

UIS Office of Web Services

Official Guidelines for the UIS Website Project Web Site Content for Department Web Sites

We are remodeling all department and academic program websites at UIS with three issues in mind: recruitment of prospective students; tech support issues; and Web accessibility. We are using a Content Management System and Official Web Page Templates.

As part of the UIS Website Project, the Office of Web Services will construct your new Web site using the content you prepare. We will install special software on your computer, and teach you how to easily maintain the site. For more information see: www.uis.edu/webservices .

See the Guidelines on the following pages. Then, fill in the *Site Map* document and list the names of your content files and other requested info. We need the Site Map document to construct your new website.

List of Items to Prepare:

- Photos and Graphics unique to the department
- Color Preference for the Name Bar and other elements
- Meta Tag Content:
 - 25-word description of the program
 - 5 single words that describe the program
- Name, Location, Phone and Email of primary contact person(s)
- Main Phone Number, Office Location, and Hours of Operation
- Text-only files with content for each of the pages in each Link Category

The following Link Categories are standard for every site:

- About
- Staff
- Contact

You should group your additional menu items into *Three (3) Link Categories*. Give each category a short explanatory name. Within each category, develop a complete list of links to pages of information in that category. Here are some **suggestions** for Link Categories:

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| • Services | • Calendar | • Policy Manual |
| • Eligibility | • Survey | • Forms |
| • Benefits | • What's New | • Links |
| • Procedures | • Resources | • Etc. |

Guidelines for Preparing Content for Department Web Sites

- **Save your content in a Plain Text or Text-Only format.** When you prepare the content for your Web site, it should ultimately be saved in a Plain Text or Text-Only format:
 1. If you use Microsoft Word or another word processing program, when you are finished with the content, save a copy of the document and choose Plain Text or Text-Only as the format for the copy.
 2. You might also choose to originally create the document with a Text-Only document program like Notepad or WordPad (Windows/Programs/Accessories), or TextEdit (Mac), instead of using a word processor.
 3. The file should be named *.txt .
- **Use your Web Site content to explain your services and to extol the unique features and personality of your department.**
- All current research shows that **Web users SCAN the contents** of Web pages rather than read large blocks of text. Bulleted Lists are much better than long passages of text on the Web. Whenever possible, **create lists**, and then make words and phrases *hot*, so users can click to go to another page to get the details.
- **Structure your content.** Long passages of text that cannot be put into List Format should be broken up with Sub-Headings. This is not only good writing style, but it is important to making our website accessible to differently-abled users. For more Writing Style Guidelines, see the Campus Relations website. (uis.edu/newsroom/guides/style.html)
- **Don't underline words and phrases** on a Web page. When things are underlined on the Web, users think it is a clickable link. Use color, boldface, and spacing to make words and phrases stand out.
- **Email links should also be written out.** Providing embedded email links (i.e. MailTo tags) is good – but we should always include the text of the actual email address in addition to just making a name or word "hot." That way, if users do not have an email application like Outlook configured on their computer, they can write down the email address and use it later with their email client (like yahoo.com, msn.com, and other Web-based email programs).
- According to official university guidelines, departments, **programs and units are not allowed to create and use their own logos.** See the Campus Relations website (uis.edu/newsroom/guides/style.html) for more information.

- We encourage every official department, program and unit to create (and link to on their website) a **Calendar of Events**, using the university web-based calendar tool. See the UIS Office of Web Services for more info (uis.edu/webservices/)
- **Create a *TITLE* for each of your Web pages.** The *Title* appears at the very top of a browser window. If you do not put anything there, the *Title* will default to something generic. The *Title* is extremely important because it is one of the places that Search Engines (like Google) look first when compiling results.

Here is an example of the format for UIS page titles:

Contact Info - Widget Department – University of Illinois at Springfield - UIS.

Fill in the *Site Map* document and list the names of your content files and other requested info. We need the Site Map document to construct your new website.

When we are ready to construct your new website, we will contact you.

In the meantime, follow your existing procedures for accessing your current website.

This is an extensive project. We thank you for your cooperation.

UIS Office of Web Services

<http://www.uis.edu/webservices>