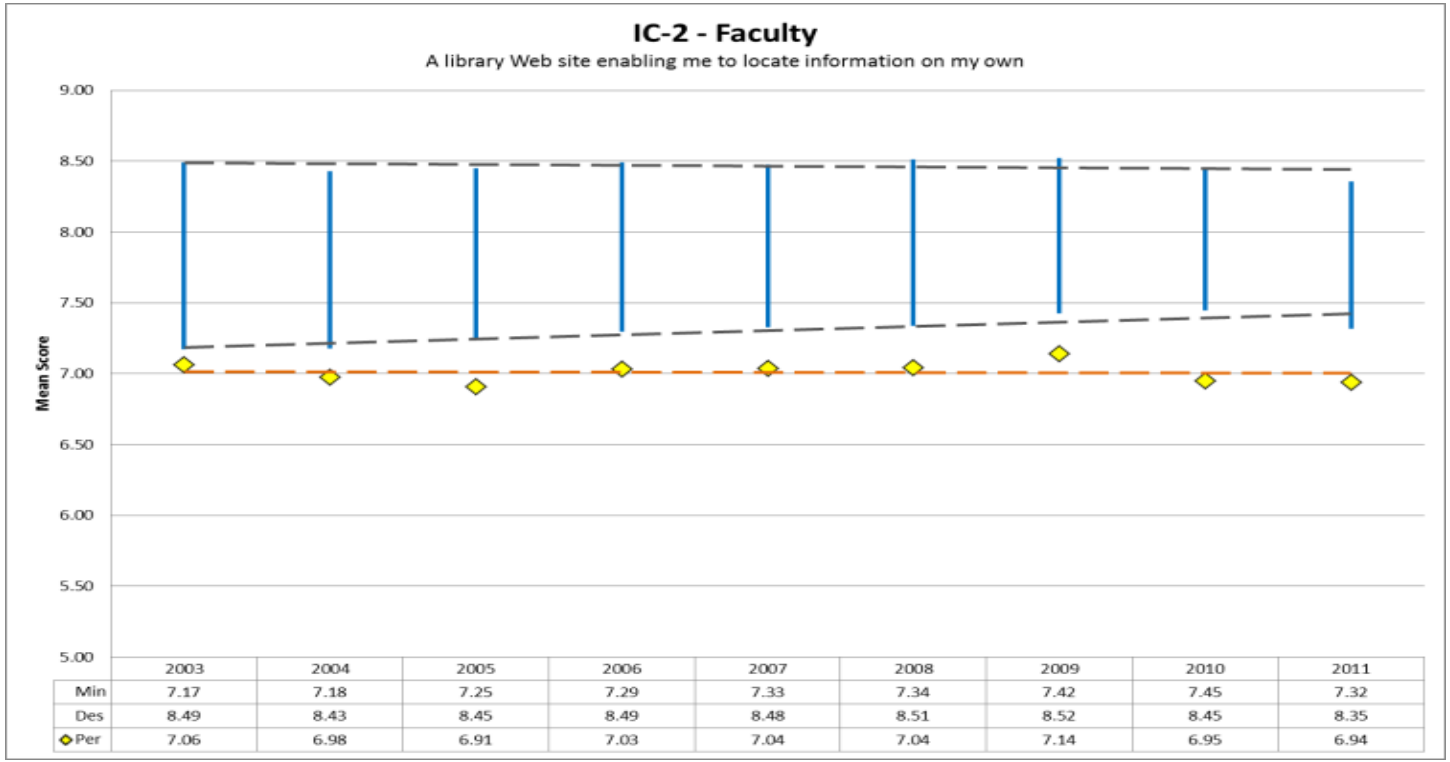
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Min	6.80	6.83	6.76	6.82	6.76	6.78	6.82	6.48	6.39
Des	8.13	8.09	8.03	8.05	7.95	7.96	7.95	7.67	7.62
Per	6.55	6.56	6.49	6.71	6.68	6.84	6.85	6.70	6.71

