WCU Website Standards & Guidelines

8/17/2011

This document provides a set of standards and guidelines for websites at Western Carolina University (WCU). WCU relies on a Content Management System (CMS) to maintain a consistent look and feel that reflects the mission and direction of the university. Standards promote a common visual identity, usability, consistency and accuracy. All new websites must be built according to these design guidelines. Existing sites designed with previous styles will be migrated to the standards.

Exceptions

While the university encourages the application of the standards defined in this document for ease of use and consistency across all parts of the WCU website, adoption of these standards is not required for:

- Student, faculty and staff personal pages
- Blackboard course pages
- Student organizations

Websites hosted outside WCU

Websites hosted outside WCU include those hosted externally by vendors and those that belong to non-university organizations. For more information on standards for these types of websites, refer to the section at the end of this document (page 11).

Accessibility

WCU strives to adhere to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Compliance with these acts helps ensure that our web pages will be readable by users with disabilities.

Federal law

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (http://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm)
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (http://www.section508.gov/)

North Carolina law

- NC Office on the Americans with Disabilities Act (http://www.osp.state.nc.us/ADA/theact.htm)

WCU Policy

- University Policy 86 - Web Accessibility Policy (http://www.wcu.edu/25360.asp)

W3C Guidelines

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Specific WCU requirements:

- ALT tags for all images
- Text-only version available
- Text transcripts or alternate text content for all multimedia (Flash, audio and video)

Branding: Web Templates

University websites and applications must adhere to WCU branding as outlined in the style manual (http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/WCU_StyleManual.pdf). Web templates developed by Web Services already adhere to WCU branding.

Choosing & Applying a Template

A single template (Option One or Two) is to be chosen by a college, division, department or office and applied across that unit's entire set of pages. Academic programs and services within these units should use the template of their home department or office.

College Example:
- College of Business (COB) – College makes template choice
- Departments and centers within COB – Department/center makes template choice
- Programs within the departments – Department makes template choice

Division Example:
- Student Life (Student Affairs)– Division makes template choice
- Departments/offices within Student Affairs (e.g. Campus Recreation) – Department/office makes template choice
- Individual services (e.g. Disc Golf) – Department/office makes template choice

Option One (Recommended)

Option One provides a subbrand layout and three non-subbrand layouts.

Subbrand three-column layout (Fig. 1). This layout is for subbrand pages only—colleges, divisions, and other major offices—as defined as in the WCU Style Manual (PDF, SecA:6).

Fig. 1. Option One, subbrand three-column layout.

There are three layout choices for non-subbrand pages:

