

Library Website Migration and Chat Functionality/Aesthetics Study February 2013

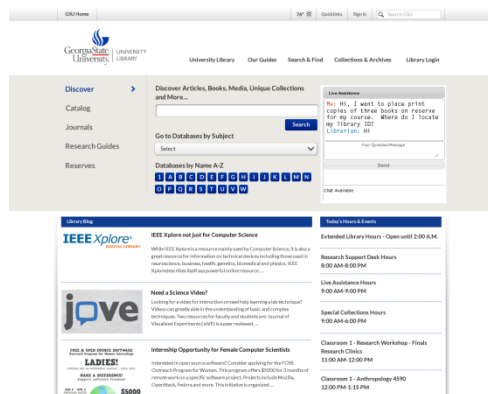
Summary of Study and Results

Georgia State University is in the process of migrating its website from RedDot to WordPress and implementing a new design template. The library plans to switch to WordPress and adopt the new design template by April 2013. In anticipation of the new website design, the library conducted usability and preference testing with students to gather feedback on the chat reference tool available from the site. The purpose of the testing was to determine user preferences about basic function and aesthetics regarding the chat feature.

Ten GSU students were recruited for this study, and each subject participated in an individual interview with the Assessment Librarian. All interviews were conducted February 8-19, 2013. The subjects were of the following class levels and majors:

- PhD, Clinical and Community Psychology
- Senior, International Studies
- Senior, Computer Information Systems
- Senior, Accounting and Finance
- Junior, Psychology
- Junior, Physics
- Junior, Psychology/Pre-Med
- Junior, Marketing
- Junior, Business/Economics
- 2nd/3rd year, Political Science

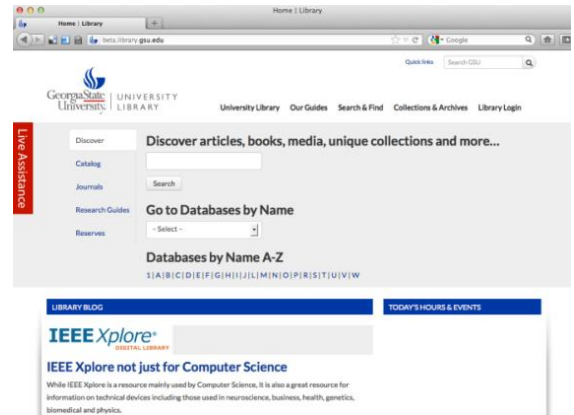
Subjects were asked nine questions, a few of which had follow-up questions. Presented here are summary responses for each question. Appendix 1 (beginning on page 5) includes individual responses to each question.



Question 1: [Subjects were shown the home page mock-up with the embedded chat widget.] This is a mock-up or prototype of the library's new home page. If you were on this page and wanted help from a librarian, what would you do?

Nine out of 10 subjects responded "Live Assistance" and indicated the embedded chat widget. One subject pointed to "Live Assistance Hours" in the Today's Hours & Events section.

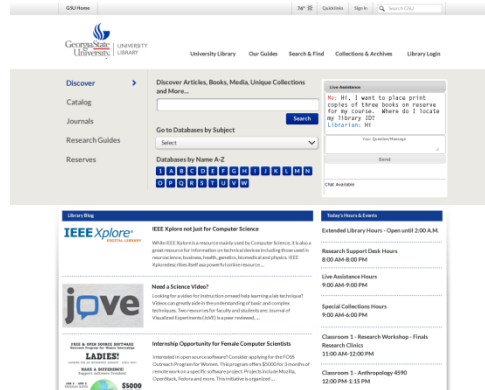
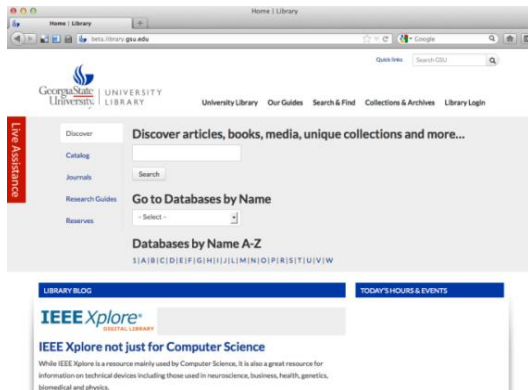
Question 2: [Subjects were shown the home page mock-up with the red Live Assistance button on the left.] Here's another mock-up of the library's home page. If you were on this page and wanted help from a librarian, what would you do?