Print and/or Electronic Journal Collections I Require for My Work

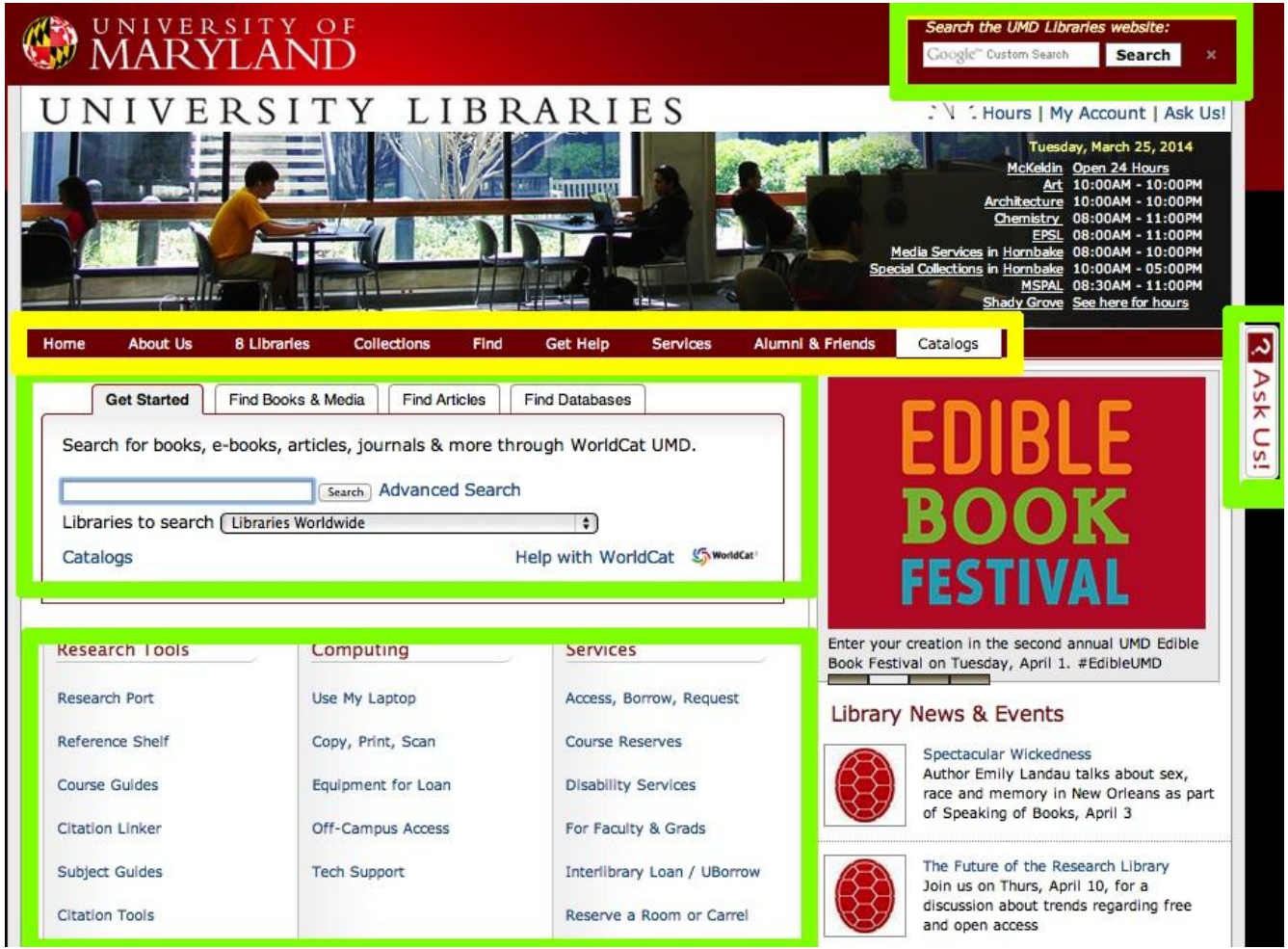


	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Min	7.04	7.36	7.41	7.43	7.51	7.50	7.54	7.52	7.42
Des	8.43	8.56	8.58	8.56	8.60	8.56	8.56	8.48	8.44
Per	6.53	6.67	6.64	6.85	6.94	7.13	7.10	7.08	7.06

