

Content Management Policy for Official Web Pages

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures with respect to communication and updates of Xavier University's official web site. Xavier University of Louisiana herein establishes this policy for faculty, staff, and students seeking authoring access to the University's official website, and identifies guidelines and restrictions associated with this process.

This policy is limited in scope to the University's official website. Definitions and policies regarding unofficial Web pages and broader aspects of network use are covered in the University's Network Use Policy. In any conflict between these policies, the Network Use Policy shall be considered the more authoritative document. The official Xavier University site is ultimately the responsibility of the Department of Public Affairs. The University should make every effort to include a page for every Xavier department and office, and to organize the Site Map according to the Xavier University organizational chart.

This policy contains specific terms you may find unfamiliar. Please refer to the Definitions at the end of this document to clarify the meaning of these terms.

Style Guidelines

The Web Planning Committee has established the following Style Guidelines. Webmasters have flexibility in their presentation, but are expected to follow the Style Guidelines at every opportunity. The purpose is to establish common characteristics across Xavier University's official website (not for webusers.xula.edu). The Style Guidelines govern the following areas:

Use of Seal. The Xavier seal may only be used on the home page, all official pages, and the President's page. The seal is reserved for only the most official forms of business, and its frequent use and misuse diminishes its honor.

Backgrounds. In most cases, the color should be white (#FFFFFF) or off-white. The use of background images may in certain circumstances be appropriate, but they often render the text hard to read, and diminish the dignity of a well-designed site. Exceptions may be made.

Text, Headings and Body. The use of common and sedate fonts (Arial, Times, Helvetica, or Verdana are recommended) in page headings will be strictly enforced, and should always be in black or dark colors. The use of Arial fonts in body text is recommended, and should also always be black. Hypertext links in the body text of a page should be left at their default style (in most browsers, links are [blue \(#0000FF\) and underlined](#), on a **dark background, links may be [light blue \(#3399FF\) and underlined](#)**). More flexibility is permissible with other page design elements such as list items, table headings, and graphics.

Animated GIFs. The frivolous use of animated GIFs, or any animation, should be restricted to instructional purposes, and not used as a page design element. The use of clip art and "cutesy" graphics is strongly discouraged in any circumstance.

Xavier colors are white (#FFFFFF) and gold (#FFFF33). For legibility, text colors should always be dark on a light background, or light on a dark background.

Dark colors can be used such as a **dark brown** (#381206), **black** (#000000), and **green** (#00A552). **Light colors may be used such as light green** (#DDFFDD) and **light brown** (#BB8800). **Red** (#FF0000) may be used for important notices. These hex codes are provided for your use and reference for an exact color match across the Xavier site.

Accessibility. The Americans with Disabilities Act makes many recommendations for making pages that are accessible to users with visual impairments. Pages must comply with these guidelines by using ALT tags for links and images.

Template. ITC has provided this template for units wishing to create official Xavier University webpages for their groups.

<http://www.xula.edu/create-a-page.html>

This template can be customizable according to the various needs of Departments and Offices. Use of this template is strongly recommended in order to provide consistency and ease of implementation.

Exceptions. Exceptions in Style Guidelines may be made because we recognize the need for the various organizations to be able to establish their own rules for style. The Department of Public Affairs is the final arbiter on the matter, as the group most concerned with the style and content of Xavier publications. The University Web Developer acts in an advisory role to the Director of Communications, and disputes will be cooperatively ruled upon according to their standards.

Technical Recommendations

Many software packages can simplify the creation of HTML pages through a visual interface. However, good Web authoring practices demand that attention be paid to the code as well. Therefore, it is recommended that the use of Web development software be limited to those titles that allow for editing and validating HTML code. Because of this requirement, use of Microsoft Word and Microsoft Publisher is discouraged. Instead, this document recommends the use of software that allows the Webmaster to edit code directly. The University offers three choices of software, but training is only available for Macromedia Dreamweaver, available through the University Web Developer. Netscape Composer and Microsoft FrontPage are also options, although care must be taken to avoid a number of pitfalls that can lead to invalid HTML and Web pages that do not behave as expected across all browsers.

Since creating HTML pages has more to do with code than with software, installation of and training in one of these packages may not be necessary for experienced programmers. For new users, an interface will decrease the learning curve associated with putting together a page.

Every web author is responsible for making sure that his/her page contains valid code, meaning it should comply with specific standards. The standard for XULA.edu will be XHTML 1.0 Transitional, as defined by the World Wide Web Consortium (<http://www.w3.org/>) with the goal of creating pages that will survive the next several years of changing technologies, devices, and browsers. This standard suggests the use of style sheets for presentation and deprecates the use of tables for page layout.

