Website Usability Test Description & Participant Consent

**Study Description:** Marshall is working on a usability study to evaluate the accessibility and ease of use of the new online library platform. We would like to give you some background on the study to give you an idea of what we are going to be doing.

**Background Information:** The purpose of this study is to see how well designed the library site is, where the site falls short in terms of causing difficulty for the users, and to get the testers’ opinions about the site (how easy the site is to navigate and use). This project is designed to be a test of the web site’s usability/accessibility, not of the users’ abilities. We are looking for persons who are current undergraduate and graduate students at Marshall University.

**Procedures:** If you are eligible to participate and agree to be in this study, we will ask you to do the following: navigate to the library portion of Marshall’s website and perform several tasks – tasks that a student would typically have to perform such as searching for research materials. There will be one person with you during the process – the facilitator who will help direct the process, ask questions, observe and take notes. Following the facilitated questions portion of the study, participants will be asked to fill out a brief survey rating the various portions of the website. Participants will be given a coffee mug and a flash drive for assisting us with the study.

**Risks & Benefits of Being in the Study:** We do not anticipate any risks for you to participate in this study and survey. We hope that the information gathered in the study will inform the library staff about what will make the site more accessible and usable and help them to improve the website for all users.

**Voluntary Nature of Participation:** Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with Marshall University or other cooperating entities. You are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. However, if you do withdraw your compensation will be voided.

**Confidentiality:** The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report the librarian may put together, no identifying information will be included. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the testers will have access to the records.

**Questions:** If you have any questions, please contact Marshall University’s graduate and government documents librarian, Kathleen Phillips, MLIS, either at phillipsk@marshall.edu or 304-746-8906.

**Usability Test Script**

I will be asking you to navigate the library portion of Marshall’s website and to perform some specific tasks that a distance graduate college student might do. Please “talk out loud” – explain what you are doing as you work to help us understand what you are thinking about as you perform these tasks. Remember that this is not a test of your abilities, but rather a test to see how well the site is designed and how “usable” it is.
Scenario 1:
Starting from the library home page:

You need to find the contact information for the librarians as well as the hours for physical libraries.

Time started scenario:

Time ended scenario:

Observer notes:
1. Completed task easily
2. Completed task with some effort/confusion
3. Completed task with assistance
4. Could not complete task

Post-task questions:

1. How confident are you that you successfully completed the task?
   Very confident Fairly confident Not confident Not at all confident Didn’t complete task

2. Please rate your impression of the level of ease or difficulty in completing this task.
   Very easy Easy Difficult Very Difficult Impossible

Scenario 2:
Starting from library home page:

You need to find journal articles about the topic “Child Psychology” from three different databases. Where do you find the databases and what 3 databases do you choose?

Scenario 3:
Starting from Resources page:

You are writing a research paper and have to borrow materials from another university. Where do you go to do this?

Scenario 4:
Starting from library homepage:

Where will you find the answer to the question “Where are the photocopy machines in Drisko Library?”

Scenario 5:
Starting from the library homepage:

You would like to schedule a meeting with someone for help with your research or thesis paper. Where do you find the information to do so?

Scenario 6:
Starting from library homepage:

You really, really need to ask a librarian something, but you are at home. Find and list the different ways you can contact one without going to the library?

Scenario 7:
Starting from library homepage:

You are writing a research paper and have to cite your resources in APA format. Where do you find MLA, APA & Chicago citation guides, and information on EndNote?