Responses were mixed.

- Four subjects noted the Live Assistance button.
- Four subjects noted the Live Assistance button after first mentioning another option: site search, Our Guides, Search & Find, and “nothing.” These subjects commented about the button:
 - It didn't catch my eye because it's sideways. It looked like a logo or part of the design.
 - I'm not sure I can click on it.
 - It looks like a graphic or a logo, not a button.
 - I didn't see that.
- One subject chose Our Guides.
- One subject chose the site search.

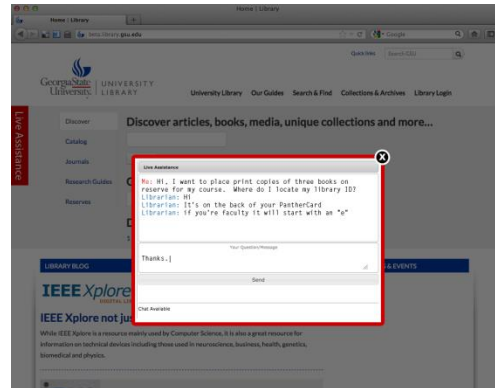
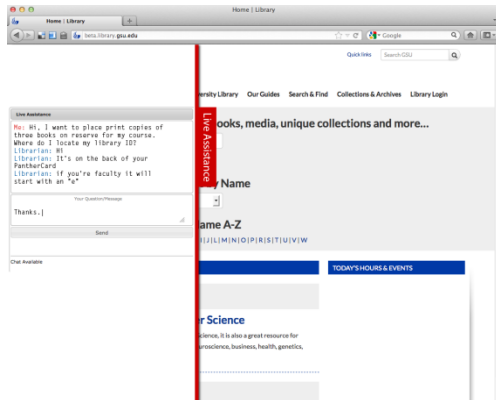
Question 3: [Subjects were shown the home page mock-up with the embedded chat widget and a second mock-up with the Live Assistance button on the left.] Which of these designs would you rather use?



All subjects responded that they would rather use the page with the embedded chat widget. When asked to explain their preference, responses included:

- It seems like I can use this immediately.
- Chat is easier to access.
- [Live Assistance] is right there.
- Clearer.
- It looks like I can start chatting right away.
- If I needed help, it's easier to find.

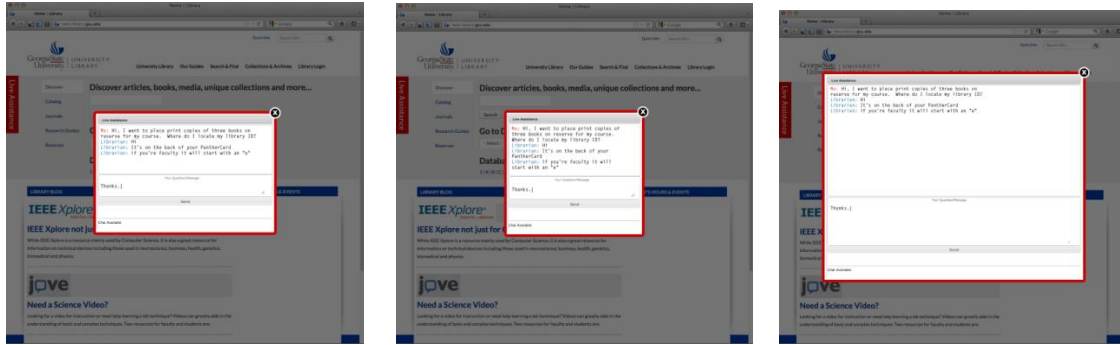
Question 4: [Subjects were shown the home page mock-up with the slide-out chat window and a second mock-up with the medium-sized, pop-up chat window.] If you click the Live Assistance button, a chat window will open that you can use to chat with a librarian. The chat window will slide out from the side or pop to the front. Which one of these would you rather use? Why?