- Three-column (Fig. 2)
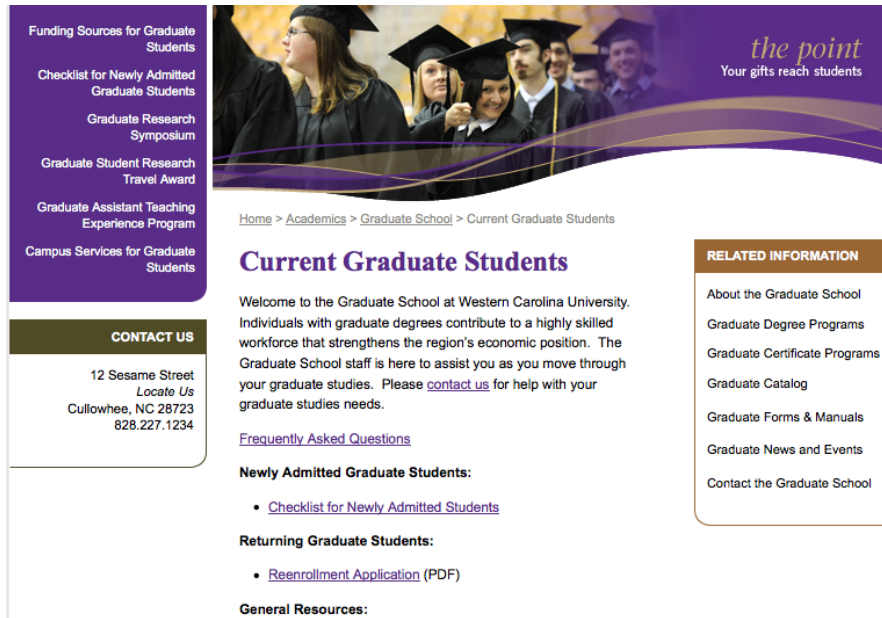- Two-column (Fig. 3)
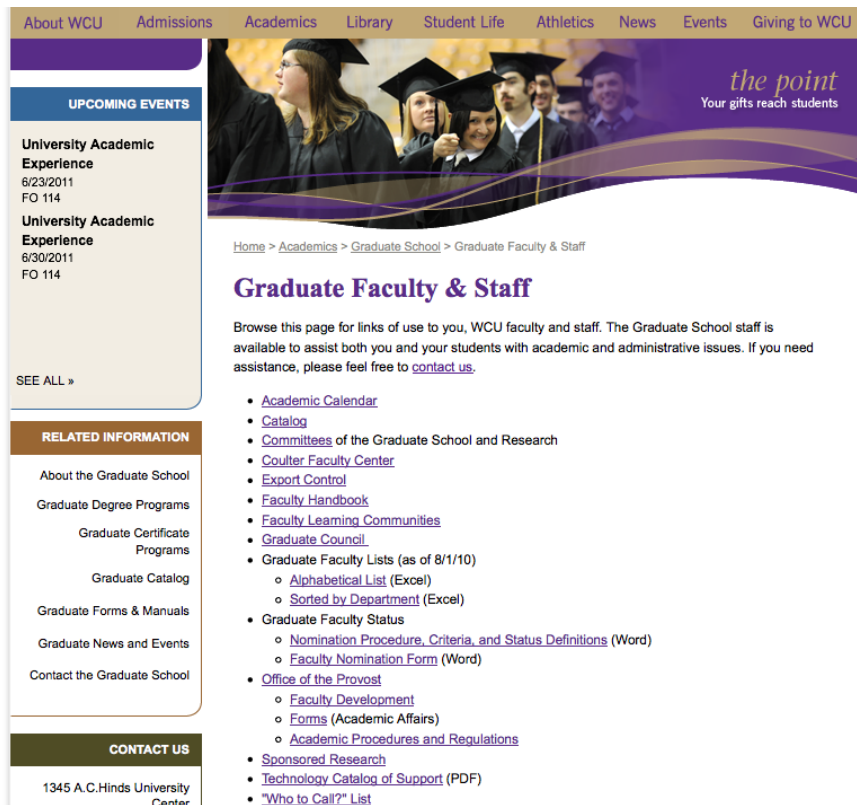- One-column (Fig. 4)

Fig. 2. Option One, three-column layout.

Fig. 3. Option One, two-column layout.
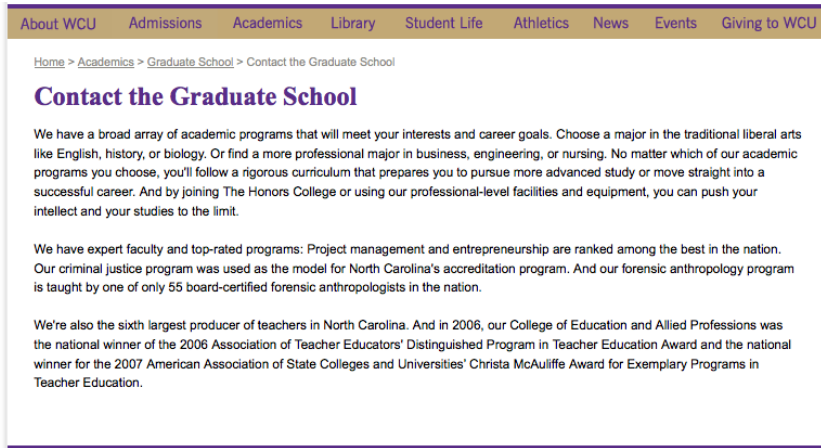
Fig. 4. Option One, one-column layout.

