



## University Web Guidelines

The University's Website plays a strategic role in the overall success of the institution and supports the institution's operational plans. The site provides a key communication channel to deliver and support recruitment and outreach to students, faculty and staff. It often serves as a first impression of UW Oshkosh for these audiences.

In addition, the Website is a vehicle to build and maintain relationships with the community, businesses, alumni and other critical partners. It also plays a vital communication role in the daily life of the campus community.

For all these reasons, it is important for the Website to reflect and support the University brand.

We can support the brand in two ways online: first, through the use of the brand's visual and verbal elements, modified as necessary for the Web; and second, by creating a Website that is consistent and usable — one that follows clear rules of both form and function throughout.

## Using Visual and Verbal Brand Elements on the Web

Our wordmark, logo and tagline are used on the University Website, per the following guidelines:

The **wordmark** is incorporated into the University Website template. It appears in a fixed position on every page of the site and is not removable or modifiable. (See template, p. 43.)

The **logo** also is part of the template, appearing at the bottom right of each page. It is not removable or modifiable. (Note: While the wordmark and logo do not appear together on the same surface in print documents, they do appear together on the same Web page. This is because the logo is “below the fold” — i.e., visible only when one scrolls down the page. Therefore, it does not appear on screen when the wordmark also is visible.)

The **tagline** may be used on the Website within the guidelines established on p. 22–23.

**Color** — For recommended colors to use in developing Web pages, see the “Web Color Palette” section on p. 32–33.

**Typography** — For information about Web fonts, see “Fonts on the Web” on p. 36.

**Photography** — For Web photographic guidelines, see “Photography” on p. 38–39, and Appendix G.

**Verbal elements** — Just as in print, it is important that the words we choose to represent ourselves on the Web are informed by the brand platform. Keep the elements of the brand platform — our brand personality, attributes and promises — in mind as you write about the University, and make use of brand keywords as appropriate.

## Photography on the Web

Photography on the University Website should adhere to the general photography guidelines presented on p. 38 and in Appendix G.

As in print communication, photography can be an important tool for enhancing the appearance and effectiveness of a Website. Content and context are important; be sure that photographic subject matter is relevant to the page on which it appears, and that photographs are supportive of the message and/or point of view expressed.

Special technical considerations apply to Web photography; file size is one of the most significant. While large, sharp photographs can create an appealing Website, they can result in increased file size, which in turn can have a deleterious effect on the speed at which Web pages load.

To keep file size manageable, remember first to use only jpeg format for photos; jpeg photos are a fraction of the size of photos in other file formats. In addition, you should keep the file size for individual photos to 100KB or less; contact Integrated Marketing & Communications if you need guidance in accomplishing this.

### Banner photos

Banner photos are those which spread across the upper portion of a Web page. The dimensions of banner photos are significantly more horizontal than those of photos typically taken for print. The width of a Web banner photo is 920 pixels; height varies, but averages 200 pixels. Therefore, in taking or selecting banner photographs, it is important to consider whether they can be successfully “cropped” (vertically and/or horizontally trimmed) to fit the banner dimensions without harming the quality of the composition.

For additional guidance on Web photography, please contact Integrated Marketing & Communications.

## Internal Consistency on the University Website

Our Website is one of the most compelling branding tools we have ... but also one of the most complex.

In one respect, the University Website is a single “document” (albeit a very large one); it is focused in its totality on University issues. But at the same time, it is a multi-tiered, multi-purpose collection of documents pertaining to both the University and its many constituent parts, serving diverse audiences.

To unify the site’s numerous subsections under a readily recognized “umbrella” of University identity, and to ensure that each subsection can function efficiently as part of the whole, the Website follows standards pertaining to how pages are built, how they look and how they work. These consistent elements allow people to comfortably and confidently navigate our Website, while also reassuring them that throughout their navigation they remain within the boundaries of the University site.

While the site standards create a consistent, recognizable framework, they also allow sufficient freedom and flexibility for units of the University to establish strong identities of their own, and serve their audiences’ needs.

The following pages identify both the standards used to maintain consistency within the Website and the opportunities afforded units to create a distinct presence for themselves.



The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh home page

## University Website Template

The image at right shows the required elements of the University brand online. The very top navigation, as well as the navigation across the bottom of the page, remain consistent to unify the site across divisions, colleges and units. The wordmark and logo clearly and consistently identify the University on every page. The open white area represents the region of the page available for individual unit/department look and feel, navigation and content.



In some cases, such as a college Website, it is appropriate to remove the second row of audience-level navigation on the University template and add similar, college- (or other unit-) specific navigation. Replacement of standard navigation with unit-specific navigation is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.



## Sub-Branding

Colleges and other units have latitude in creating a distinct look and feel for themselves on the Web, just as they do in print. Website template requirements (p. 43) apply to all such efforts, as does the requirement to use only Helvetica type (p. 36). But opportunities abound to build an identity based on choices including color, content, photography and page organization.

As you consider how to develop your Web presence, please keep the following in mind:

**1) Maintain proper hierarchy among identifiers.** Every unit is first and foremost a part of the University, and it is important that it be recognized as such on the Web. Accordingly, unit identification should not overshadow or compete with University identification. In turn, department identification should not overshadow college identification, office identification should be subordinate to department identification, and so on.

By maintaining a clear hierarchy, you will strengthen visitors' understanding of your unit's relationship to the institution, and benefit fully from your connection to a respected, comprehensive university.



