A. Statement of Purpose

The quality of the information published online has a direct effect on the reputation and image of the University of West Georgia (UWG). Developed collaboratively by University Communications and Marketing (UCM), Information Technology Services (ITS), and the UWG Executive Council, these Web Advisory Board, these web guidelines standards and rules are necessary both to ensure consistency in the online presentation and quality of UWG information online.

All web resources in the UWG web space must comply with these guidelines UWG Website policies, all Web standards and rules, and applicable UWG, federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR) policies.

The UWG official website Official Website is a major component of our overall marketing, communication, and recruitment strategy. Its ultimate goal is to provide a succinct, effective interface with our institution to enhance our UWG's reputation among key audiences to generate interest, inquiry, action and to create affinity for our the institution. The UWG official website:

- Attracts students with characteristics consistent with our UWG vision and who will choose UWG as a top choice university;
- Supports the institutional recruitment and enrollment plan, using an analytical approach to identify and reach "right-fit" students and other key constituencies;
- Elevates academic success through digital storytelling of academic distinction, programs, achievements and the transforming of lives throughout the region, state and beyond;
- Expands community awareness, visibility, and support of university activities and mutually beneficial partnerships; and
• Publicizes all university achievements that support the aim of operational effectiveness and sustainability.
• The key audiences of the UWG official website are:
  • Prospective students and their families;
  • Alumni, donors, and friends;
  • Community members; and
  • Prospective employees.

Adhering to the UWG Web standards and rules will help UWG:
• create a strong and unified identity for UWG,
• establish consistency among the many unique Unit Websites,
• identify each Unit or organization as a member of the University Community, and
• provide a positive experience for key audiences (i.e., prospective students and their families, alums, donors, friends, community members, and prospective and current employees) by making UWG sites accessible, quicker, easier to use, and more secure.

The UWG Official Website and the collection of Official Web Applications on UWG official website along with the collection of official web applications in UWG web space is the Webspace are the University’s internal communication and information channel for the University.

The key audiences of the UWG web space, which consists of official and unofficial websites and web applications, are:
• Current students, and
• Current employees.

The Web standards and rules are a good starting point for making UWG sites more usable and accessible to visitors. This procedure only brushes the surface of many of the best practices that are continually updated to stay current with the developing technology landscape.

B. Principles & Guidelines

1. General Principles

a. The official website design must adhere to visual identity guidelines and reflect UWG brand with consistent theme including new fonts, colors, logos, and other graphical branding elements.

b. The official website must be consistent throughout with respect to theme, layout, navigation and content standards.

c. The official website must be easy to use, functional and adhere to current web technology standards.

d. The official website must provide a positive user experience on desktop, tablet, and mobile devices.

e. The official website must present consistent, accurate and timely information.
f. The official website must be optimized for major search engines.
g. The official website must be easy to use and functional for persons with disabilities and meet accessibility standards.
h. The official website must be maintained in a Content Management System (CMS) that is easy to use and makes it easy to develop new features.

The Official Website must:

i. adhere to visual identity guidelines and reflect the UWG brand with consistent theme, including new fonts, colors, logos, and other graphical branding elements.
ii. be consistent (i.e., theme, layout, navigation, and content standards).
iii. be easy to use, functional, and adhere to current web technology standards.
iv. provide a positive user experience on desktop, tablet, and mobile devices.
v. present accurate and timely information.
vi. be optimized for major search engines.
vii. be functional for persons with disabilities and meet accessibility standards.
viii. be maintained in a Content Management System (CMS) that is easy to use and makes it easy to develop new features.

2. Content Management System (CMS)

The UWG official website is managed through the OmniUpdate Campus Content Management System (CMS). All individuals who publish information on the UWG official website should use this CMS and associated modules.

For information on obtaining and maintaining access to the CMS, see UWG PL 5001 associated procedure, Website Content Management System.

3. Web Authoring Tools

Other CMS or web authoring tools (e.g., WebCV and Program Navigator, etc.) may be used to publish information on the UWG official website under the condition that it provides both:

١. Functionality necessary to support core administrative, academic, research, or other University business;
٢. Functionality not available in OmniUpdate Campus Content Management System.

i. the functionality necessary to support core administrative, academic, research, or other University business, and

ii. the functionality is not available in UWG’s CMS.

