


# Chapter 4

## Overcoming the Google Handicap: How to Incorporate Information Literacy Skills on a Junior College Library Website

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### ABSTRACT

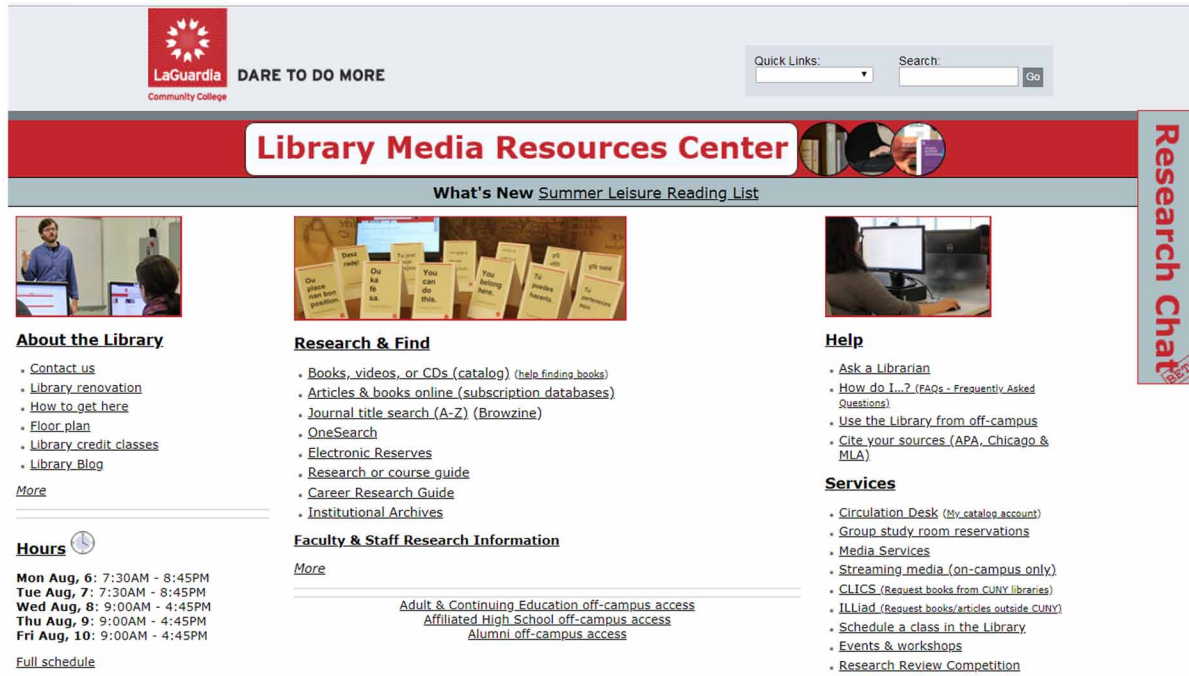
*This chapter illustrates how the author upgraded the library website at an urban junior college, evaluating the efficacy of the single search box and how to support information literacy. As a framework, the author used the United States Department of Energy's Root Cause Analysis Guidance Document, which illustrates root cause analysis, a process to uncover, analyze, and resolve issues or problems of user behavior relating to technology. A usability test of the library's website using student subjects supplied data for data collection. Events and causal factor analysis identified the causes of problems observed in the usability test and corrective actions required to mitigate them. Results determined what design strategies promote information literacy on a library website and if the single search box is the best fit for an urban junior college.*

### INTRODUCTION

Google Search is arguably the most popular resource to search the World Wide Web (Statista, n.d.). It requires no research experience. A user enters words into a single search box and receives seemingly good results in a split second (Koonz, 2016, p. 120). Recent trends position a single search box in the center of an academic library's home page. Discovery tool services such as Primo, EBSCO Discovery Service, Summon, and WorldCat Local, allow students to search all available information in a library using the familiar single search box. More importantly, the Google-like tool supports a search for research articles across multiple databases rather than require students to select a database from a subject or alphabetical

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Figure 1. The former Library Web site utilized the ExpressionEngine content management system (LaGuardia Community College, 2018)



list (Fawley & Krysak, 2012, p. 207). While several college libraries within the City University of New York had employed Primo's single search box on their Web sites by 2017, LaGuardia Community College had not. LaGuardia is an associate degree-granting junior college within New York City. The Library's Web Services unit decided it was time to both review existing literature and assess the eight-year-old Web site to consider a potential upgrade. It was also time to determine if the search box approach was the best choice for a junior college. Figure 1 is the Web site's home page at the time of the review.

Studies of implementing discovery tools on library Web sites are primarily restricted to senior colleges and universities. Very little research is at the junior college level. However, researchers at Moraine Valley Community College, an associate degree-granting institution in the United States, determined that a single search box alone on a home page was not sufficient at the junior college level (Swanson & Green, 2011, p. 227). They concluded that junior college students "were not well-positioned to make choices on an academic library Web site" (Swanson, Hayes, Kolan, Hand, & Miller, 2016, p. 359) and were not prepared for college. Junior colleges in the United States refer many students to one or more levels of remediation or developmental education to help them adjust to college-level work (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010, p. 255). Researchers at Moraine Valley emphasized that a key part of student learning at the junior college is building a context for research because students are new to college and college-level research. Students' ability to select tools and interpret results will be limited when they do not have guidance in how research tools operate (Swanson et al., 2016, p. 366). Therefore, a search box in the center of a library Web site without any instruction in how to use it or in what it searches is unsatisfactory.

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