Reaching High and Far to Improve the Value of the Library's Website

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Why Redesign?

- Dated appearance
- Lengthy and unwieldy column of links in left column on homepage
- Confusing link names
- News given central importance over resources and services
- Stagnant news box
- Patron group information portals overlooked
- Tiny font size
- Hidden site search option
- Confusing image links and organization on E-Resources pages
- Numerous text-heavy secondary pages
- Hidden related links

Web Survey

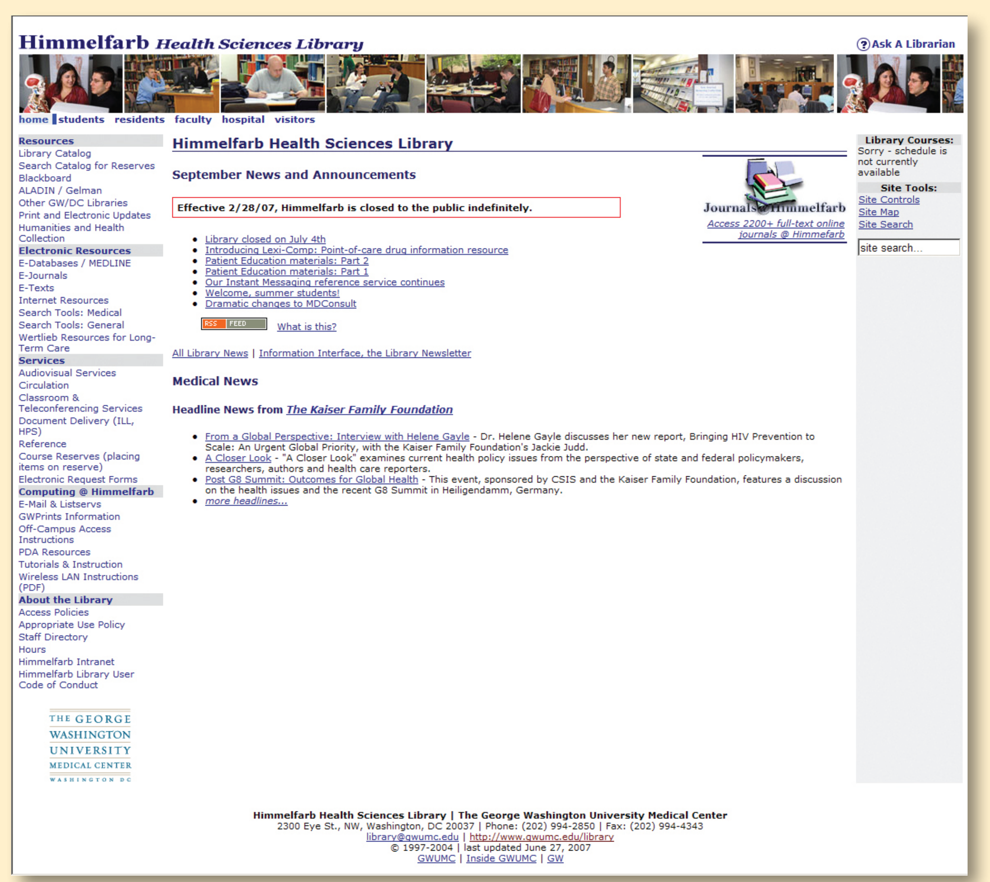
- A web survey of 223 students, 43 faculty, 13 residents, and 18 library staff was conducted in October 2006 to obtain information about the website including user demographics, user experience, tasks performed, perceptions of the website, and suggestions for improvement.
- Many problems associated with the website were confirmed and new issues were identified.