Responses were mixed.

- Four subjects preferred the pop-up window.
 - I can see more of the home page. There's "dead white space" on the slide-out page.
 - It seems a little easier. I don't like the slide-out.
 - Seems simpler and I like the way it looks better.
 - It gets my attention.
 - I want to be able to minimize the pop-up and use the webpage in the background.
- Four subjects preferred the slide-out window.
 - I'm not a fan of pop-ups.
 - I'm still able to look at the webpage.
 - It's cool. It doesn't seem like the functionality of the webpage will be disabled, and the pop-up suggests that everything on the page will be disabled.
 - Cooler.
- Two subjects said their preference would depend on functionality. They said that they want to be able to use the webpage in the background without losing the chat. They want to be able to minimize or move the pop-up window, still use the webpage, and not lose the chat or collapse the slide-out, still use the webpage, and not lose the chat.

Question 5: [Subjects were shown three page mock-ups, each with a pop-up chat window of a different size: small, medium, and large.] Which of these chat windows would you rather use?



The majority of subjects would rather use the medium-sized chat window. Simply put, the large window is too large, and the small window is too small.

Question 6.A. What do you think about the label on the button—“Live Assistance”? All subjects responded favorably to the button label, and provided comments such as “good representation of what you’re getting,” “straightforward,” and “someone can ask a question then and there.”

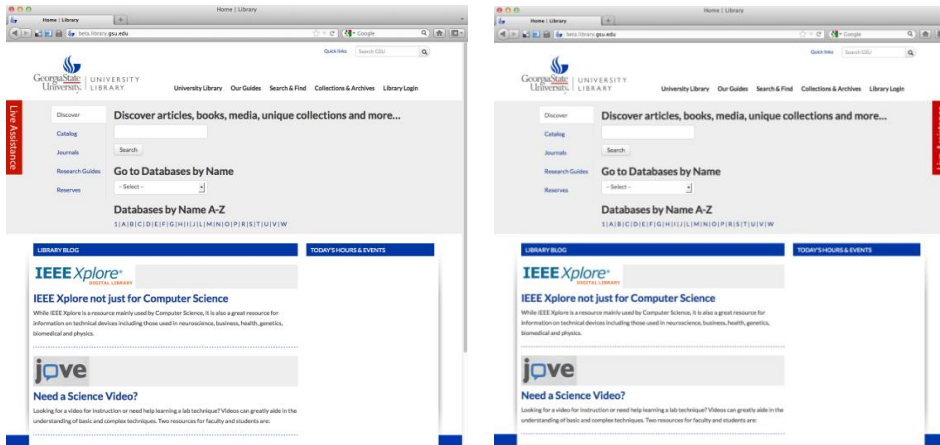
Question 6.B. What words would you use to label this button?

- Online librarian is in. Add a descriptor or change the button color to communicate availability.
- Questions?
- Help
- Talk to a Librarian. Using “librarian” suggests someone skilled who can help.
- Live Librarian
- Four subjects had no suggestions.
- Three subjects responded that Live Assistance is fine.

Question 6.C. [Subjects were shown four text label options for the button currently labeled “Live Assistance.” The options were 1) Ask Us; 2) Chat Now; 3) Chat with Us; 4) Live Assistance.] Which of these labels do you think would be best?