A Library Website Enabling Me to Locate Information on My Own



	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Min	7.17	7.18	7.25	7.29	7.33	7.34	7.42	7.45	7.32
Des	8.49	8.43	8.45	8.49	8.48	8.51	8.52	8.45	8.35
Per	7.06	6.98	6.91	7.03	7.04	7.04	7.14	6.95	6.94


UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
Search the UMD Libraries website:
Search
Hours | My Account | Ask Us!
Tuesday, March 25, 2014
McKeldin Open 24 Hours
Art 10:00AM - 10:00PM
Architecture 10:00AM - 10:00PM
Chemistry 08:00AM - 11:00PM
EPSL 08:00AM - 11:00PM
Media Services in Hornbake 08:00AM - 10:00PM
Special Collections in Hornbake 10:00AM - 05:00PM
MSPAL 08:30AM - 11:00PM
Shady Grove See here for hours
Home
About Us
8 Libraries
Collections
Find
Get Help
Services
Alumni & Friends
Catalogs
Ask Us!
Get Started
Find Books & Media
Find Articles
Find Databases
Search for books, e-books, articles, journals & more through WorldCat UMD.
Search
Advanced Search
Libraries to search
Libraries Worldwide
Catalogs
Help with WorldCat
EDIBLE BOOK FESTIVAL
Enter your creation in the second annual UMD Edible Book Festival on Tuesday, April 1. #EdibleUMD
Research Tools
Research Port
Reference Shelf
Course Guides
Citation Linker
Subject Guides
Citation Tools
Computing
Use My Laptop
Copy, Print, Scan
Equipment for Loan
Off-Campus Access
Tech Support
Services
Access, Borrow, Request
Course Reserves
Disability Services
For Faculty & Grads
Interlibrary Loan / UBorrow
Reserve a Room or Carrel
Library News & Events
Spectacular Wickedness
Author Emily Landau talks about sex, race and memory in New Orleans as part of Speaking of Books, April 3
The Future of the Research Library
Join us on Thurs, April 10, for a discussion about trends regarding free and open access

Researcher Think Aloud

When researching, I start in Google Scholar. Once I find a resource I am interested in reading more about, I then use the UMD proxy javascript on my toolbar to grant me access to the page I am on.
Because of this, I do not use the UMD website frequently.

Researcher Think Aloud

After attending a library user instruction session during an MLS class, I began using

Research Port almost exclusively to conduct topic searches and download specific articles. The only time I use WorldCat is to search for books.

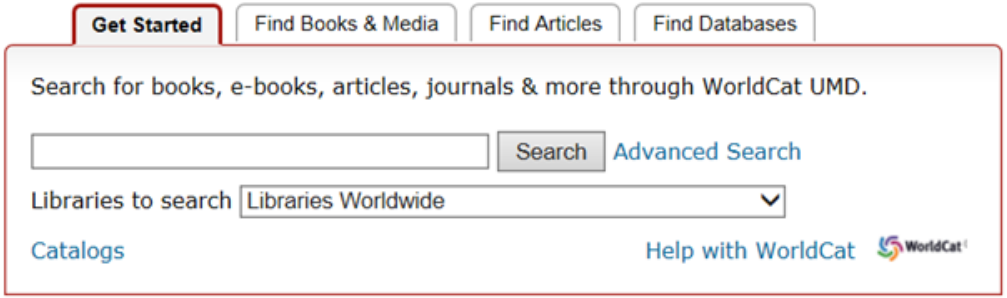
Researcher Think Aloud

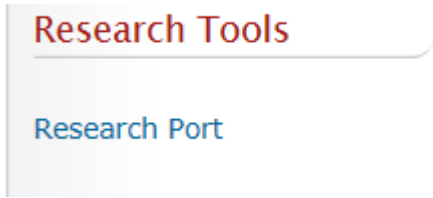
After logging in to Research Port, I access databases I frequently use from the “My Databases” list organized in the “My List” section of the portal.