Goals for Redesigned Website

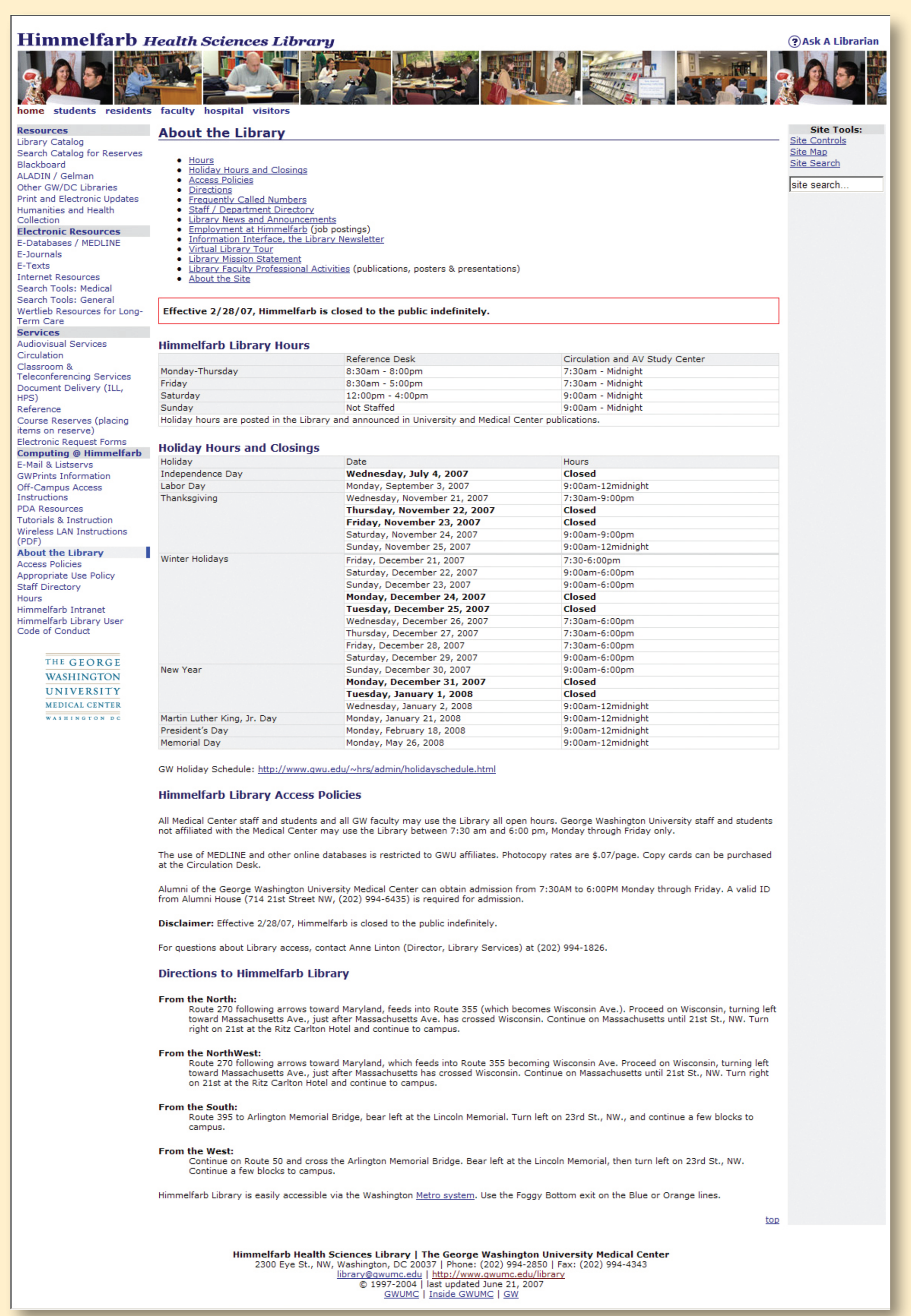
- Easy access to frequently used resources
- User-friendly wording
- Cleaner, more attractive, user-centered design
- Continually updated news box
- Search tool on the top level
- Simplified categories for resources and services on top level
- Streamlined content on secondary pages

Challenges

- Migrating from a customized in-house E-Journals page to Serials Solutions in the middle of the redesign process. This had many implications for the design of the interface as well as changes to the SQL database used to generate the E-Journals, E-Databases, E-Texts and Internet Resources pages.
- Reworking the content from the former Faculty, Student, Residents, Hospital sections at the top of the old webpage into the new Portals area for Medicine and Health Sciences and Public Health & Health Services required on-going collaboration with a sub-committee to develop the new pages.
- Communicating the timeline and technical impact of adopting Serials Solutions (versus moving forward with modifications to our existing database) required frequent meetings with members of the administrative and electronic resources staff, and a high level of flexibility in the development of the E-resources pages.