Option Two (Standard)

Fig. 5 Option Two (Standard)

There are mandatory and optional elements for Options One and Two. Please reference the table below for guidelines (Fig. 6).

Elements & Layout	Option One (Recommended)				Option Two
	Subbrand 3-column	3-column	2-column	1-column	Standard
Banner	Mandatory	Optional	Optional	NA	Optional
Headline	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Subheader	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Body Copy	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Children	Optional	Optional	Optional	NA	Optional
Related Info/Links	Optional	Optional	Optional	NA	Optional
Callout	NA	NA	NA	NA	Optional
Upcoming Events	Optional	Optional	Optional	NA	NA
Contact	Mandatory	Optional	Optional	NA	NA
RSS/News	Optional	Optional	Optional	NA	NA

Fig. 6. Elements & Layouts

The Elements

Banner (Options One & Two)

- The top banner graphic is mandatory on the Option One subbrand pages.
- Banner sizes must conform to the following specifications:
    - Option One, subbrand, three-column layout: 760 x 175 pixels
    - Option One, two- and three-column layouts: 585 x 175 pixels
    - Option Two (Standard): 760 x 175 pixels
- Banners are produced by WCU Creative Services and may be requested via that office. See Imagery/Photography section (page 10).

Headline (Options One & Two)

Headline (or name of page) should include the full name of an office or department on the home page of the website. Headlines in general should create a context for the visitor—for example, "Contact the Office of Web Services" rather than "Contact Us".

Subheader (Options One & Two)

Subheader should be contextual and short.

Body Copy (Option One only)

The default format for body copy is normal Arial font and a minimum size of 10 pixels. Pre-set subheaders are formatted as follows:

- H1, H2 and H3 = purple
- H4 and H5 = black
- H6 = small print

WCU PR news headlines and descriptions may be displayed in the body copy using feeds generated from WordPress. (RSS/news may also be displayed in the RSS/news box. Refer to the RSS/News section below.)

Text should be entered or pasted into the text editor as **unformatted text**. If images are to be placed next to the text, they should be left aligned and given 10 pixels of vertical and horizontal space. **Maximum widths** for body copy images are as below.

Option One

- 3 columns – 360 pixels
- 2 columns – 540 pixels
- 1 column – 710 pixels
- Related Information – 150 pixels

Option Two

- 3 columns – 385 pixels
- 2 columns – 560 pixels
- 1 column – 710 pixels
- Callout – 140 pixels

Children (Options One & Two)

A page's main navigation should consist only of a) children of that page or b) shared children. PDF, Word and other documents may not function as children. Children automatically appear as white text on the WCU purple background (near right).

Prospective Graduate Students
Current Graduate Students
Graduate Faculty & Staff

Related Information (Option One)

Text and images in this box:

- Should remain aligned to the right if the box is on the left-hand side of the page (near right)

- Should remain aligned to the left if the box is on the right-hand side of the page (far right)

The maximum width for related information images is 150 pixels.

RELATED INFORMATION

About the Graduate School
Graduate Degree Programs
Graduate Certificate Programs
Graduate Catalog
Graduate Forms & Manuals
Graduate News and Events
Contact the Graduate School

RELATED INFORMATION

About the Graduate School
Graduate Degree Programs
Graduate Certificate Programs
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Related Links (Option Two)

Related links should be strategically selected to complement and support the information and children of the page (near right).

RELATED LINKS

Administrative Divisions
Student Life

College Portrait
of Undergraduate Education
Voluntary System of Accountability

Callout (Option Two)
The maximum width for callout images is 140 pixels (far right).