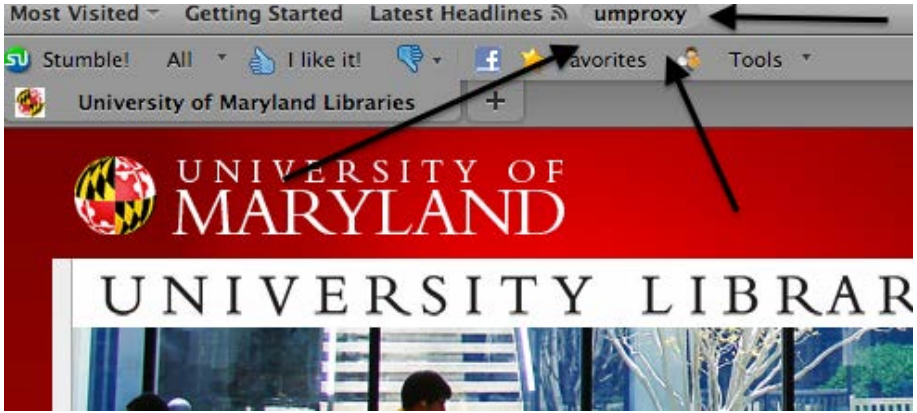
Researcher Think Aloud

I go directly to Research Port databases to get to subscription articles and WorldCat for books. I have very specific research routes when I visit lib.umd.edu and don’t often pay attention to other search features.
The lib’s homepage is too busy and overwhelming.

Different Approaches







Literature Review:
How Students Conduct Online Research

- Students tend to search for academic resources in the same way that they conduct regular searches in their everyday lives.
- Tend to start with search engines rather than library website.

Literature Review: Student Expectations/ Use of Academic Library Websites

- Expect sites to be easy to navigate and visually appealing
- Clarity about what electronic resources on the site are for
- Prefer single search boxes, but expect it to function like commercial search engines
- Doctoral students, faculty, and Arts and Sciences majors utilize academic library websites more than others

Literature Review: Usability 101 by Nielsen

- Jakob Nielsen defines usability “as a quality attribute that assesses how easy user interfaces are to use.”
- Nielsen attributes five quality components of a usable interface: learnability, efficiency, memorability, errors, and satisfaction.
- Nielsen’s usability problem curve demonstrates “that you need to test with at least 15 users to discover all the usability problems in the design.”
- Nielsen recommends using an iterative model which tests typically five users at each stage of the process. “The ultimate user experience is improved much more by three tests with 5 users than by a single test with 15 users.”

Literature Review: Wayfinding & Findability

- Cognitive mapping
  - *Findability*
    - Trajectory & container metaphors (“I went to…” or “I found it in…”)
  - *Wayfinding*
    - Markers in cityscape (i.e. directional signs, street signs, etc.)

- Users are humans! And humans are complex!
  - Mooers’ law - “an information retrieval system will tend *not* to be used whenever it is more painful and troublesome for a customer to have information than for him to not have it”

Problem/ Initial Examination

- An initial examination of the website reveals a number of issues in relation to usability, search functionality, and discovery.
- Our initial assessment already indicates the need for more space between sections on the homepage to reduce information overload. The website does not make it known what collections are available to be searched, and without knowing what is out there, it can be counterproductive for students to simply throw keywords at the search box and hope for the best.

Goals

- Provide suggestions on...
  - Redesign of the research tool features
  - How students access the UMD Libraries' website to satisfy their research needs
  - What features of the website are being utilized?
  - If they are satisfied with performance of research tools.