As a service to the UWG content owners, the UCM provides support and training on the OmniUpdate Campus-CMS for web authoring.
4. Official Web Templates

All official UWG web pages should utilize the official UWG web templates to maintain consistent branding standards.

The official UWG web templates are embedded in OmniUpdate Campus Content Management System and available to faculty and staff to develop and maintain their official unit's website.

To maintain consistent branding standards, all Official Webpages used to conduct core University business or academic activities should utilize the Official UWG Web templates. These templates are embedded in the CMS and available to Website Editors to develop and maintain Official Unit Website.

Units and individuals with third-party web applications should contact UCM web services prior to approximating the look and feel of the campus Official UWG Web templates through local design.

UWG home page and other top level pages, which serve as a gateway to the campus UWG Web presence, utilize "home environment" templates that are reserved for only this use.

5. Web Content Responsibilities

UWG home page and other top level official pages which provide an overview of UWG, academics, services, and activities are maintained by UCM.

Other official web pages are the responsibility of an academic or administrative units. These include, but are not limited to, university departments, divisions, colleges, programs and activities.

6. Keeping Content Current

7. Maintain Current Content

All official University web pages must be maintained and up-to-date. Furthermore, only active files should be kept on the site. Inactive files (i.e., such as old WORD, PDF, EXCEL documents, should etc.) are to be removed from directories, unless there is a legal requirement for the content except when legally required to remain online.

The UCM Web Services team performs periodic site reviews and sets stale content reminders in the CMS for out-of-date content.

8. Appropriate Content Standards

Web content should be professional and consistent with the rest of the UWG website.

No “under construction” web pages are allowed. Every page should contain useful information before being published on a website.
All web pages in UWG Webspace must provide a link back to the UWG homepage.

The units responsible for the authoritative content on UWG official webpages should ensure that it is the best and most accurate source. Other units and sites should point to the authoritative content, rather than recreating it. Examples of authoritative content include, but are not limited to, department contact information, registration deadlines, enrollment numbers, and other.

All unit names used must be the official names as recognized by the University.

i. Web content should be professional and consistent with the rest of the UWG website.

ii. All Webpages in UWG Webspace must link back to the UWG homepage.

iii. All unit names must be the Official name as recognized by the University.

iv. Webpages should contain useful information before being published on a Website. No "under construction" Webpages are allowed.

v. Units responsible for the authoritative content on UWG Official Webpages should ensure that it is the best and most accurate source. Other Units and sites should point to the authoritative content rather than replicating or duplicating content. Examples of authoritative content include but are not limited to, department contact information, registration deadlines, enrollment numbers, and others.

9. Accessibility Reviews

All UWG Websites must comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA. Existing UWG Websites will be reviewed periodically for Web accessibility compliance using accessibility checking software that allows UWG to check the accessibility of any Webpage to immediately identify issues based on the latest ACT (Accessibility Conformance Testing) rules – with instant feedback and recommendations. Website Editors are provided with login credentials during web training and will have access to view accessibility errors reported on their specific site(s) using the accessibility checking software/platform.

UWG Web Services reserves the right to remove any Webpage or Website not compliant if the Website Editor does not take the necessary steps to fix non-compliant Websites as indicated.

10. Maintaining Visual Standards

All website content must adhere to the Visual Identity Guidelines (aka, Brand Identity Guidelines and the Web Style Guide published by or Brand Standards) and the Web Style Guide. UCM on its website. UCM oversees the enforcement of these standards. The Web Style guide defines approved web fonts, web-colors, web-logos, headers, footers, and other approved web elements.

11. Situations Prompting Immediate Web Page Removal

* The page is inaccessible to site visitors with disabilities and does not provide an accessible alternative.
• The page violates local, state or federal law, USG or UWG policy.
• The page features unapproved commercial advertising.
• The page conveys disruptive or harmful misinformation.
• The page features inappropriate material, including obscene, harassing, or discriminatory language.
• The page contains copyrighted material without proper approval.
• The page compromises the security of the UWG Web Space.

