



UNIVERSITY OF
WEST GEORGIA

Last Approved	N/A
Effective	N/A
Next Review	N/A

Area	Administration/ Governance (Procedures)
Responsible Party	University Communications and Marketing

Web Standards and Rules

Authority for Procedure granted by [UWG PL #1003, Online Resource Ownership, Control, and Use](#).

A. Purpose

The quality of the information published online directly affects the reputation and image of the University of West Georgia (UWG). Developed collaboratively by University Communications and Marketing (UCM), [and Information Technology Services \(ITS\)](#), ~~and the~~[these Web standards and rules are necessary to ensure consistency in the online presentation and quality of UWG](#) ~~Executive Council, these Web standards and rules are necessary to ensure consistency in the online presentation and quality of UWG~~ information.

All web resources within the UWG Webspace shall comply with UWG Website policies, Web standards and rules, [WCAG 2.1 AA Guidelines](#), and applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR) policies.

The UWG 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 UWG's reputation among key audiences, generate interest, and create affinity for the institution.

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 Webspace are the

University's internal communication and information channel.

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

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 [WCAG 2.1 AA](#) 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 a Content Management System (CMS). 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:

- 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 Web Editors, UCM provides [support and training](#) on the CMS for Web authoring.

4. Official Web Templates

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 before approximating the look and feel of Official UWG Web templates through local design.

UWG Top-Level Webpages, which serve as a gateway to the UWG Web presence, utilize "home environment" templates that are reserved for only this use.

5. Maintain Current Content

All Official UWG Webpages must be maintained and up-to-date. Only active files should be kept on the site. Inactive files (i.e., old WORD, PDF, EXCEL documents, etc.) are to be removed from Web directories 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.

6. Appropriate Content Standards

- 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.*

7. 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.

8. Maintaining Visual Standards

All Website content must adhere to the [Visual Identity Guidelines](#) (aka, Brand Identity or Brand Standards) and the [Web Style Guide](#)~~Web Branding Guidelines~~. UCM oversees the enforcement of these

standards. The Web ~~Style guide defines~~ Branding Guidelines define approved Web fonts, colors, logos, headers, footers, and other approved Web elements.

9. 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 Webpace.

10. Website Address

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 Web address.

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

Units may request shortened (aka friendly) URLs for its Website homepage (e.g., 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. Shortened URLs are intended for use in print materials and should not be used for internal site links or links within site files (i.e., Word, Excel, PDF, documents, etc.).

11. Personal and Organization Webpages

Hosting space is provided (at the discretion of UCM) for sites that add additional value for users and align with UWG's strategic mission. Websites are required to comply with all UWG provides and USG policies to ensure a safe and consistent ~~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. Websites are expected, but not required, to comply with all UWG and USG policies to ensure a safe and consistent hosting~~ environment. To request a ~~personal or an~~ organization webpage, complete the online Website CMS Account Request (Wrike) Form CMS Account Request (Asana) Form, and attend one Website CMS training session, which teaches the basics of editing a Unit site.

- i. ~~Personal or organizational~~[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~~[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](#) for more information.
- iii. Authors of ~~personal and organizational~~[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

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, [WCAG 2.1 AA Guidelines](#), 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.

Note: *All mandatory training shall follow guidelines established by Board of Regents (BOR) Policy 8.2.5, Employee Orientation and Training.*

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 \(Wrike\) Form](#) [CMS Account Request \(Asana\) Form](#), and attend one Website CMS training session, which teaches the basics of editing a Unit site.

Definitions

Official Website - a Website created or sponsored by the University, its divisions, college/schools, departments, units, or other administrative offices and used in conducting Official University business. In addition, Web Applications 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 University division, department, college/school, office, program, research center, or other operating academic/administrative area.

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

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 Webpace - websites whose purpose can be legitimately connected with University activities, including academic, research, administrative, and outreach activities. A 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 Webpace.

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

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

Website - a collection of Webpages residing under a single domain and whose content is centered around a single University Unit or workgroup, a 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 Webpace.

Forms

- ~~CMS Account Request (Wrike) Form~~[CMS Account Request \(Asana\) 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~~[Web Branding Guide](#)
- [Brand Center](#)
- ~~OU Campus CMS & Web Templates~~
- ~~OU Campus Guide~~
- [Web Editor Guide](#)
- [Work West WebSpace Guide](#)

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

Step Description

Approver

Date