Representativeness

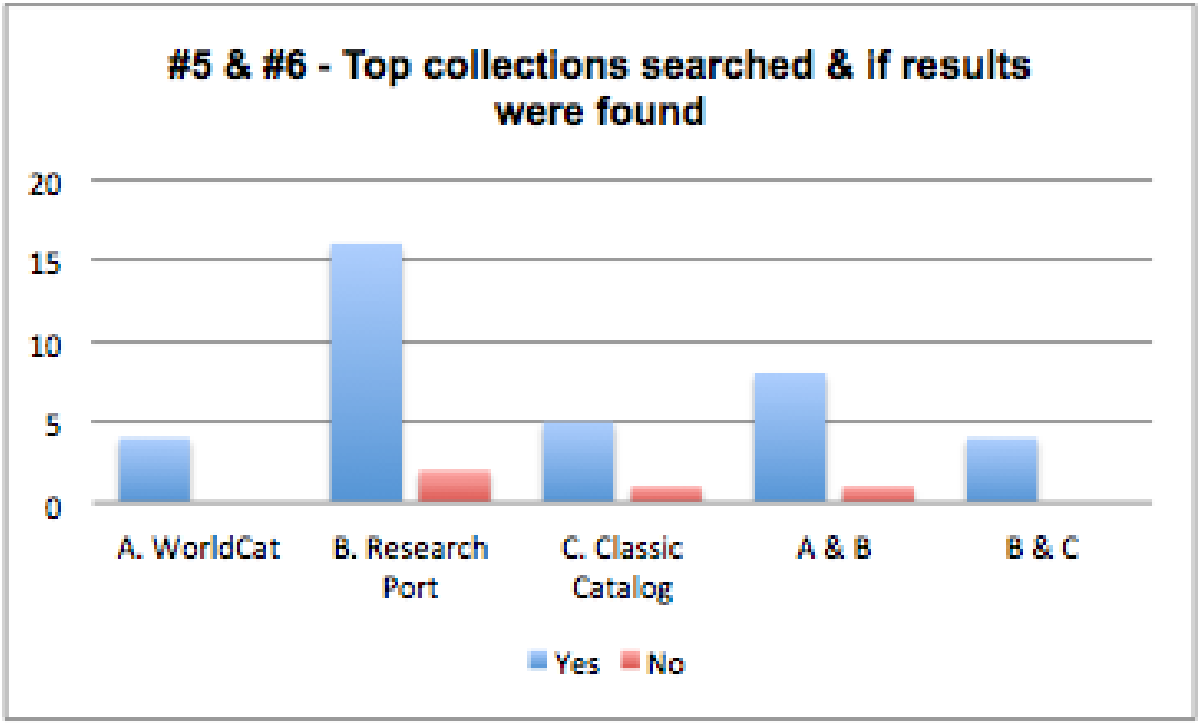
UMD iSchool students received the online survey via a listserv. Of the 444 total students, 57 responded (12.8%).

	# / % of responses	# / % of student population
In person, full-time	27 / 47.4%	273 / 61.5%
In person, part-time	14 / 24.6%	120 / 27%
Online cohort	16 / 28%	51 / 11.5%

Results - Questions 5 & 6

Think about the last time you landed on the UMD Libraries' website to conduct a search. When entering keywords for your topic, which collections did you search?

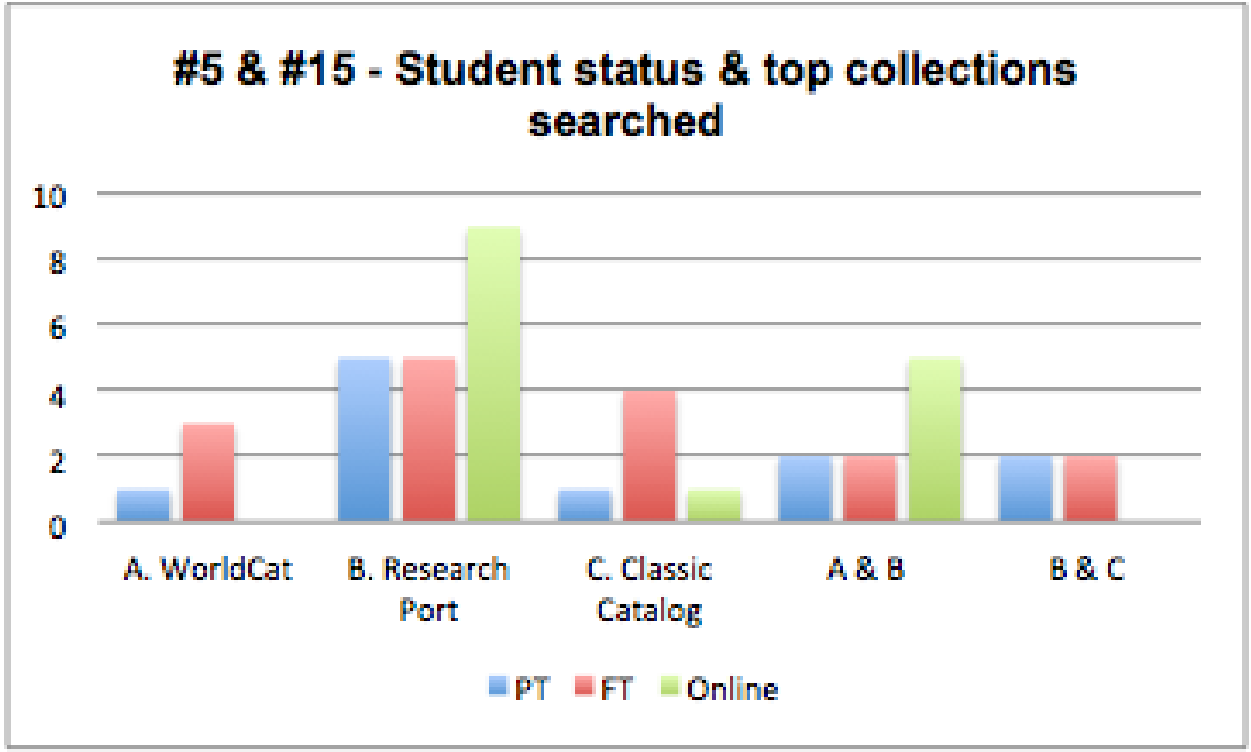
Did you find what you needed?



