

Style Guidelines
for UIS Web Sites and Multimedia Production

Text Content:

- When preparing text for a Contribute website, always use the **Save as Plain Text** feature in Word or your other word processor to save a text-only document. Then copy that plain text and paste it into Contribute. Do not paste formatted Word text into Contribute.
- Structure all text content with **Heading** tags. *H1* tags are built-in to Contribute for the main headlines of the pages. For text on the page, use sub-headings and the *H2* and *H3* tags to structure the text.
- Change the text into **bulleted lists** as often as possible. Web users are scanners. Bullet lists are much better than long passages of text on the Web. Create lists, and then make words and phrases hot, so users can click to go to another page to get the details.
- **Do not underline** words on web pages unless they are hot links. When things are underlined on the Web, users think it is a clickable link. Use heading tags, boldface, and spacing to make words and phrases stand out.
- Text at the **bottom of the web page** in Contribute sites should sit directly at the bottom of the text container. Do not put a *Return* after the last line of text in a Contribute page.
- Use **Back to Top** links on very long pages. Use the *Anchor* feature of Contribute and use *toppage* as the link.
- **Attachments and downloads:** If you have documents that users can download from your Web page, use the **PDF format** rather than Word docs. Not everyone owns Microsoft Office or other word processor. But anyone can download the free *Adobe Reader* to view PDF files. You may also want to include a link to the free Reader:
<http://www.adobe.com/>

To create PDF files, you need a copy of *Adobe Acrobat*. Faculty may call or email Tech Support to obtain a free copy. Staff and students may purchase a copy from the [UIS WebStore](http://webstore.illinois.edu/) at <http://webstore.illinois.edu/>. Once you install Acrobat on your computer, simply open a Word, Excel, etc. document and choose *Print* from the File menu. Instead of printing to your regular printer, you will “print” to a PDF file. For help, contact Tech Support at 206-7357.

- **Forms:** For all feedback, registration, survey and other web-based forms, use the U of I WebToolbox. [<https://illinois.edu/toolbox>] Login with your *netID* to access the tools. Watch for free training workshops during the year.

- **Calendar:** You can also use the WebToolbox to create a department calendar and link it to your website.

Naming Conventions:

- **Name** new web pages, files, images, etc. with short names, lower case, no spaces or special characters.
- Always put a **Title** on each web page. The format is:
Name of Page – Name of Department – University of Illinois Springfield – UIS.
- Use **.jpg** not **.jpeg** for jpg image file names – change the name if necessary before uploading to a web page. (.jpeg is an outdated designation for the .jpg format.)

Images:

- Generally, the **jpg image** format is for photographs, and the **gif image** format is for graphics. The format is created by the image-editing application, such as Photoshop. You cannot change the format simply by changing the name jpg or gif.
- The **file size** of images for the Web should generally be about 20k to 30k each.
- As a general rule, web page images should have a resolution of 72 pixels per inch, and measure a maximum of 300 pixels wide by a maximum of 300 pixels high. Use Adobe Photoshop to resize your images. Attend the [free workshops in the ITS department](#) to learn to use Photoshop.
- Images used for Faculty and Staff photos (**head shots**) in academic websites are 75 px wide by 100 px high. When cropping, leave a small amount of headroom on top, and crop at the bottom of the neck. If you have a profile, leave extra room on the *nose* side.
- When you insert images, you can **Right-Align** or **Left-Align** them to make the text flow around them. Add a few pixels of **H and V space** to images to set them apart from the text. Make these settings in the image Properties box.
- If you use a **Table**, make it 100% wide with 2 px padding and 2 px cell spacing with the border OFF. Use the Properties box to set these attributes.
- Need a full or half line to separate items on your web page? Don't use the standard Horizontal Rule – it's boring. In each Contribute website, we've added custom lines with your specific department website color. In the Insert menu at the top of the screen, choose Shared Asset. In the box that appears, choose the Full or Half line and click OK.
- Add at least one **great photograph** to each of the main pages that are part of your site navigation. **Avoid using Clip Art.** Contact the UIS Creative Director Diana Nelson (206-6722) for copies of existing photos or to schedule a photo shoot. You may also use a stock photo service such as [iStockPhoto.com](#). But, don't use stock photos of people – work with Diana to use actual UIS photos of our own faculty, staff, and students.

- **Model Release Forms** are available for download here (print them out on your department letterhead): <http://www.uis.edu/webservices/tools/>

Links:

- Sprinkle links **throughout the text** in pages that contain a lot of text.
- Use *Target Blank* for all links that go to **external (outside UIS) websites**.
- **Email links** should always be written out. You may also use the *mailto* tag to make an email address into a hot link. But that only works if users have an email client (like Outlook) available on their computer. So be sure to display the actual email address so users of web-based email (like Yahoo) can copy and paste the email address.

General Content Guidelines:

- See if you have any programs or services that should be listed in the [main Campus A to Z Index](#). Send your submission to webservices@uis.edu
- Update your home page with **something new every month**. Don't let the home page get too 'long' – users do not like to scroll. Add a short item and then link to an inside page.
- Spotlight your **students** on your site. Did a student graduate last semester and get a great job? Did a student receive an award or do something outstanding that you can feature?
- See our **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** Tips to make your site more 'findable' by search engines: www.uis.edu/webservices/community/handouts/
- On the Web, **less is more**. Be brief, use lists, and provide phone and email info.

More Help:

The Office of Web Services offers **workshops, Brown Bags, Web Help** sessions and other opportunities for you to learn more and share knowledge with each other.

- Check our website for **upcoming events**:
www.uis.edu/webservices/community/workshops.html
- Download copies of our event **handouts**:
www.uis.edu/webservices/community/handouts/
- **If you have questions**, please contact the UIS Office of Web Services:
webservices@uis.edu
- If you need our assistance to **change or edit your website**, please use our **Request Form**: <http://illinois.edu/goto/webhelp>