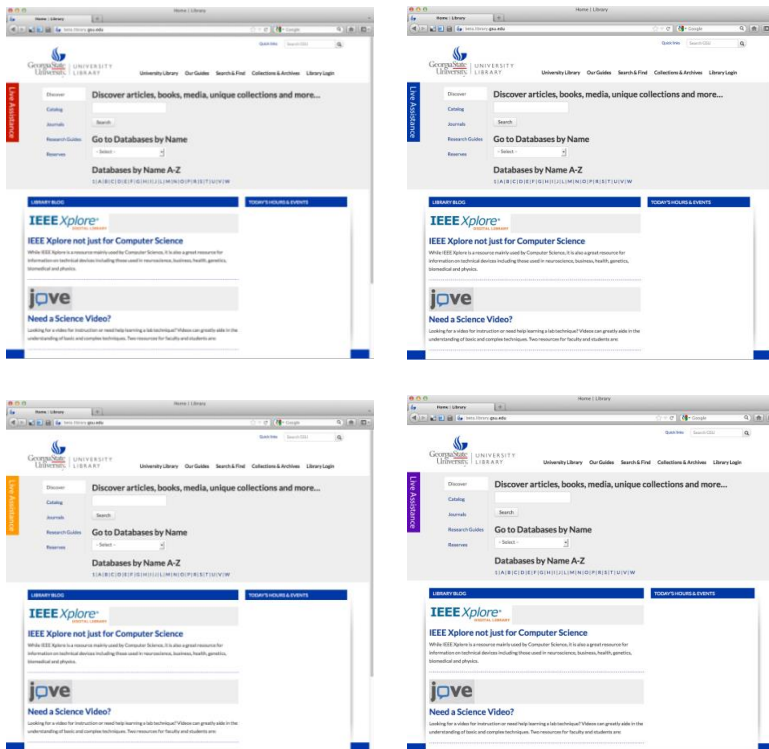
- Six subjects chose “Live Assistance.” Subjects preferred this option because “live” suggests immediacy, and “assistance” suggests help.
- Four subjects chose “Chat Now.” Subjects who preferred this option commented that the name is direct and seems immediate.

Question 7: [Subjects were shown the mock-up with the red Live Assistance button on the left and a second mock-up with the red Live Assistance button on the right.] Which one of these do you like better—the button on the left or the button on the right?

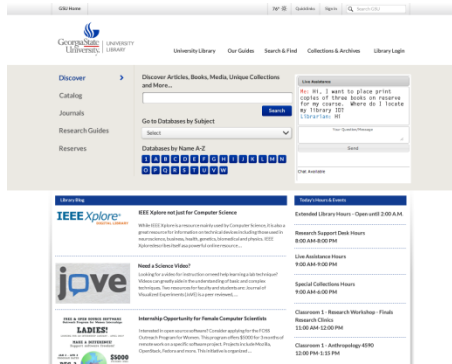


- Six subjects preferred the button on the right because it stands out more and is near the scroll bar.
- Four subjects preferred the button on the left, primarily because we read from left to right and the button is near other functions (search, Databases A-Z, etc.)

Question 8: [Subjects were shown four different page mock-ups, each with a different color Live Assistance button: blue, orange, red, and purple.] What color button do you like the best?



- Five subjects chose red because it stands out.
- Four subjects chose orange because it stands out.
- Two subjects chose blue because it goes with the color scheme.
- The subjects who chose red or orange all recommended not using blue because it blends in with the color scheme and doesn't stand out as a button.



Question 9: [Subjects were shown the home page mock-up with an embedded chat widget.] Take a look at this page. Which elements on this page do you like? What suggestions do you have for changing the page? Please see pages 11-12 for responses to this question.

Suggestions based on results:

- Keep the embedded chat widget over the Live Assistance button/tab.
- If the Live Assistance button/tab is used, keep the “Live Assistance” label.
- If the Live Assistance button/tab is used, move it to the right side of the page.
- If the Live Assistance button/tab is used, make the button red or orange.
- If the Live Assistance button/tab is used, build in functionality that will allow users to access the webpage without dropping/losing the chat.
- Keep hours and events prominently displayed on the home page.
- Use blue buttons (rather than plain text links) for the Databases by Name A-Z letters.