Upcoming Events (Option One)
The content is a feed from R25, which displays a pre-set calendar option (near right). You may customize the feed's title, giving it the name of your choice, e.g. Upcoming COB Events.

Contact Box (Option One)
If you choose to use the optional contact box (far right), **the following elements are mandatory**:

- Campus address (follow the room number and building format: 180 Belk)
- City, State, Zip (format: Cullowhee, NC 28723)
- *Campus Map* link to http://www.wcu.edu/546.asp
- *Directions to Campus* link to http://www.wcu.edu/545.asp
- Phone (format: ###.###.#### *tel*)

**The following elements are optional:**

- Toll-free phone (format: ###.###.### *toll-free tel)*
- Fax (format: ###.###.#### *fax)*
- E-mail (follow the format name@wcu.edu)

The directory link is optional. If you choose to include a directory link, you may select one of the following options from a dropdown list:

- STAFF DIRECTORY
- FACULTY DIRECTORY
- FACULTY/STAFF DIRECTORY

The hyperlinked social media icons also are optional. If you choose to include social media icons, you may select from the following options:

- Facebook
- Flickr
- iTunes
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- YouTube
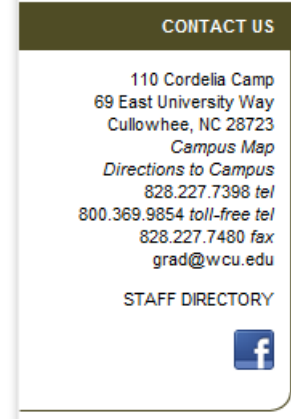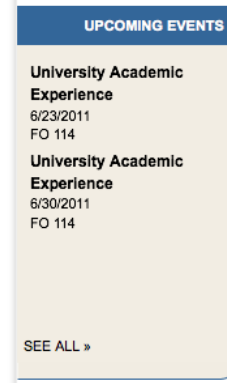
RSS/News (Option One)

A feed with the name of your choice. Remember to keep it short, however. (WCU PR news headlines and descriptions may also be displayed in the body copy using feeds generated from WordPress. Refer to the Body Copy section above.)

Content (Written & Video)

Do not repeat information maintained elsewhere by the university (another division, school, department, administrative body). Instead, link to the official information. For example, class schedules are maintained by the registrar; job listings are maintained by human resources.

Refer to the WCU Style Guide for standards on abbreviation, capitalization, and spelling. Contact the WCU Office of Public Relations at 828-227-7327 for a copy of the guide. If your question is not answered in this guide, see the Associated Press Stylebook. For issues not covered in either guide, see the Chicago Manual of Style or Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.

The Office of Public Relations is charged with managing the university's reputation and brand image through communication activities. The Office of Public Relations monitors university websites to ensure adherence to brand and style guidelines, and provides editorial review services to departmental content developers who are creating new web content. Content on official university pages should appropriately reflect an institution of higher education and align with WCU's mission and brand.

For more information on WCU website written content, contact the WCU Office of Public Relations at 828-227-7327.

If you have a completed video and would like to request that it is placed on the WCU website, please contact the Office of Public Relations (828-227-7327). **If you are in the process of creating a video for the WCU website**, please contact eMarketing (828-227-3553) or the Office of Public Relations (828-227-7327) to discuss your project plans and possibilities, and the review process.

Imagery/Photography

Photos of commencement, academic activities, athletics and other events are regularly taken by WCU's staff photographers. To review and obtain images to enhance your site or to find out more about permission and copyright issues, contact WCU Photographers Mark Haskett and Ashley Evans at 828-227-3081.

Banner images are produced by WCU Creative Services, using WCU photography as described above. To request a banner image, visit branding.wcu.edu and complete the Creative Services Job Request (PDF form). For more information, contact WCU Creative Services at 828-227-2077.

