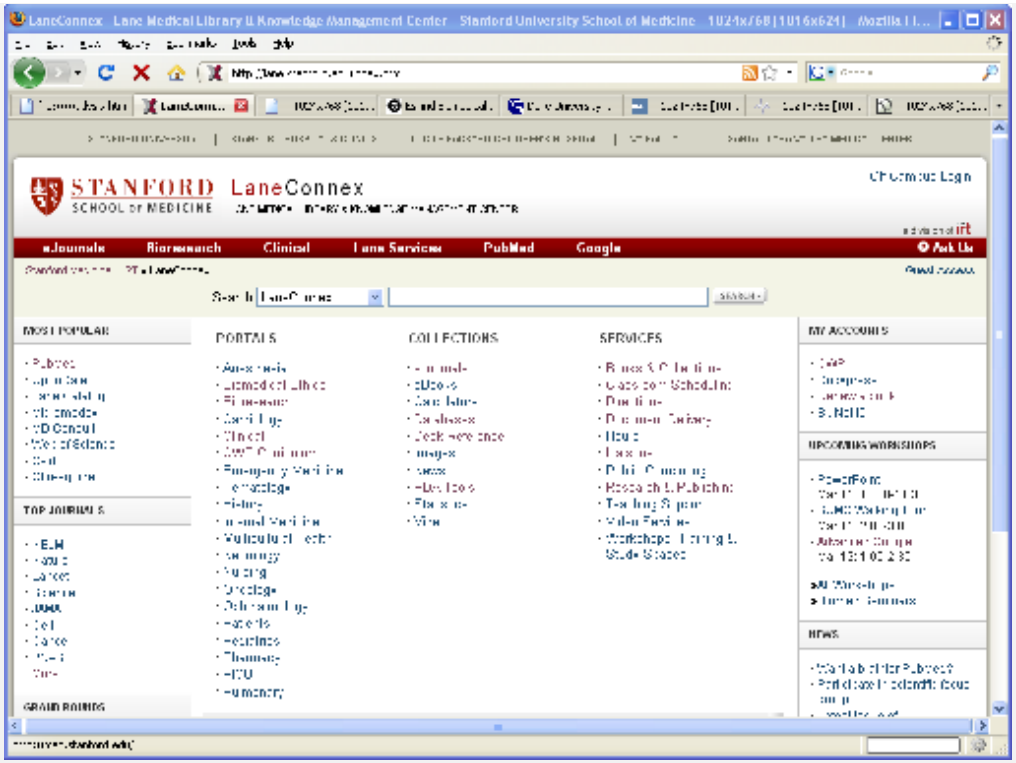
Stanford University
Organization and Structure

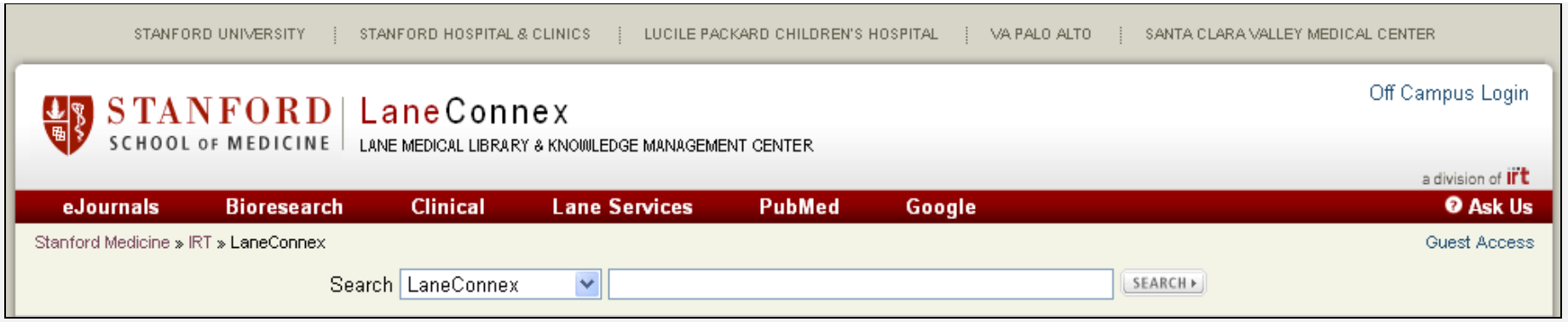
Stanford School of Medicine – Lane Medical Library (LaneConnex)

STANFORD SCHOOL OF MEDICINE | LaneConnex
LANE MEDICAL LIBRARY & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT CENTER

