Web Page Standards - 2002
The UWA Web Page Standards

Introduction
This manual is an effort to improve The University of West Alabama’s presence on the Internet and to ensure that accurate, current, complete, and consistent information is provided to visitors to the UWA web site. Because the UWA web site is an evolving entity, this manual can be little more than a work-in-progress, and should be revised or updated by the Web Page Committee at regular intervals.

The Purpose of the UWA Web Site is to project the image of the University nationally and internationally across the Internet and to provide its audience with fast, intuitive access to University information.

The Audience of the UWA Web Site includes prospective students, their parents, faculty and staff, alumni, current students, their parents, researchers, businesses, and visitors from other institutions.

The UWA Web Page Committee is a campus-wide committee which sets standards and guidelines concerning the graphics, content, consistency, and access to web pages. In addition, the Web Page Committee sets and follows procedures for creating and approving web sites and pages. The Committee will offer assistance to colleges, departments and units in the creation of web sites and other interactive web-based communications by providing consultation, a library of templates and graphics, and content guidelines.

Web Page Standards

Primary institutional pages are web pages for colleges, departments, or divisions, both academic and administrative, as well as transitional pages which link directly off the home page.

Secondary institutional pages are all pages below the index/home page of a department’s or administrative unit’s web site.

Non-institutional pages include those pages that are maintained by faculty, staff, or students who are acting primarily as individuals rather than as spokespeople for departments or units. Examples include curricula vitae, course materials, pages that UWA faculty or staff maintain for professional organizations, grant materials, and personal web pages.

I. Standards for Web Page Graphics

All web pages should employ characteristics of a good design: balance, readability, and consistency. Because the University web page audience includes a wide diversity of viewers, there is a special need for the pages to be visible to all browsers, to be easy to navigate, and to contain text which is accurate, usable, and easy to read.

UWA web pages must be visible whether the audience is using text browsers, dated versions of Internet Explorer or Netscape, or the newest browsers. Since JavaScript and frames are only visible in some browsers, the use of this technology is banned, for the present, from all primary institutional web pages and strongly discouraged in secondary institutional web pages, unless alternative code/links are provided for browsers unable to handle them. Content contained in technology which is not visible to all browsers must be made available in text also.

All primary institutional pages need a consistent look and feel just as a brochure or magazine produced by the University would have a consistent layout and appearance. Ergonomic studies have shown that users are more comfortable and remain longer at web sites where navigational buttons and links appear at approximately the same place on every page. While the location of buttons and links can vary from college
to college or administrative unit to administrative unit, the location of buttons and links should be placed at the same place on all pages within a college web site or within a unit.

Templates and images for primary institutional pages are available to web page developers. Copies of approved templates will be added to the template library.

Non-institutional pages are not required to follow the style manual guidelines. However, any non-institutional web page which is linked to by a primary and secondary institutional page must not contain objectionable material (pornographic, violent, or hate content) or any other material which would negatively reflect on the University.

Technical Standards
The following technical standards are required for all primary and strongly advised for secondary institutional pages:

- Since Javascript and frames are only visible in some browsers, the use of this technology is prohibited on primary institutional pages. JavaScript and frames are discouraged on secondary institutional pages, unless alternative code/links are provided for browsers unable to handle them.
- No one image should be larger than 25K.
- No web page should take more than 30 seconds to download (for the first time) using a 28.8 modem. Exceptions must be approved by the Web Page Committee.
- Graphics and animations must be minimal in file size and must serve a functional purpose. Developers are encouraged to reduce the size of images rather than reducing the image resolution to the point where the image is blurry, fuzzy, or hard to see.
- Page backgrounds should not interfere with the legibility of text
- Pages should be legible when viewed in text-only view mode.
- The width of any fixed-width page should not exceed 600 pixels to ensure full-screen display on 14-inch monitors
- Web page content must be viewable and equally usable regardless of the browser used.
- All pages should be designed to be viewable in HTML 3.0. Official web page developers should download an HTML 3.0 compliant browser and test their pages.
- The official UWA colors are red and black. UWA red is #CC0000 in HTML.

II. Standards for Web page Content

Responsibility for Maintaining Primary and Secondary Institutional Pages

Each college or unit is responsible for preparing and updating all materials that it publishes on primary and secondary institutional pages. The college or unit should designate a person to be responsible for maintaining the pages. This designate is the Official Web Developer for that college or unit. If the college or unit is unable to find someone to maintain its pages, the Web Page Committee will designate an Official Web Developer for that college or unit. The Official Web Developers are responsible for ensuring that the web pages are consistent with UWA web page standards.

All pages linked to www.uwa.edu must contain accurate and up-to-date information and must meet the appropriate level of UWA web site standards. Pages that do not meet these standards must be revised according to the UWA web page review process. Inclusion on the www.uwa.edu web site carries with it an implicit agreement to abide by UWA web site standards.

