

University Policies

Policy Name: Web Publishing	Effective Date:
Custodian of Policy: Vice President for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer	Last Review: July 2000
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FORMAL REVIEW

Policy

Minnesota State Mankato's mission reflects an institutional commitment to promote learning through effective undergraduate and graduate teaching, scholarship, and research in service to the state, the region, and the global community. Content published on official University websites must support the University's mission and goals and reflect the University's values. The University encourages faculty, staff, and students to utilize the web as an effective tool for furthering the University's strategic goals and objectives, for marketing the University, and for conveying information.

It is the objective of this policy to provide clear definitions and guidance with regards to branding, accuracy, responsibility to those who have been tasked with publishing content on the University's websites, or on third-party websites where the University is being represented in an official capacity.

Procedures

Official University websites must comply with all applicable federal and state laws, system and University policies, and negotiated agreements, and follow technology standards and best practices. Examples include, but are not limited to, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 508, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Family Educational Right of Privacy Act (FERPA), MnSCU Acceptable Use of Computers and Information Technology Resources, World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) standards.

Definitions

Official public website: Any official University website accessible to the general public.

Official private website: Any official University website with role-based access restriction.

Business unit: A division, office, college, department, program.

Official content: Information published by University business units. Official content must be published on official University websites or officially designated electronic media channels, for the sole purpose of promoting official University or business unit objectives.

Unofficial content: Personal and group websites that use the University's hosting services and domains, but are not used for official University content.

Content owner: Any business unit or a designated representative responsible for creation and maintenance of official content.

Content maintenance: Adding, updating and removing content to insure that it is valid and current.

Responsibilities and Relationships

The Office of Integrated Marketing (IM) is responsible for the overall University marketing strategy. IM oversees the development and implementation of appropriate marketing messaging and brand identity standards on electronic communication channels.

Information and Technology Services (ITS) is responsible for development and maintenance of the University electronic information delivery infrastructure. ITS performs research, testing and analysis of technical solutions and standards and implements or makes recommendations for content delivery infrastructure.

The website template is the approved implementation of brand identity for official University websites. The template is developed jointly by IM and ITS and is designed to ensure adherence to all applicable graphical standards and technical requirements. All official University websites are required to use the website template. The website template is a suite of design options that have been developed to meet specific purposes based on considerations such as the nature of content presented, unit marketing objectives, intended audience.

Business units that operate independently or semi-independently, but are directly associated with the University through a special arrangement are considered to be semiautonomous for marketing purposes. All University brand and technical standards apply to semiautonomous marketing units. Semiautonomous marketing units may utilize the website template, but it is not required. Examples of semiautonomous marketing units include athletics, centers, partnerships, bookstore, and food services.

Official University content

All business units with an official web presence, including social media, are responsible for maintaining the content on official sites. The business unit must designate a faculty or staff member to serve as its primary web content manager (PCM).

The PCM serves as the business unit liaison with IM and ITS. The PCM must register with IM and ITS by providing current contact information and all relevant web addresses. The PCM is responsible for ensuring all official content is continuously monitored and regularly updated and clearly labeled with up-to-date business unit contact information. The PCM is responsible for the official social media site(s), including content posted and site security.

The PCM may assign additional individuals who are authorized to create or maintain official content, including social media sites. Except for social media content, the business unit may contract with ITS to perform ongoing content management services.

Unofficial content

Unofficial content authors assume personal responsibility for compliance with appropriate regulations. The University does not review, edit, endorse, nor is it responsible for unofficial content or links associated with unofficial pages.

Unofficial content stored on University computers or using an official University domain must not use the official University website template. Brand elements, such as official University colors and logos, are allowed. All brand elements must adhere to University graphic standards.

Areas designated for hosting personal and group content cannot be used for official content and vice versa. Examples of unofficial content include personal faculty, staff and student pages, student organization websites, personal social media sites.

Individuals or groups using University computers to store unofficial content are strictly prohibited from creating and/or operating any form of online retail operation (e-commerce, shopping or auction sites, etc.).

Official content levels

Official University websites must utilize the official University website template and follow all brand standards. The website template design may vary according to the designated content level of the page and the types of content presented.

Level 1: Core marketing content

Level 1 (L1) content delivers the University's core marketing messaging intended for external audiences, with the primary focus on furthering the University's strategic goals and objectives. L1 content is published on the University's main page, major audience and topic-based pages, select business unit landing pages and content elements persistent on all official University sites. IM and ITS are the primary business units responsible for L1 content production and delivery systems.

Level 2: Business unit marketing content

Level 2 (L2) content delivers the business unit's marketing messaging intended for its key constituencies, with the primary focus on goals and objectives of the business unit. L2 content is published on college, department, division, office, program landing pages and any other designated pages. IM and ITS should be involved in the development process to ensure proper messaging and technical implementation. The business unit is responsible for maintaining the quality of L2 content. Consultation with IM and ITS is recommended for significant changes or updates to L2 content.

Level 3: Mission-critical content

Level 3 (L3) content delivers information critical for day-to-day business functions and continuing operation of the University. L3 content is intended for internal and external audiences and may be published on official public or private websites. Examples of L3 content include academic calendars, registration and financial information, important dates and deadlines, employee information, student records and emergency communications. Responsibility for integrity, validity, availability, utility and accessibility of mission-critical content is shared between the administratively responsible business unit, ITS and/or other service providers. To ensure proper implementation, advanced consultation with ITS is strongly recommended prior to significant upgrades or changes to L3 content delivery systems.

Level 4: Core content

Level 4 (L4) content delivers essential, descriptive information to support academic and administrative functions of the University or its business units. L4 content is published on official public websites and may include academic program information, course descriptions and major requirements, scholarships, service offerings and schedules, policies and procedures. The appropriate business unit is responsible for L4 content development and maintenance.

Level 5: Directory information

Level 5 (L5) content delivers structured data describing physical and administrative organization of the University. L5 content may be presented as alphabetical or thematic indexes or via search queries. L5 content may be accessed through public or private websites. Examples of L5 content include campus maps, building and room information, addresses and phone numbers, people and group search, web search, organizational charts, A-Z listings.

Level 6: Supplemental content

Level 6 (L6) content delivers secondary information that supports core content by providing additional descriptions and resources. L6 content may be published on official and unofficial public websites. Examples of L6 content include department histories, archives, missions and goals, newsletters, faculty profile pages, links of interest and student club pages.

Social media content

Colleges, departments, offices, programs, employees, and students are encouraged to utilize social networking services such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., to promote themselves and connect with prospective and current students, parents, alumni, donors, and the community more effectively. Any social media content created by a business unit to represent an official entity of the University must use site options and settings most appropriate for business purposes. Public social media site avatars must include a logo or image that can be identified with the account. Using an official department logo, if available is preferred.

Advertising and Sponsorship

Paid advertising for the purpose of promoting non-university products or services is not allowed on official or unofficial University websites.

Recognition of external sponsorship and underwriting is allowed in the form of logos and/or links to the external sponsor's home page. The logos and/or links must be displayed on the business unit's secondary or lower pages. Payment may not be accepted specifically for the placement of sponsor logos and/or links on University websites.

Rationale

The University conveys large amounts of information to a wide range of audiences. Using electronic communications channels, such as the Web is an effective way to reach many people at once, is easy to update, and extends the reach of the University to a wider audience.