Results - Questions 5 & 15

Think about the last time you landed on the UMD Libraries' website to conduct a search. When entering keywords for your topic, which collections did you search?

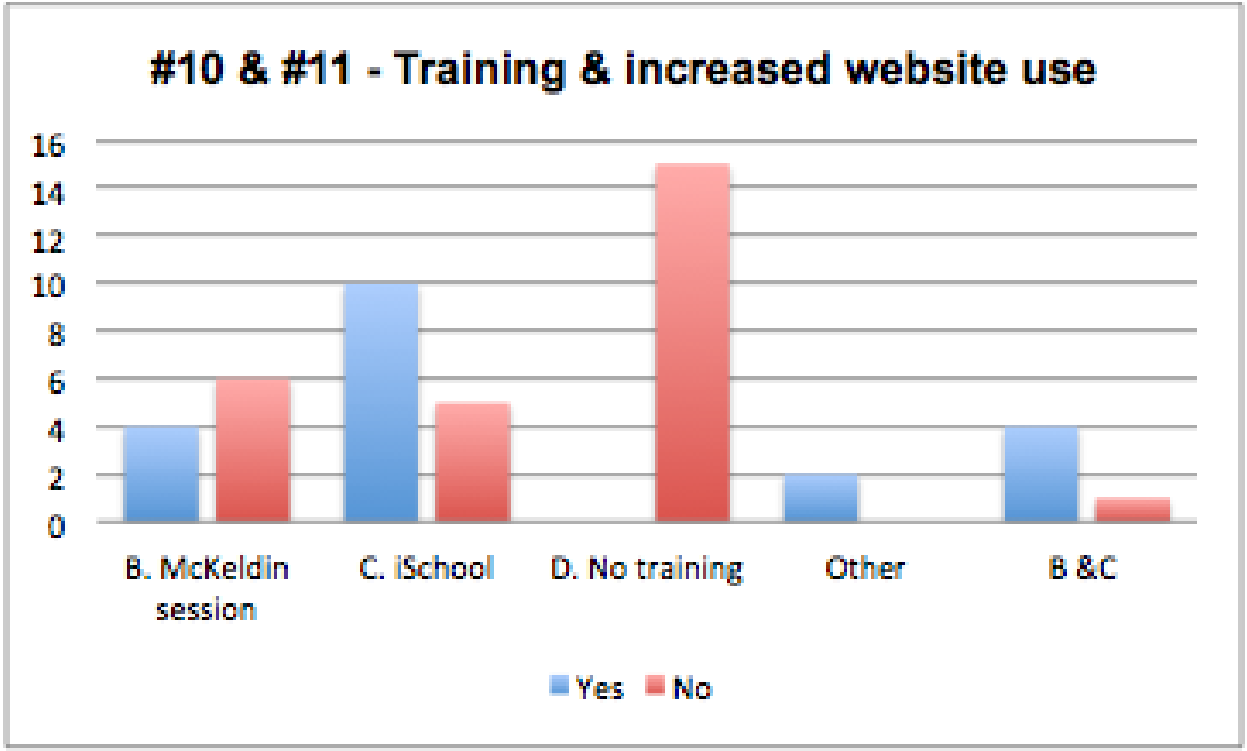
What is your student status?