At a minimum, Webmasters' computers should be configured with the latest versions of Internet Explorer (5 and 6) and Netscape Navigator (6 and 7) for testing, the latest processor class, and use of Windows 2000 or XP are preferred over Windows NT, 98, or 95. Mac users should be using OS X.2 or later. Any Webmaster creating sites using the above mentioned software titles should have a minimum of 256 MB of RAM, more for multimedia development.

The University will provide Webmasters with the hardware and software required to meet the minimum standards of this technical recommendation.

Created pages require a file transfer to the Xavier Web server before they are publicly available on the World Wide Web. To transfer files, a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) application will have to be installed on the desktop, and permissions granted to specified directories upon request to the University Web Developer. FTP functionality is built in to DreamWeaver, available by request, and other applications for Windows and Mac are available through the ITC support page and can be downloaded and installed on the local machine.

Advanced scripting can allow for advanced user interfaces. Recommended programming languages include Javascript, PHP or Perl and individual permissions will be set by request via the University Web Developer.

Training is offered each semester by ITC through the training lab. Alternately, there are several private institutions in New Orleans that offer training classes and certification, including New Horizons. Aspiring Web authors should also be aware of the wealth of free tutorials, references and resources that are available on the Web itself.

Procedure for Official Web Updates

All content on the official University website is subject to continuing review by the University's Director of Communications. The Director of Communications will notify involved parties of any problems. All parties will cooperate to resolve outstanding issues.

Groups With Webmasters

Many departments, offices, and organizations at Xavier University have an appointed Webmaster for their unit. In this case, changes can be requested directly to that individual, subject to the review of the Director of Communications. The Webmaster, under the supervision of his or her unit Manager, is responsible for maintaining departmental pages, fulfilling the requests to the satisfaction of his or her group.

Groups Without Webmasters

For any unit (department, office, or organization) that does not have an appointed webmaster, the following steps should be followed by anyone who wishes to make a change to the University's official website:

- Step 1. A network user first notifies his/her manager (department chair, sponsoring staff or faculty, or designee) of a necessary change. The manager will proceed to Step 2.
- Step 2. A Change Management Form has been made available at <http://www.xula.edu/downloads/pdf/change-management.pdf>. The manager submits a completed Change Management Form to the University Web Developer via fax (520-7902) or via the on-line form.
- Step 3. The University Web Developer makes the pre-publication change and stores the revised pages in a staging area for initial approval, then notifies manager that the change has been made. The changes can be viewed in the staging area for a period up to thirty (30) days.
- Step 4. The manager has up to thirty (30) days to approve or revise the pages. Upon approval, the University Web Developer will post the revised pages to the University website. The University Web Developer may additionally be required to make revisions as needed. If the manager does not reply within thirty (30) days, the procedure must be reinitiated.

Definitions

Content Management. Content Management is a process that gives the University control of its many Web pages, and thus produces a unified website displaying accurate information with a consistent appearance.

Official XU Website. The official Xavier University website includes pages which fall under the domain of www.xula.edu. Pages under the webusers.xula.edu domain remain the responsibility of the account holder and are outside of the scope of this document. In certain circumstances, pages from the official XU website may link to a webusers page, and in those limited circumstances, the page will be subject to oversight by the University's Director of Communications.

University Web Developer. The Web Developer's activities include resolving user interface issues, recommendation of technologies, and establishing rules and guidelines for the University website. He or she also serves as a resource for any department wishing to control its content via a Webmaster. He or she shall establish rules for the look and feel of pages via Style Guidelines, which are considered and approved by the Web Planning Committee.

Webmaster. A Webmaster is a recognized individual within an academic or administrative department, office or organization who creates official departmental pages and publishes them directly to the Xavier Web server, with proper approval of his or her Manager. He or she has the authority to add content under the authority of his or her Manager. Testing for broken links and user issues are the responsibility of the Webmaster.

Network Use Policy. The Network Use Policy was drafted by TLTR, with input from faculty, staff, and students, and approved by the Governance Committee. By outlining the expectations of both the network administrators, and those who use the network, the Network Use Policy is reviewed yearly to address the latest issues in technology, privacy, school policy, and user needs.

Style Guidelines. Style Guidelines are necessary to maintain a professional and identifiable Internet campaign. The Style Guidelines are made available for use by anyone wishing to design pages for the official site, XULA.edu. Personal sites, in the webusers.xula.edu domain, are not subject to these guidelines. However, the content is required to comply with the Network Use Policy.

Web Planning Committee. The Web Planning Committee makes recommendations of policy to Office of University and Media Relations. It meets on a bi-monthly basis and is open to any faculty, staff, or student who wishes to get involved in the committee's discussions and decisions. For more information on the time of the meetings, or how to get involved, please contact the Web Planning Committee's chairperson, Yamlak Tsega (ext. 5105).