Appendix 1 – Complete Responses

1. [Show page with embedded chat widget.] This is a mock-up or prototype of the library’s new home page. If you were on this page and wanted help from a librarian, what would you do?

1. Live Assistance
2. Live Assistance. “This is the first place I’d go to ask questions for help.”
3. Live Assistance
4. Live Assistance
5. Live Assistance
6. Live Assistance
7. Live Assistance
8. Live Assistance
9. Live Assistance Hours [Subject mentioned she was looking for a link she could click on to ask, and then pointed to the Live Assistance item in the hours and events section.]
10. Live Assistance. I’ve never used it, but a librarian told me about it in a class.

2. [Show page with red Live Assistance button on the left.] Here’s another mock-up of the library’s homepage. If you were on this page and wanted help from a librarian, what would you do?

1. Our Guides
2. The [site] search box to type in what I’m looking for. I don’t see where to ask for information. Maybe Our Guides. Maybe **Live Assistance** in red on the side. This didn’t catch my eye because it’s sideways. It looked like a logo or part of the design.
3. I would click **Live Assistance** if it’s clickable. If not . . . I don’t see anything else I would do.
4. Not sure. I guess I’d have to use the search bar.
5. Live Assistance over here [button] but it’s not as obvious.
6. Click on this [**Live Assistance**] tab? I’m a little lost...had to look around for it.
7. Probably Search and Find? It says **Live Assistance** on the side, but I’m not sure I can click on it.
8. Search and Find, I guess. **Live Assistance** . . . I didn’t see it. It looks like a graphic or a logo, not a button.
9. Nothing? Oh, **Live Assistance** [button on the left]. I didn’t see that.
10. Live Assistance button

3. [Show embedded widget page and left button page.] Which of these designs would you rather use? Why?

1. Page with the embedded chat widget. It seems like I can use this immediately and that nothing about the web page will change. I didn’t notice the tab at first. The text being sideways throws me off. The tab makes me think that something will pop up when I click on it. I don’t know what to expect.
2. Page with the embedded chat widget. Chat is easier to access and more fits on the page. I can “consume” the page with the embedded chat widget as easily as I can the one with the button, even though there is more on the page.
3. Page with the embedded chat widget. Bigger menu [Note: The Discover, Catalog, etc., links appear larger on the mock-up with the embedded chat widget than on the mock-up with the Live Assistance button. Additionally, the Databases by Name A-Z letters are larger buttons on the mock-up with the

widget and smaller text links on the mock-up with the button.] The chat box is right there. More modern-looking.

4. Page with the embedded chat widget. More straightforward. Live Assistance pops out.
5. Page with the embedded chat widget. I like this Live Assistance. It's right here.
6. Page with the embedded chat widget. Clearer. Laid out better.
7. Page with the embedded chat widget. Seems more organized. Live Assistance is right there.
8. Page with the embedded chat widget. It looks like I can start chatting right away. Simpler. If I click the button, it might crash my browser or open in a new window. I needed help on the AT&T site, and they had a button like that. I didn't click it because I didn't know what would happen.
9. Page with the embedded chat widget. It's more detailed. I can actually type and ask a question. The other one I have to click on to type.
10. Page with the embedded chat widget. It's easier to see the chat box. If I needed help, it's easier to find.

4. [Show slide-out chat window page and medium pop-up window page.] If you click the Live Assistance button, a chat window will open that you can use to chat with a librarian. The chat window will slide out from the side or pop to the front. Which one of these would you rather use? Why?