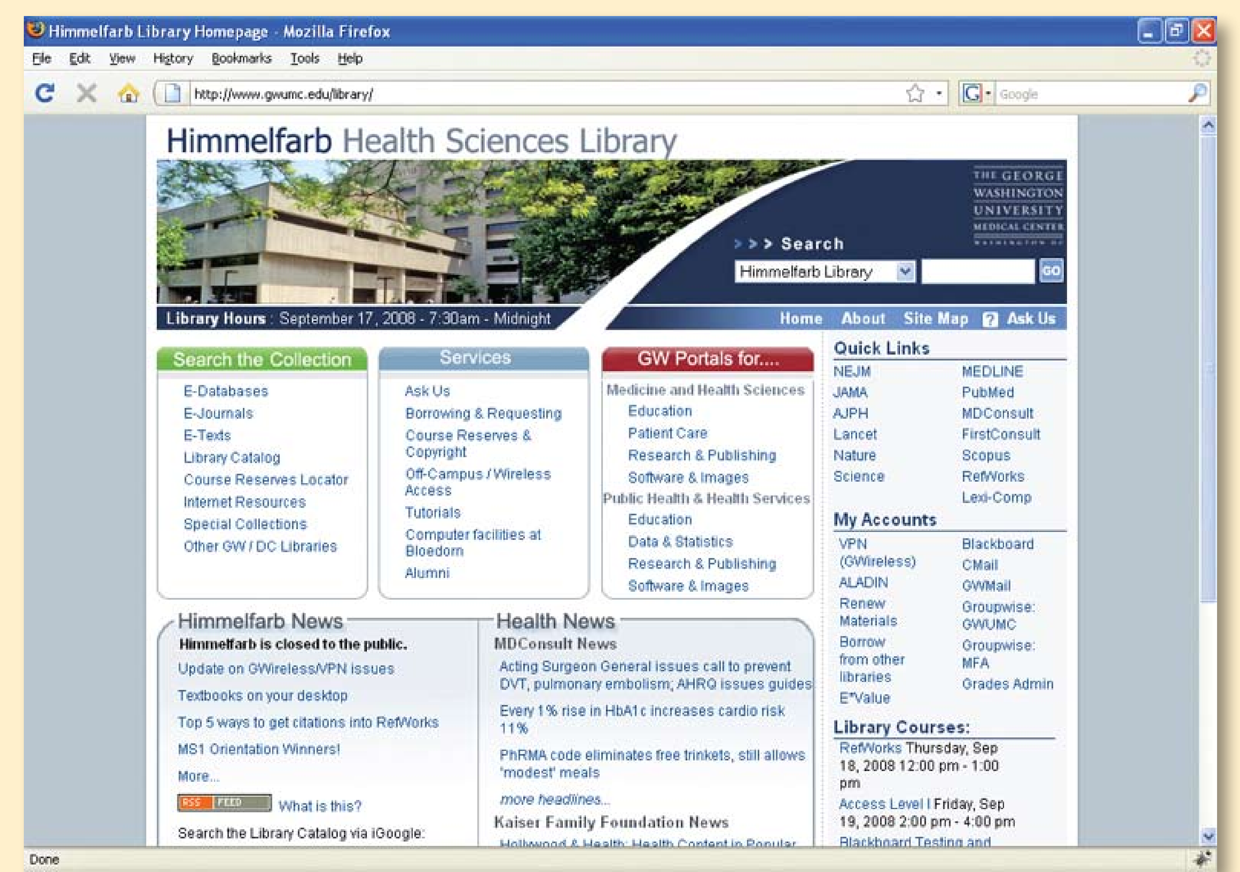
Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library
Ask A Librarian
home students residents faculty hospital visitors
Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library
September News and Announcements
Effective 2/28/07, Himmelfarb is closed to the public indefinitely.
Medical News
Headline News from The Kaiser Family Foundation