Home Page



Primary Nav

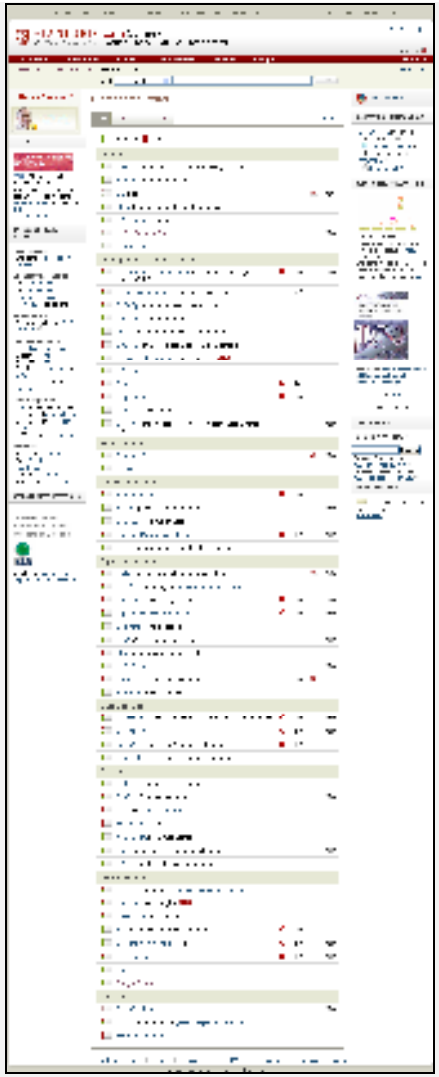


Primary Nav Level 1

eJournals	Bioresearch	Clinical	Lane Services	PubMed	Google
Nav01	Nav02	Nav03	Nav04	Nav05	Nav06

eJournals (Nav01)

Bioresearch (Nav02)



Clinical (Nav03)

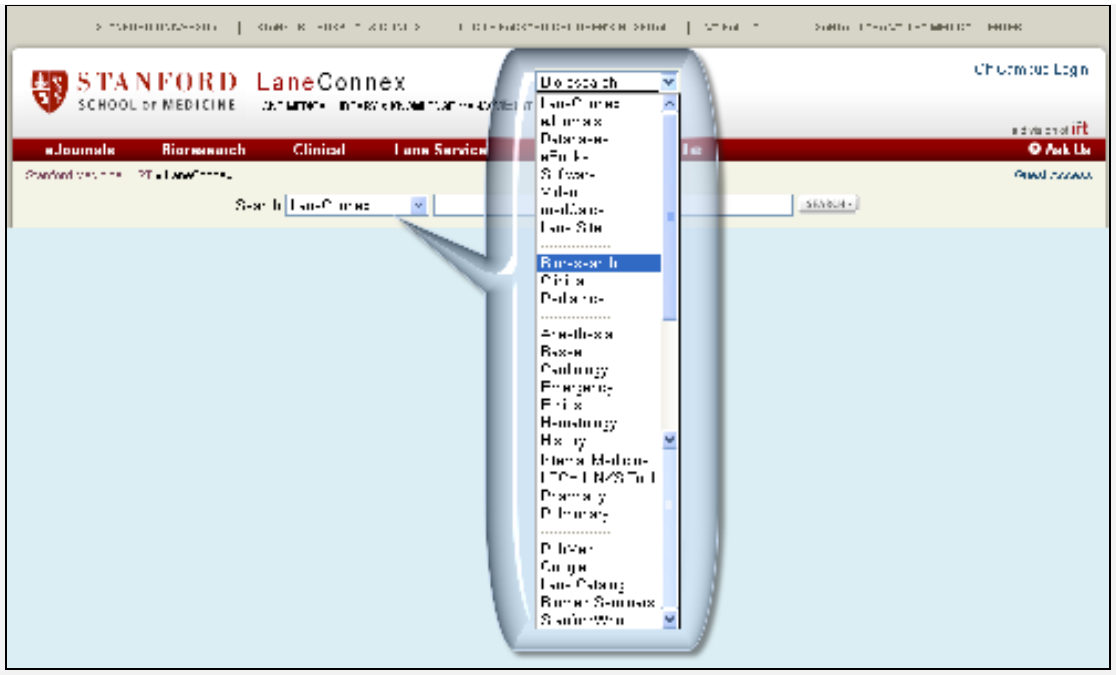
Lane Services (Nav04)

PubMed (Nav05)	Google (Nav06)
	