1. Depends on functionality. If I can slide the chat closed and not lose the chat, I would like to use the slide-out one. If I can minimize the pop-up window and not lose the chat, I would like to use that one. Visually, I like the pop-up better.
2. Pop-up if I can click away from the chat window and not lose the chat. I can see more of the home page. There's "dead white space" on the slide-out page. Can I slide the chat in and out and not lose the chat? Can the pop-up be minimized, or just closed? I don't want it to close, because I want to refer back to the home page.
3. Depends on functionality. If I can move the pop-up window around the page, keep the chat open, and still use the web page in the background, I would prefer the pop-up window. If I can use the web page while the slide-out chat is open, that would be fine, too.
4. Slide-out. I'm not a fan of pop-ups.
5. Slide-out, because I'm still able to look at the page. I don't want to have to minimize the pop-up to use the page in the background.
6. Pop-up. It seems a little easier. I don't like the slide-out.
7. Pop-up. Seems simpler and I like the way it looks better.
8. Slide-out. It's cool. The navigation is still there. It doesn't seem like the functionality of the webpage will be disabled. The pop-up suggests an "intimate chat relationship" where everything else on the webpage will be disabled.
9. Slide-out. I like that it's "technical"—seems cooler.
10. Pop-up. It pops up in the middle. It gets my attention. The page with the slide-out has other things going on.

5. [Show pages with small, medium, and large pop-up chat windows.] Which of these chat windows would you rather use? Why?

1. Medium. The large one is too large, and the small one is too small. Ideally, if it has to pop up, I want to be able to minimize the window—not close it, but minimize it—so that I can use the web page behind it. Also, I want to be able to resize it myself, and undock it and move it around the page to see the web page content behind it.
2. Small – condensed, and I can see more of the web page in the background.

3. Medium. The large one is too large. The small one is ok, but I like the wider screen [medium] better.
4. Large – more space to type.
5. Large – “less work you have to do when messages start appearing.”
6. Medium. The large one is too large, and the small one is too small.
7. Medium. The large one is too large, and the small one is too small and awkward.
8. Medium. Nice width. The large one is too large.
9. Large – because it’s bigger, but I would like to minimize it so that I can do something the librarian is telling me about without closing the window.
10. No preference.

6.A. What do you think about the label on the button—“Live Assistance”?

1. Good representation of what you’re getting. Is the service 24x7? What about when it’s not staffed? I would be upset if it’s not working but still displayed. Maybe a note on the button about availability.
2. I would use “assistance” as the main word with “live” smaller. As it is, it doesn’t look like it’s for getting help. The text is too long. The direction is odd; horizontal would be better. [Subject drew a button just left of “Databases by Name A-Z.”]
3. Like it. Easy to find. Pops out on the page.
4. Fine.
5. Straightforward.
6. Someone can ask a question then and there.
7. Fine
8. Ok. Self-explanatory, but it sounds like tech support.
9. Bold. Straightforward.
10. I know what it’s for, so it makes sense to me.

6.B. What words would you use to label this button?

1. Online librarian is in. Add an indicator like “is in” to communicate availability. Maybe change the color of the button based on availability?
2. Questions?; Help
3. Live Assistance is ok.
4. Live Assistance is ok.
5. No suggestions.
6. No suggestions.
7. Live Assistance is ok.
8. Talk to a Librarian; Live Librarian – using “librarian” suggests someone skilled who can help
9. No suggestions.
10. No suggestions.

6.C. Which of these labels do you think would be best?

1. Live Assistance. “Ask Us” does not communicate immediacy. “Chat Now” seems generic. Who would I be talking to?
2. Chat Now. The “chat” suggests you can ask something. “Now” means an immediate response. It’s shorter and to the point. “Ask Us” might be an email—not immediate. “Chat with Us” might not be immediate. “Live Assistance” seems “medical.”

3. Live Assistance. States the purpose. Can assist with anything. Sounds like customer service. “Ask Us” is #2. I don’t like “Chat Now” or “Chat with Us.” Who am I chatting with—a student worker? “Random chat.” People use it because they need help, not to chat.
4. Live Assistance. “Assistance” means communication and help. The others don’t really suggest you’ll get help.
5. Live Assistance. Seems solely for help. It gives the purpose.
6. Chat Now. It’s direct. You know exactly what you’re doing. The others are “a little vague.”
7. Live Assistance. It’s more direct.
8. Chat Now. “Chat” is familiar to “kids.” It’s the most benign. “Ask Us” sounds like a survey. “Chat with Us” sounds like group chat. “Live Assistance” sounds like tech support.
9. Chat Now. Immediate.
10. Live Assistance. Instant. The other three don’t seem instant—might be email or might take time to get back to you.