12. Webpage Removal

The following lists situations that may prompt UCM to remove or edit a Webpage or Website immediately.

i. The page is inaccessible to site visitors with disabilities and does not provide an accessible alternative.
ii. The page violates federal, state, local law and/or USG or UWG policy.
iii. The page features unapproved commercial advertising.
iv. The page conveys disruptive or harmful misinformation.
v. The page features inappropriate material, including obscene, harassing, or discriminatory language.
vi. The page contains copyrighted material without proper approval or permission.
vii. The page compromises the security of the UWG Webspace.

13. Website Addresses

All official UWG websites must have website addresses that include (i.e., URL - uniform resource locator) that include "westga.edu or uwg." UCM may grant an exception from this rule for a grandfathered non- "westga.edu" website addresses. In this case, an alternative "westga.edu" web address will be established and used as a primary address.

Official hosted environment, third-party web applications are excluded from this requirement.

- Exempt: Official hosted environment, third-party Web Applications are excluded from this requirement.

Any college Units may request shortened (aka friendly) URLs for its Website homepage (e.g., school, department, or other unit may request a westga.edu/rcob rather than westga.edu/academics/business/index.php). All requests for friendly URLs should be approved by UCM and executed by ITS. All requests for friendly URLs should be approved by Communications and Marketing and executed by Information Technology Services.
14. Disclaimer for Personal Web Pages

Each personal web page must contain the official UWG disclaimer or provide a clearly displayed link to the official university-maintained disclaimer page located at [https://www.westga.edu/disclaimer](https://www.westga.edu/disclaimer).

15. Personal and Organization Webpages

UWG provides hosting space for faculty, staff, and student Webpages created to fulfill academic requirements and organizational Websites (e.g., student and affiliate organizations, eCampus, eCore, etc.) that are not Official UWG sites. However, to ensure a safe and consistent hosting environment, these Websites are expected, but not required, to comply with all UWG and USG Website policies.

i. Personal or organizational Websites shall not give the impression of representing, giving opinions, or otherwise making statements on behalf of UWG or any university unit unless appropriately authorized.

ii. Personal and organizational Websites may only contain the UWG web elements or other symbols of the University if they pertain specifically to a University function. Refer to the [Web Branding Guidelines](https://www.westga.edu/branding) for more information.

iii. Authors of personal and organizational Websites interested in using Official UWG Web designs outside the CMS should contact UCM Web Services before initiating such a project.

iv. Each personal Webpage must either provide a link to or contain the Official UWG Disclaimer.

C. Institutional Responsibilities

UCM Web Services maintains the UWG website at the top-most level—setting direction, governance and information architecture strategy for all the sites in the domain. In conjunction with the ITS, the UCM Web Services team provides direction in web design and development in alignment with the UWG brand. The team maintains and supports the official Content Management System and associated modules. UCM Web Services provides content entry assistance and training to campus stakeholders, as well as design, layout, metrics, and information discover ability consulting.

The Office of Information Technology is responsible for supporting technically the college’s internet site, [https://www.westga.edu/](https://www.westga.edu/)

The Web Advisory Board (WAB) advises on issues related to the UWG website as well as broader concerns relevant to the Web. The WAB proposes recommendations to UCM, and Information Technology Services, on matters relating to the content, design and overall functionality of the UWG website. The WAB also serves as an initial contact point and clearinghouse for policy matters regarding the website.

University departments, divisions, colleges, offices, and other units are responsible for maintaining their own web content in accordance with these web guidelines, all applicable UWG, federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.

1. **UCM Web Services** maintains UWG’s Top-Level Official Websites by setting direction,
governance, and an information architecture strategy for all sites in the domain. In conjunction with ITS, UCM Web Services provides Web design and development in align with the UWG brand. UCM Web Services maintains and supports the Official CMS and associated modules.

**UCM Web Services team**

- provides design, layout, metrics, and information discovery ability consulting to Units.
- provides content entry assistance and continued support to Web Editors through training, workshops, and one-on-one sessions based on recommendations provided by the department, division, or Unit requiring Web Editor replacement.

