Website Content for Academic Websites

See the pages that follow for detailed examples of each of the items listed below. At the point in time when we are ready for your site, the Office of Web Services will construct your website, and teach you how to easily maintain the site.

List of Items to Prepare:

• Photos and Graphics unique to the program

• Points of Pride
• What You Can Do With This Degree
• About the department – general information
• Curriculum – pages of content related to curriculum
• Faculty – pages of content related to program faculty
• Students – pages for and about students in the program
• Contact info – name, address, location, phone, fax, email

• Department and UIS Links – page of links unique to the department or UIS
• Resources – list of external links (outside UIS site) that are useful to students
• What’s New – page of timely info
**Example of the Structure for an Academic Website**

**PSYCHOLOGY WEBSITE STRUCTURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>about</th>
<th>faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>about/ – (general description)</td>
<td>faculty/ – (list of faculty + contact info)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>degree/</td>
<td>focus/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>links/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pride/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resources/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whatsnew/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>curriculum</th>
<th>students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>curriculum/ – (overview)</td>
<td>students/ – (outstanding students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courselist/</td>
<td>advising/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entrance/</td>
<td>advisingfaq/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goals/</td>
<td>facilities/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>major/</td>
<td>forms/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minor/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minorteached/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidelines for Preparing Content for Academic Websites

General Information:

- **Use your website content to extol the unique features and personality of your department.** Give users a chance to see why your program is a better choice than another school. Include photos and descriptions of department events, testimonials from previous students, interesting information about faculty, etc.

- **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.**

- **Don’t apply heading styles to words and phrases you wish to stand out on a Web page.** Use boldface, and spacing to make words and phrases stand out.

- **Email links should be written out in text.** Type the text “Email John Doe” on the page and link it to the email address (mailto:johndoe@uis.edu).

- **Plan for the 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 the word Title. The Title is extremely important because it is one of the places that Search Engines (like Google and Bing) look first when compiling results. Use something descriptive that includes a keyword that your audience might be using as a search term.

- **Do not reproduce the material from official Course Descriptions.** You can use lists of
courses, and one-line descriptions for each, on your website. A link to the official Course Description site will be needed after that.

- **Official Program Requirements are listed on the UIS Catalog and Admissions/ApplyGrad websites.** If you include program requirements on your program website, you must be sure that the same information appears in both your location and the official locations.
- According to official university guidelines, **units are not allowed to create and use their own logos.** Contact the Campus Relations department for more information.
- **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 Style Guides website.
- We encourage every official unit to create (and link to on their website) a **Calendar of Events**, using the university’s Webtools Toolbox.

### The Standardized Navigation Set for All Academic Websites

There are seven primary links that are standard for every academic program website. They appear in the navigation to the left of each website:

- **About:** This area contains general information about the program, and contains these links: general info about the program; contact info; points of pride; what you can do with this degree; links to other program pages and resources, and links to other UIS websites; links to external websites that have info of interest to our students; a What’s New page for employment announcements, student deadlines, department events, etc.
- **Curriculum:** This contains links related to the requirements of the program and other specific areas of study. The Curriculum button itself links to a page with Overview information and a list of relevant links. (For programs offering both a Bachelor’s Degree and a Master’s Degree, the links should be separated by category.) Examples of links for this area include: Areas of Emphasis; Entrance Requirements; Major; Minor; Course List; Transfer Students, Online, etc.
- **Faculty:** This contains a list of all faculty in the program. Examples of links for this area include: Contact Info for each Faculty member; Research; Publications, etc.
- **Students:** This contains information for and about students, including links like these: Outstanding Students; Student Advising; Honors Programs, Alumni, Testimonials, etc.
- **Contact:** should contain the name and mailing address of the program, the office location, phone numbers and email addresses of persons to contact. Program staff should be listed in this section.
- **Site Map:** This is automatically generated page the Office of Web Services has programmed to show all of the pages on your website in one alphabetical list.

### The Program Home Page

- **Site Search:** The search box in the top right corner allows a user to search the contents of the program website.
• **Top:** One or two sentences appear at the top of the home page in a stylized font.
• **Main Content Area:** The content on the homepage (or any page of your website) can be arranged into two columns to help organize and present this content to your audience.
• **Program Name:** The program name appears above the navigation on the left side of the homepage and also on inside pages.

**The Inside Pages for Academic Websites**

• The body of the page contains a left-side navigation column, topped by the name of the program or department.
• The right-side column in the body of the page contains the information relevant to that page. The information should be written with scanning in mind – i.e., short paragraphs, indented text, and list items.