Navigation Design

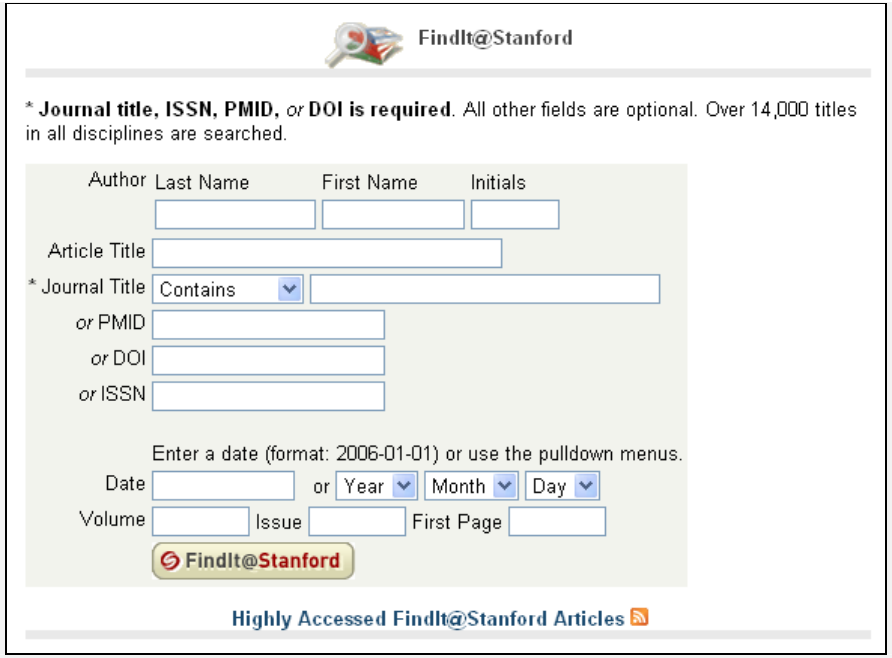
The Stanford School of Medicine Lane Medical Library site (LaneConnex) has a static primary top navigation with six static navigational choices. The right-most two of navigational headings lead to PubMed and Google search (both behind a login screen), and the first four are eJournals, Bioresearch, Clinical and Lane Services. The target pages for each of these are very different from one another, with each page sharing a search interface in the header consisting of a select box and a text box. The select box sets the domain of the search, and each of the four navigational headings defaults the domain to eJournals, Bioresearch, Clinical, and LaneConnex respectively.

Primary Nav Search



The eJournals page (Nav01) starts off with an A-Z index of eJournals, which also has shortcuts to Core Titles, By Subject, and Lane Catalog. However, the main feature of the eJournals page is a complex search interface with twelve text fields and four select boxes, as well as a long list of highly accessed resources.

eJournals Detail (Nav01)

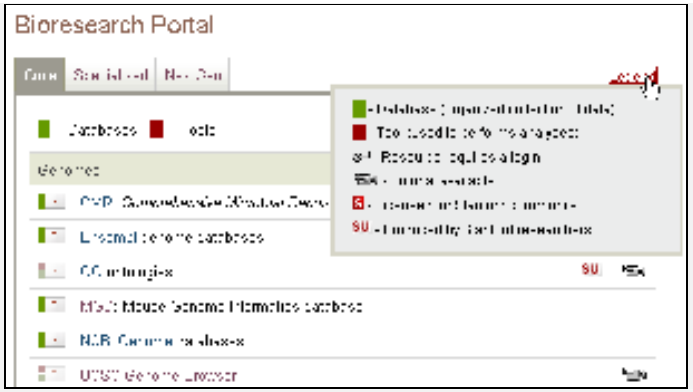


The Bioresearch Portal page (Nav02) consists of a highly structured and well designed tabbed interface which presents a listing of links to resources categorized as being “Databases”, “Tools” or both. The tabbed interface presents lists labeled Core, Specialized, and NextGen. The list members are grouped into persistent categories which appear across the three tabbed lists (if a category has members). These categories are:

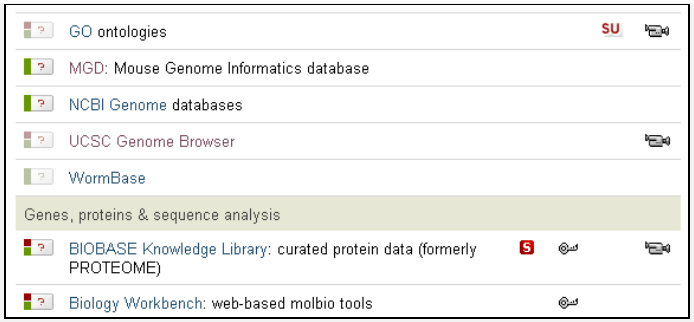
- Bioreagents
- Data mining
- Drugs & chemistry
- Expression & function
- Expression & function
- Genes, proteins & sequence analysis
- Genetics & phenotypes
- Genomes
- Literature & biodata mining
- Literature & patents
- Pathways & enzymes
- Structures