2. **Information Technology Services** is responsible for supporting UWG’s internet site, (https://www.westga.edu/) technically.

3. **The Executive Administrative Council (EAC)** advises the University President on issues related to the UWG Website and broader concerns relevant to the Web. The EAC proposes recommendations to UCM, and ITS, on matters pertaining to content, design, and overall functionality of the UWG Website. The EAC also serves as an initial contact point and clearinghouse for policy matters regarding the Website. The EAC comprises divisional Vice Presidents, the Director of Athletics, the University General Counsel, and the President’s Chief of Staff.

4. **University Units** are responsible for maintaining their Web content in accordance with UWG policies, Web standards and rules, and applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR) policies. Units operating UWG Webspaces outside the westga.edu domain are responsible for adhering to this procedure and working with UCM to ensure brand alignment across all UWG Webspaces.

5. **Website Editors** are responsible for editing and publishing content within the CMS for their respective Unit Webpages or UWG Webspaces. Website Editors shall participate in all mandatory Web training, workshops, and one-on-one sessions and receive Website training before being permitted access to the CMS.

   To gain access to an Official UWG Webpage or Website, the employee should review UWG PL 5001 Associated Procedure, Website Content Management System, complete the online Website CMS Account Request Form, and attend one Website CMS training session, which teaches the basics of editing a Unit site.

**Definitions**

- **Official Website** - A website that has been a Website created or sponsored by the university. University, its divisions, college/schools, departments, units, or other administrative offices and that is used in the process of conducting official University business. In addition, web applications — both those developed in-house, and those purchased from outside vendors — are considered official.

- **Top-Level** - pages include: UWG home page, all campaign landing pages, academics, future students, student services, campus life, about UWG pages, apply, search, directories, site map, legal, and all error pages.
Unit - A college University division, department, college/school, office, program, research center, or other operating academic/administrative service, office or other operating unit/area.

University Communications & Marketing (UCM) - UWG's full-service marketing, communications, and design center.

Unofficial Website - A website published by an individual such as a student or a university faculty or staff, or by a non-university organization, which is typically hosted on university servers but does not conduct official University business. These include student, faculty, and staff personal pages; pages created by students to fulfill academic requirements; student organization pages; affiliate web pages.

University Community - all persons enrolled at or employed by the University, including University students, faculty, staff, administrators, and employees, and (2) recognized University-affiliated entities, including University departments, foundations, and registered University student organizations.

UWG Web Space/UWG Webspace - The entire collection of websites whose purpose for existence can be legitimately connected with University activities, including academic, research, administrative, and outreach activities. A website Website may reside on a non-UWG web server, or may not have a westga.edu domain name, but may still be considered part of the UWG Web space Webspace.

Web Application - Any software that delivers dynamically generated content intended to be rendered in a web browser.

Webpage - A a (web Web) document rendered by a markup language, (e.g., xhtml XHTML, html HTML, php PHP), independent of its transmission protocol (e.g., http HTTP) and user agent (browser/reader).

Website - Any a collection of web pages Webpages residing under a single domain and whose content is centered around a single organizational unit University Unit or workgroup, a university University course, a research or business activity, or an area of academic content.

Website Editor - the designated person(s) responsible for maintaining a department’s, division’s, college’s, office’s, or unit’s Webpage or UWG Webspace.

Forms
- Wrike Request Form for UCM Web Services

Guidelines/Related material

The following material is available on the University Communications and Marketing (UCM) Work West Webspace (one USG login is required).
- Visual Identity Guidelines (aka, Brand Identity or Brand Standards)
- Web Style Guide
- Brand Center
- OU Campus CMS & Web Templates
Appendices/ Other Resources (i.e., training, checklists, job aids)

The following resources are available on the University Communications and Marketing (UCM) Work West Webspace (one USG login is required).

- Training & Support (online)
  - Develop West
    - OU Campus Web Basic Training
    - OU Campus Web Accessibility Training
  - SiteImprove Accessibility Checker

Approval Signatures

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