 As a general rule, images should be 72 dpi. All images must be given an alternate text that describes the image for compliance with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). If a caption is provided with the image, use the caption as the alternate text.

Asset Naming & Organization

- **Image Naming**: It is recommended that an image be named with the known abbreviation of the department or unit and a descriptive qualifier separated by underscores, e.g. ENGL_seminar_session.jpg. Profile or headshot images should follow the lastname_firstname.jpg convention.
- **File Naming**: Names must contain only number, letter, or underscore characters. It is recommended that a file be named with the known abbreviation of the department or unit and a descriptive qualifier and date, e.g. ENGL_advising_checklist_20110530.
- **Faculty and staff images:** All images of or featuring faculty and staff (i.e. headshots) must be stored in the Faculty images folder.
- **Folder Creation:** For sections that will contain more than 20 similar files not intended for widespread use across the site—a run of a newsletter or collection of online exhibition images, for example—a request should be made by email to the CMS administrator for a subfolder to be created within the existing asset library folder structure. *Eg. Files > PDF > The Reporter.* The approval of the request is the responsibility and decision of the administrator.

Copyright

University Policy 52: Use of Computers and Data Communications states WCU's policy on copyright - http://www.wcu.edu/25319.asp

For more information on copyright infringement, visit http://www.wcu.edu/948.asp.

Websites hosted outside WCU

Vendors

If a university organization is working with a vendor on a web application and the vendor cannot apply one of the templates, the application is expected to follow the standards presented in this section.

Colors

The correct hexadecimal codes for university colors are below.

- Purple - #592C88
- Gold - #C1A875
- Black - #000000
- White - #FFFFFF

Fonts

- Headlines/page titles should be in bold Times New Roman and 24 pixels in size (near right).

Academics

Every year, more than 9,000 students find themselves in our classrooms. You can, too.

- Content should be in normal Arial font and a minimum size of10 pixels (near right).
- Non-link text should not be underlined, as users will confuse underlined text with hyperlinked text. Do not boldface or italicize your entire text; it decreases readability.

Logo

- WCU logo rules – refer to http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/WCU_StyleManual.pdf.
- Custom images provided by Creative Services

Non-University Organizations

Occasionally WCU hosts websites for organizations that are not part of the university, but are loosely tied to the institution. For example, a faculty member may be serving as board chair of an academic organization and, as part of that service, manages the group's website. These hosted websites are not subject to university requirements because they belong to non-university organizations. However, the sites should include the following page footer with links to the WCU website http://www.wcu.edu set under the logo and "Western Carolina University" text:

Policy Questions/Issues

The Office of Web Services is available to answer or address technical, stylistic, organizational, policy and procedure questions or issues related to the CMS or the university website.

Web policies are considered by the Web Advisory Committee and recommended to the Information Technology Policy Committee (ITPC). The ITPC establishes the overall policies governing the university's information technology, including the WCU Web presence.

Web Services & Contact Information

The WCU Office of Web Services provides the following services.

Web Application Support

Web Services provides services for a variety of campus web applications, including:

- Catalog (official University Catalog online)
- My Cat (Campus Portal)
- Sharepoint
- Web Calendar (R25/25Live)

Web Development and Consultation

- Consulting (+/- hour)
- Feature Add-Ons (few hours)
- Development Projects (weeks/months) – this level of project requires a written agreement

Web Hosting and Publishing

Web Services provides publishing environments for WCU (PAWS, CLAWS, and faculty professional presence websites using WordPress) and additional services for university organizational websites on wcu.edu:

- Compliance with accessibility and usability standards
- Subdomains
- University search engine
- Website usage reports
- Webmaster contact email

Please contact the IT Help Desk with questions, incidents or requests for Web Services:

- Phone: 828-227-7487 (locally) or 866-928-7487 (toll free)
- E-mail : ithelp@wcu.edu
- Online: http://ithelp.wcu.edu/