Results - Questions 10 & 11

Have you received any training on how to use the UMD Libraries' website?

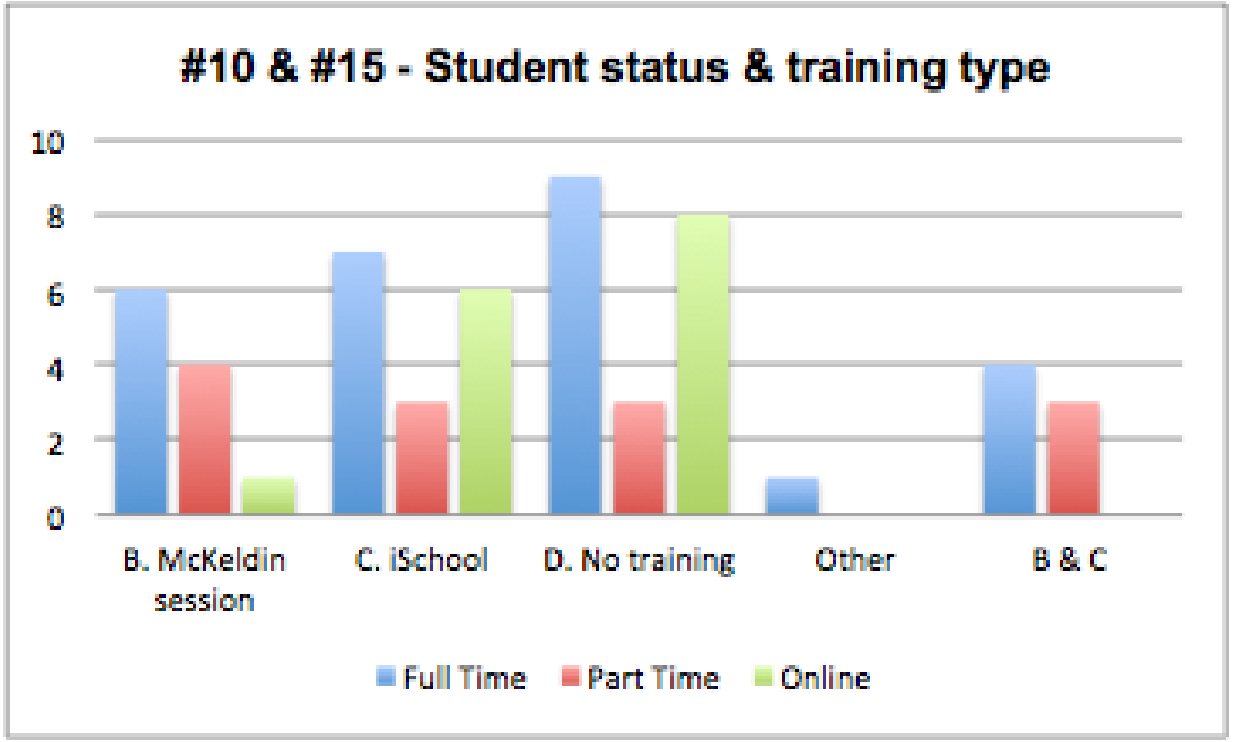
Do you think you would use the UMD Libraries' website more often if you had received training?



Results - Questions 10 & 15

What is your student status?

Have you received any training on how to use the UMD Libraries' website?



Recommendations

For the web team:

- Aesthetics: Bolder/bigger fonts
- Reformat: Less clutter, more prominent databases, emphasize Research Port
- Online tutorial/instruction

Recommendations

For Future Research:

- Larger Sample Size/Student Groups to look at instruction
- Conduct more than just an online survey

Best practices …

Utilizing LibQUAL+® to identify best practices in academic research library website design

Raynna Bowlby, Brinley Franklin, and Carolyn Lin

Proceedings of the 9th Northumbria International Conference on Performance Measurement in Libraries and Information Services, Ian Hall, Stephen Thornton, and Stephen Town, eds. York, England, August 22-26, 2011 (York, UK: University of York, 2012): 29-34.

Questions?

THANK
YOU