7. Which one of these do you like better—the button on the left or the button on the right? Why?

1. Left – It’s intuitive. I read left to right. Plus, it’s next to other options. The button on the right has too much empty space around it.
2. Right – it’s away from dense text on the left. There’s empty space around the button on the right. People might see it better if it’s next to the scroll bar.
3. Left – It’s practical because it’s near the menus [Catalog, Journals, etc.]
4. Left – I read from left to right.
5. Right – Facebook has trained me that chat is on the right.
6. Left – On that one I can read the text in that direction. The one on the right is hard to read [the text is going up].
7. Right – I think I would see this while I’m scrolling. The left button is “weird.”
8. Right – It stands out more. I didn’t see the button on the left at first.
9. Right – Maybe because I’m right handed?
10. Right – It stands out more, even though the screens are the same. Maybe because it’s closer to the search box?

8. What color button do you like the best?

1. Red – It pops out more. Suggests “live,” “urgent.” Blue and purple are too similar to the headings, and I might overlook them.
2. Orange or red – They stand out the most. Blue and purple are too similar to the headings and borders and don’t stand out. They look like background accents, not buttons.
3. Orange – Stands out. Purple is too dark. Blue is nice because it matches, but it doesn’t stand out.
4. Orange – More appealing. Contrasts with the blue on the page. Not blue, because it doesn’t stand out.
5. Red – Stands out. Purple is #2. Orange is not very vibrant—kind of dull. Blue doesn’t stand out.
6. Blue – It matches the other colors on the page.
7. Red – bold. Orange is too bright. Blue blends in—no to blue. No to purple.
8. Orange – Stands out the most. Blue blends in.
9. Blue – It’s my favorite color and GSU’s color. It does with the scheme. But maybe make it darker or lighter so it stands out more.
10. Red – It’s my favorite color.

9. Take a look at this page. Which elements on this page do you like? What suggestions do you have for changing the page?

1. I don't like [the labels] "Discover" and "Search & Find." Why not just "search"? "Discover" and "Search & Find" are not familiar to me, because other websites don't use them—they just use "search."

2. I like the GSU Home button and the weather

--I want the chat box to open as a new window to allow for multitasking.

--A blinking indicator or something to say the librarian has responded

--Hours listing is good

--Search section [Discover] – the links on the left might be easier than the current tabs.

--Add a link to GIL Classic.

--Add a colored border around the chat box to make it stand out more – orange like the chat button or green?

--Reduce the amount of text for the blog posts and consider adding more media/graphical elements, like the rotating photos on the GSU home page. Add more eye-catching content to try to attract people who are usually *not* interested.

--Maybe expand the size of the chat box to make it stand out more—make it a bit wider, so it's not exactly the same size as the hours column below.

3. Hours and events are really helpful

--Searching by title/subject—good where it is

--The chat box is good. The issue is that if you have a long conversation, it doesn't display well in the small box. Make it larger?

--The blog is ok "if you're interested."

--Add graphics or color. Lots of white space. I like the current background with the logo and blue. Maybe add more blue?

4. "Seems fine." No suggestions.

5. "Not that bad." No suggestions.

6. Hours and events are good.

--It's all "laid out exactly where you need to go."

7. I like the rounded edges of the search boxes.

--I like the blue buttons for the letters [Databases by Name A-Z].

--Like that the chat box is right there.

8. I like the blue block buttons for the letters [Databases by Name A-Z].

--I like the weather at the top of the page. People like information like this. It might help keep them on the page.

--Add "a social media something," like a Twitter tag cloud.

9. Add a guide or step-by-step instructions to look up journals, books, articles.

--It's fine with me.

10. When I was doing research, I had trouble finding what I needed, but that wasn't because of the page layout. It was the databases. The page layout is ok.