**2) Work from the color palette wherever possible.**

The official colors and complementary palette provided in these guidelines afford ample opportunity for you to distinguish your college or other unit, while retaining an important connection to the University. Regular use of colors outside those presented in the guidelines is discouraged.

**3) Follow the principles of good photography and good design.**

A well-crafted Web presence reflects well on your college or other unit. Guidelines for general photography — and Web photography, specifically — can be found on p. 38–39, and in Appendix G. Web design guidance can be provided by Integrated Marketing & Communications.

An example of a college site that incorporates its own sub-branding within the recommended framework appears on p. 44.



**About your URL ...**  
When lengthy URLs appear in print, they can be difficult for readers to remember, and tedious for them to retype. When promoting your college, department or other Website in print, you may create a briefer, more user-friendly URL that links users to your site, or even to a specific page. Work with Integrated Marketing & Communications to ensure your choice of URL is available, and to create the necessary links.

## Website Features

The following features can enhance the user experience on your site and help you communicate efficiently and effectively.

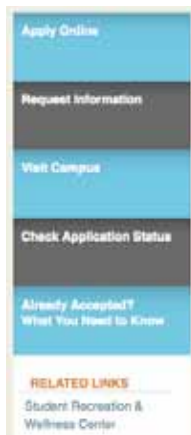
### Main or 'Banner' Photographs

You may wish to have a photograph appear consistently across all the pages on your site, just below the top navigation bars. This main, or "banner," photo is 920 pixels wide; height varies, but averages 200 pixels. The dimensions are more horizontal than those in a typical print photo, something you should keep in mind when shooting or selecting photos.

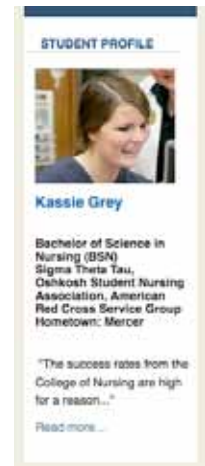
**Navigation Boxes** are critical to the usability and functionality of your site. The standard for the University Website is left-side navigation, as shown here:



**Call to Action Boxes** facilitate actions you wish visitors to take, such as “Apply Online” or “Request Information” for a student recruitment page. Multiple action boxes can be used on a page, but each one should be relevant to the content on the page. Call to Action boxes appear in the upper right corner of the page, below the main image (if one is used).



**Profiles** are another effective Website tool. They can be used to highlight a student or faculty member, or to present a case study. Profiles can include text and a corresponding thumbnail image. Profiles can generally be positioned wherever other elements (i.e., template and navigational) permit.



**Related Links** are helpful in directing visitors to information outside of your specific site that is pertinent to the page they are viewing. To avoid confusion with site navigation, Related Links appear in the lower right-hand corner of the page.



## Editorial and Content Considerations for the Web

Fundamental principles of good writing apply on the Web.

In addition, the Web places a premium on brevity and division of text into manageable and “eye-friendly” chunks. Strive for short paragraphs; make liberal use of bullets; provide users with the option of clicking to find further information rather than presenting great detail on an introductory page.

Search engine optimization is another factor to consider. Fundamentally, search engines reward your use of words strongly related to your subject by ranking your site higher in their search results. Therefore, it is to your benefit to use such words liberally — within the boundaries of sound writing. Search engine optimization has numerous special rules, however. Please consult Integrated Marketing & Communications if you have questions.



## Building and Maintaining Your Site

A content management system (CMS) allows for standard features to be easily added to sites to provide usability and consistency. The University has chosen Plone as its CMS. If you would like to be trained in Plone use, please contact Integrated Marketing & Communications.

## Social Media

Blogs, social networks and Websites such as Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, Second Life and YouTube are exciting new channels to share information and connect with others. The University is active in these online communities and supports the participation of colleges, departments and other units, as well.

**Please note: Integrated Marketing & Communications manages all University-level social media accounts.** These currently include Facebook, Flickr, YouTube and Twitter accounts.

Social media channels may be new to many faculty, staff and students. If you post on behalf of your department, unit or program, the following recommendations (p. 50) will help you use these forums effectively, protect your personal and professional reputation, support the University's reputation and brand and adhere to University policies.





## General Recommendations for Social Media

The keys to success in social media are being honest about who you are, being thoughtful before you post and respecting the purpose of the community where you are posting.

**Be transparent.** If you participate in or maintain a social media site on behalf of a University entity, clearly state your role and goals. Discuss with your supervisor when you are empowered to respond directly to users and when you need approval.

**Be connected.** If you have been authorized by your supervisor or the University to create an official UW Oshkosh department, unit or program social media site or a video for posting at sites such as YouTube, please contact Integrated Marketing & Communications for an approved logo and other images, and to ensure coordination with other UW Oshkosh sites and content. Wherever possible, use University branding on the social media site to support your identification.

**Be respectful.** The University respects the dignity of others and is committed to civil and thoughtful discussion of opposing ideas. Adherence to those ideals is expected of everyone who represents the UW Oshkosh community.

**Be thoughtful.** If you have any questions about whether it is appropriate to post certain kinds of material in your role as a University representative, ask your supervisor or contact Integrated Marketing & Communications.

**Always consider this before you post:** There's no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post.

**Maintain confidentiality.** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about UW Oshkosh, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow University policies and federal requirements, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