General Content Standards

The content of all Web pages delivered over the UWA network must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and with UWA policies. No UWA web page should be used for profit or commercial purposes; no UWA web page should harass or violate the privacy of others. Web pages on the UWA web should not violate another party’s copyright and should not contain libelous or defamatory material. A web page on the UWA web should not collect any information from a visitor without first informing the visitor.
Content Standards for Primary and Secondary Institutional Pages

If the content of a web page duplicates content also found in the Online Catalogues, the web page should instead link to the appropriate bookmark or anchor in the Online Catalogues. Since the Online Catalogues will be updated annually, linking to the Catalogues will facilitate the timely updating of web page content.

Web pages for Colleges should have the following minimum content:

- The official name of the College
- A listing of departments or a link to a page containing the listing
- A listing of majors or a link to a web page containing a list of majors
- A listing of minors or a link to a web page containing a list of minors
- A link back to the UWA home page
- Navigational links
- A listing of faculty members, faculty email addresses, and/or faculty web pages, a link to a web page containing such a list, or a link to a departmental page which contains such material or links
- A revision timestamp, a name or email address of someone to contact for questions, and the email address of the page’s Official Web Page Developer

Web pages for academic departments should have the following minimum content:

- The official name of the department
- A link back to the UWA home page
- Navigational links
- A listing of faculty members, faculty email addresses and/or faculty web pages, a link to a web page containing such a list, or a link to a Departmental page which contains such material or links
- A revision timestamp, a name or email address of someone to contact for questions, and the email address of the page’s Official Web Page Developer

Web pages for administrative units should have the following minimum content:

- The official name of the unit
- A listing of student services rendered by the unit
- A link back to the UWA home page
- Navigational links
- A revision timestamp, a name or email address of someone to contact for questions, and the email address of the page’s Official Web Page Developer

Content Standards for non-Institutional Pages

- Non-institutional pages may not represent their content as official UWA information
- If referring to a UWA college, division, department, unit, activity or service, non-institutional pages developers of non-institutional pages are encouraged to provide a link back to the appropriate UWA primary or secondary institutional pages.

III. Guidelines on the use of fonts

Every time we read, we process not just words and paragraphs, but characters. Because of this, it is important that styles of type used on the UWA web site are attractive, easy to read, and available to all site visitors. There are thousands of typefaces, or fonts, available. Excessive use of fonts, however, bombards a reader and can be quite distracting visually. Therefore, it is the belief of the UWA Web Page Committee that web page developers for primary institutional pages and secondary institutional pages should restrict font use by following the suggested guidelines below:

- When a font is designated for a particular use by the UWA Web Page Committee, a web page developer may use the entire family (in other words a developer may choose to use normal, bold, italics, etc. within that family group).
• Since Sans Serif type (typefaces which have no strokes at the tips of each letter) are easier for audiences to comprehend in larger formats, the font family of Arial should be used for headlines, headings, button names, etc.

• Normal text on a web page should use the Times New Roman or Arial families.

• Web page developers needing to call attention to special areas of his/her web page may choose to use the families of Bart, Bimini, and Bookman.

• Type size should be within the range of 10 to 60 point (Heading 6 to Heading 1).

IV. The Use of University-Related Terms

The University of West Alabama is capitalized as shown.
Procedure for Reviewing Proposed Primary/Secondary Institutional Web Pages

1. Selected members of the Web Page Committee are directed to review a portion of the web site
2. An electronic version of the check sheet is sent to each member of the committee.
3. Using the check sheet, members evaluate the page(s) based on the check sheet criteria.
   If a web page does not pass all criteria,
   if the member sees a way to revise the page, he should indicate the changes either on a
   printed/corrected copy of the page or by any other practical means.
4. Members send their check sheets and/or revisions to the Chair.
5. The committee meets to discuss reviewed pages and finalize decisions.
6. The author/developer is notified of the results of the procedure and requested to make any indicated changes
**Checksheets for reviewing Proposed Primary/Secondary Institutional Web Pages**

**Appearance**
1. Is the design of the page pleasing to the eye?
   (Consider balance, color coordination, overall layout, quality of images, background)
2. Does it contain too much clip art? Does all clipart serve a functional purpose on the page?
3. Do all graphics and animations serve a functional purpose on the page?
4. Is the text legible against the background?
5. Do the elements of the page (banners, buttons, sidebars) use the UWA official colors?

**Page Content**
1. Does the page content meet the minimum standards for the type of page (college, dept. or administrative unit) it is?
2. Is the information accurate and up-to-date?
3. Is the grammar correct and appropriate?
4. Is the message appropriate?

**Technical**
1. Are any images on the page larger than 25K?
2. Does the page take too long (>30 sec) to download based on a 28.8 modem?
3. Is the width of the page restricted to 600 pixels or less?
4. Is the page viewable in text browsers, in Netscape, in Internet Explorer?
5. Does the page restrict itself to HTML 3.0 standards?