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Library website gets new look



The new library website is expected to go live in June.

UM's **J.D. Williams Library** is showing off a new website designed to better suit users' needs. The new website is intended to be more user-friendly and boost academic research.

Debra Riley-Huff, head of Web services for the library, said the UM library website was updated so that people could use it on all kinds of mobile devices. She said the new website is an example of responsive design that allows for easy navigation.

Julia Rholes, dean of University Libraries, said updating the library website is important because "the website is our virtual face to the world."

"We are very excited about the new site," Rholes said. "We think this is going to be very popular. It is prettier, and we think people are going to enjoy using it because it will be easier for them to find things."

While the previous website was useful, it needed an update. Riley-Huff said the library followed the lead provided by the Ole Miss website, which has been recently updated to reflect a more modern look and provide improved functionality.

The library's new website has more photographs, adding life to the site and letting students peek into various spaces throughout the library.

According to Rholes, upgrading the website has made content management easier and has improved the attractiveness of the site.

Over the years, the library website has been one of the university's most popular sites, second only to athletics. Tens of thousands of researchers from the university, state and around the world use the website each month. The new website is expected to increase usage even more.

"We get traffic internationally, with visitors frequently searching our special collections, blues collection and digital collection," Rholes said. "The library's accountancy collection is the best in the world."

Except for a few sections, the website is freely available for global use. UM faculty, staff and students can use their WebID and password to access licensed materials from anywhere, while access for others is only available when physically at the library.

Riley-Huff said upgrading the website is only the beginning. Plans call for adding blogs and a special collections website, an online exhibit website and an instructional/bibliographic website for the library.

The library is moving to buy more electronic books to make reading easier for students who prefer e-content. The new website will be live for the public in June.

"So far, the comments we get from people about it are positive," Riley-Huff said.

Riley-Huff was the lead developer of the website and was provided assistance by Jing Jing Wu, Web services librarian. Library staff and stakeholders contributed ideas and content.

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