The results are presented with icons that indicate whether a resource is Stanford-only, requires a key, is “Stanford’s Own”, and if it is video. This interface also uses color-coded bar graphics to show at a glance if the resource is a database or a tool (or both). One drawback of the implementation of this design is that it uses color alone to convey the difference between a database or a tool (or both). Due to the prevalence of color-blind users this is weak design choice. The graphic itself is a bit confusing as well; the question mark design element literally raises questions and doesn’t seem to contribute anything to the system. The graphic also rarely appears in a faded “disabled” version, although it is not clear what this means.

Bioresearch Portal Detail Top (Nav02)

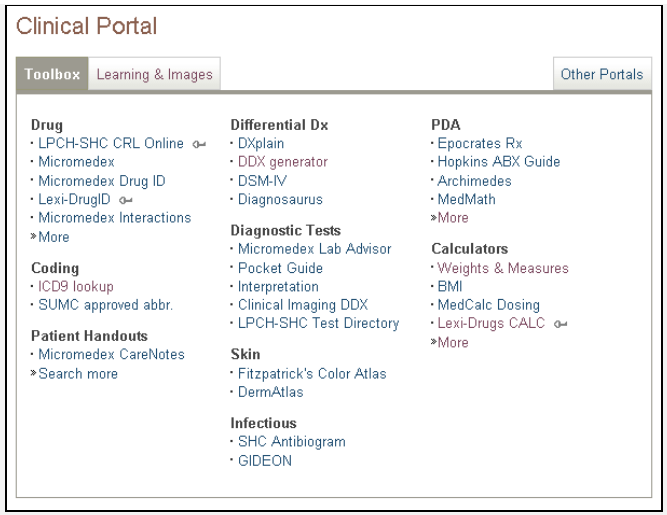


Bioresearch Portal Detail Bottom (Nav02)

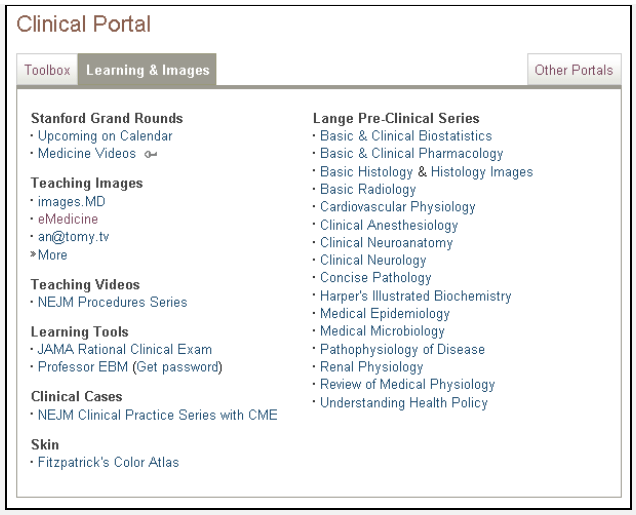


The Clinical Portal (Nav03) page consists of a tab control with 2 pages, Toolbox (the default) and Learning & Images. The content on these pages are lists of links that are well thought through and grouped in a variety of categories.

Clinical Portal: Toolbox Tab (Nav03)



Clinical Portal: Learning & Images Tab (Nav03)



The Lane Services Tab (Nav04) also makes use of the tab design, but only has a single tab labeled “What We Do”.

Lane Services & FAQs (Nav04)

Categorization Design

The organizational strategy of the Stanford School of Medicine Lane Medical Library website (LaneConnex) follows a search paradigm designed to serve the information seeking user. The navigational choices in the static nav really just chute the user into different content areas, rather than trying to establish an organizational system and get the user to participate in it.

The four main navigational choices on the LaneConnex site share a common search interface. The idea is that users will be inclined to search first, and probably that most site traffic consists of users seeking information from a limited set of resources. This is a highly usable design which seems to make the most of brevity and simplicity. The site suffers slightly from an overly limited use of color and heavy reliance on text. Images paired with boxed categories of content would help repeat users visually scan the site to reuse content.