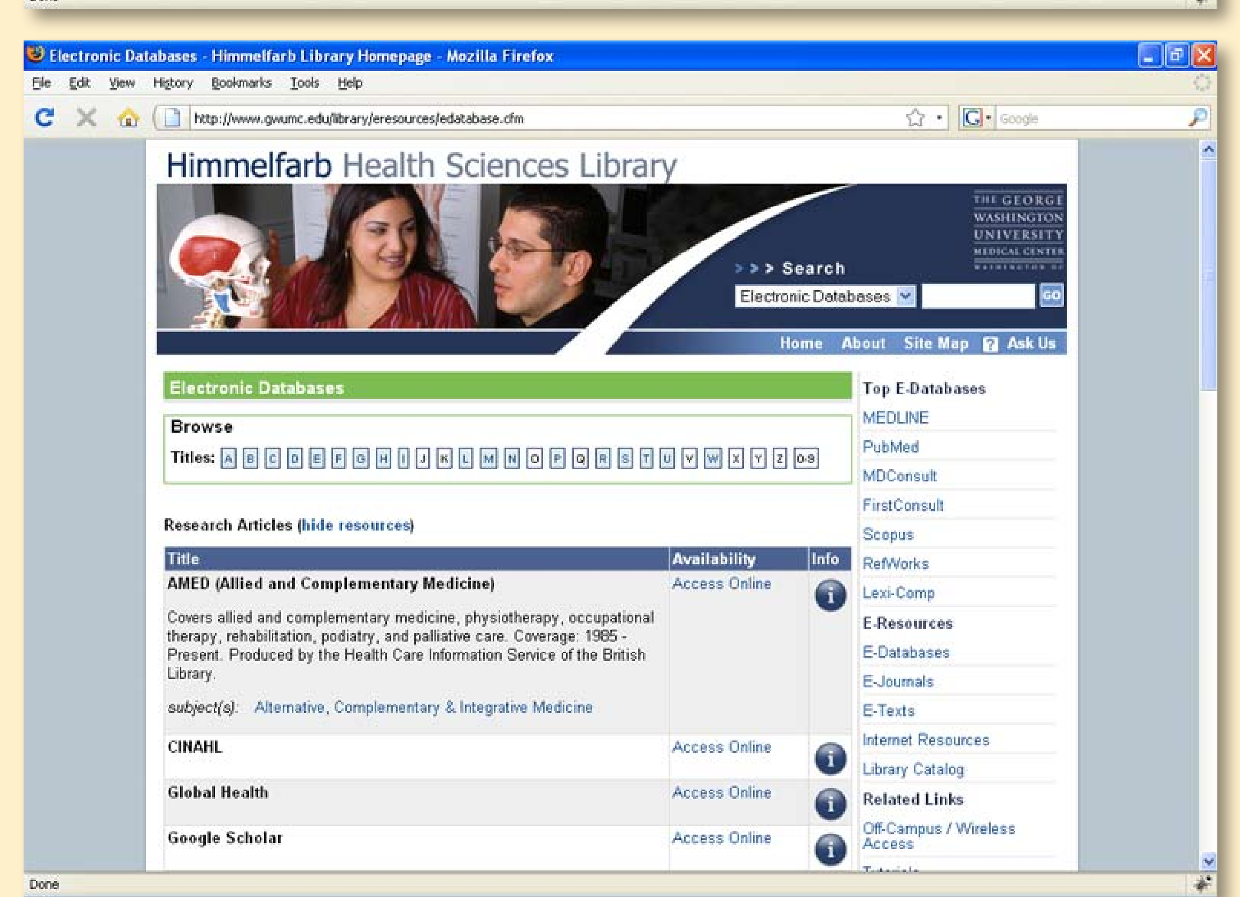
Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library
About the Library
Effective 2/28/07, Himmelfarb is closed to the public indefinitely.
Himmelfarb Library Hours
Holiday Hours and Closings
Himmelfarb Library Access Policies
Directions to Himmelfarb Library

Before Screen Shots

After Screen Shots



Himmelfarb Library Homepage - Mozilla Firefox
http://www.gwumc.edu/library/
Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library
Search
Library Hours : September 17, 2008 - 7:30am - Midnight
Home About Site Map Ask Us
Search the Collection
Services
GW Portals for....
Quick Links
My Accounts
Himmelfarb News
Health News
Library Courses:



Electronic Databases - Himmelfarb Library Homepage - Mozilla Firefox
http://www.gwumc.edu/library/eresources/edatabase.cfm
Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library
Electronic Databases
Browse
Research Articles (hide resources)
Title
Availability
Info
AMED (Allied and Complementary Medicine)
CINAHL
Global Health
Google Scholar
Top E-Databases
E-Resources
Related Links

New Features

- Search the Collection, Services, and Portals sections of the homepage
- Quick Links and My Accounts area
- Blog format for news box
- Search box across website on top level
- User-friendly wording
- Context-specific related links
- E-Texts pages with links for both electronic and print versions (when available)
- E-Databases main page organized into eight broad categories
- E-Journals pages generated by Serials Solutions
- Simplified E-Resources table of materials (Columns were reduced and relabeled, access links were simplified, and an image link was added to show or hide resource descriptions.)

Usability Testing

- Two rounds of usability testing were conducted.
- The first round, conducted in May 2007, tested the homepage and secondary pages except the E-Journals, E-Databases, E-Texts and Internet Resources pages. There were 6 student participants.
- The second round of testing was conducted in early July 2007 (1 month before going live) and covered the entire website including all E-Resources pages. There were 4 faculty and 5 student participants.
- A Reference Librarian was available for all usability sessions to assist in answering questions related to specific databases, journals, and other resources.

Changes Made Based on Usability Results

- Link names and wording of content were modified (Example: Borrowing from other Libraries, GW Portals for.., Off-Campus / Wireless Access)
- Suggestions were incorporated (Example: Move library hours into the banner space)
- Selection of links and clarity of new areas of the webpage were confirmed (Example: Quick Links, My Accounts, and GW Portals for.. sections)
- Problem areas were identified (Example: The A-Z browse links on the Internet Resources pages caused repeated user confusion and were subsequently removed.)

Future Plans

- Incorporation of WebFeat federated search tool searching across 40+ bibliographic and full-text databases
- Addition of downloadable toolbar providing quick access to select library resources from a browser
- Adding tagging options (i.e. del.icio.us) for patrons to tag web pages
- Adding a features section to better promote individual library resources; use in conjunction with library marketing plan
- Highlight comments feature to make it more visible to patrons
- Provide ability for patrons to rank library web pages
- Expand use of Serials Solutions to include E-Texts and E-Databases when Serials Solutions versions are available