



The UNIVERSITY *of* OKLAHOMA
NORMAN CAMPUS

Web Guide & Policy

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www.ou.edu/webcomm/resources/webguide.html



David L. Boren
Thirteenth president of
The University of Oklahoma

Welcome

To the OU Web Community,

From the ever increasing number of prospective students to the hundreds of thousands of alumni across the globe, the University of Oklahoma Web site serves as a window to the unprecedented developments we are making together. The efforts and leadership of the recently established Web Communications department have ushered in many advances and improvements in this area, including the launch of our newly designed homepage last fall.

As we continue our efforts to create an aesthetically pleasing and functional Web site, it is important that we are communicating and presenting the distinct aspects of the university in a consistent manner. For this reason, we are pleased to now offer a Web Guide created with the help of several OU departments to provide style and design guidelines for developing Web pages on the OU domain. This development guide will help ensure that each of the many different areas of the university communicate as a collective force that drives the excellence of the University of Oklahoma.

In today's technically advanced world, our Web site is often the first opportunity that we have to show others the many examples of excellence that has brought OU recognition as a pacesetter in American public higher education.

Thank you for your commitment to transforming our Web site into one of the best in the nation. Above all, thank you for your dedication to the University of Oklahoma and all that you do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Boren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

David L. Boren

President

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Introduction

We all use our organization's name and logo each day, so the detailed information that follows is critical to your work at The University of Oklahoma. However, if you read no further than this, please remember these key points:

First and foremost, a brand is strong when those representing the brand (that's us) deliver on what it has promised. As we use the OU brand, we must constantly realize that with every encounter, we're building that brand. If our interactions are positive, honest and helpful, the OU brand is enhanced. If not, the brand can be tarnished.

Secondly, the brand gains its power from appropriate and consistent use. Something that is seemingly harmless - such as a morphed logo image on t-shirts or a logo on a Web site in a creative, but not approved color - contributes to fragmenting and diminishing the strong intended brand. And that's why the Web guidelines contained herein are critical. With every use of the OU name, we must apply it to meet the expectations of The University of Oklahoma. While none of us wants to be "logo police," the reason for the guidelines and insistence upon following them is simple: to repeatedly and consistently build the power of the OU brand and to protect the integrity of the brand.

As this is accomplished, we all benefit. The OU brand is even more widely recognized as implying excellence and subsequently, our reputation - through association with it as OU faculty, staff and students - is also enhanced.

Who must follow these guidelines?

All academic; research; outreach; student services; registered student groups and organizations as well as administrative units of The University of Oklahoma Norman Campus funded through or by the Norman Campus that are not legally autonomous must follow these Web guidelines. Outside agencies or publishers that create Web or electronic publications for any University unit are also required to abide by these guidelines.

About the OU.edu Domain

The University of Oklahoma Web site contains several million pages and the OU home page hosts around 10,000 unique visitors per day from all over the world. The Web is essential to our mission of teaching, research, creative work, and public service. Many visitors are external audiences, such as prospective students, parents, or researchers. They may not always enter our sites through the OU home page. Our Web content will be, for many, their first and only view of the University of Oklahoma community.

Our Web pages need to reflect our values including respect for intellectual property, respect for individual's privacy, accessible information for those with disabilities, the need to support open public dialogue, and respect for the law. Thus, the University's Web policy seeks to establish standards and

For questions about Web guidelines or policies, please contact Web Communications at webcomm@ou.edu or (405) 325-0058.

guidelines that will:

- Support the vision, mission, goals, and academic values of the University of Oklahoma;
- Assist Web publishers in developing sites that comply with University policies, rules, and regulations and local, state, and federal laws;
- Facilitate the official business of the University;
- And enable appropriate online transactions.

Furthermore, the purpose of this guide is to maintain a consistent OU identity and help streamline all University pages so that users can efficiently find what they are looking for on any OU Web page.

This document applies to:

- Web pages located on servers within the ou.edu domain or using OU internet protocol ranges affiliated with the Norman Campus.
- University sites outside ou.edu affiliated with the Norman Campus using OU trademarks in their domain names;
- Web pages prepared for any organization or activity receiving Norman Campus funds, or with funds maintained in the University of Oklahoma Norman Campus financial system, excluding agency affiliates; and
- Faculty, staff, and student pages on servers connected to the Norman Campus network.

Materials placed on a Web site, including graphics and photos, are subject to the same copyright laws and standards of academic honesty as any print-based publication.

To ensure that all Web sites representing the University of Oklahoma convey a consistent and accurate message and image, all sites involved in a redesign, must be reviewed by the Office of Web Communications.

The Office of Web Communications will review sites based upon the guidelines and checklist contained in this policy. The Office of Web Communications will perform audits to check for compliance, consistency and accurate messages.

“It takes only five users to uncover 80 percent of high-level usability problems” - Jakob Nielsen
<http://www.useit.com/>

Usability

Jakob Nielsen’s “Law of the Web User Experience” states that “users spend most of their time on other Web sites.” In other words, users form expectations of your site based on what’s commonly done on most others. If you deviate from the expected norm, your site will be more difficult to use. For this reason, we require that all OU sites:

- Contain the global navigation bar.
- Display the OU logo or the words “The University of Oklahoma” linked to www.ou.edu.
- Display the department/college name in the upper quadrant linking back to that site’s homepage.
- Contain the global footer.
- If possible have topic navigation on the left, close to the top.

Web Applications

Web applications (forms, ecommerce, etc.) should not include interaction techniques that deviate from common graphical user interface (GUI) standards as they can create usability catastrophes that make applications and transactions much more complex and in some cases, impossible to use.

All sites that collect personal or financial information must consult with the Information Technology Security team and comply with all, ecommerce, PCI, privacy and security requirements.

Some required page elements may be eliminated in certain Web applications (forms, ecommerce, etc.) where the presence of an element may hinder the usability of the application. Any exceptions to required page elements must be approved by the Office of Web Communications.

There are many excellent resources for creating good user interfaces for Web applications. We recommend starting at:
<http://www.useit.com/user-interface-design.html>.

Naming Conventions

Domain names should be intuitive, short, and reflective of an academic or administrative unit’s affiliation with The University of Oklahoma.

Typical OU URLs are extensions of the root ou.edu. In general, only URLs ending in “ou.edu” are hosted on university Web servers. Colleges and departments must request an exemption from the Office of Web Communications in order to utilize a domain extension other than .edu (.com, .org, etc.). The university also reserves the right to reserve URLs or refuse requests for URL forms deemed inappropriate or likely to be used in



OU Public Affairs (www.ou.edu/publicaffairs) is a good example of intuitive URL naming.

the future by departments and administrators (for example, URLs including words like “security” or “emergency”).

We recommend that when referring to email addresses, you represent them as name[at]ou[dot]edu. This prevents many spam spiders/crawlers from extracting email addresses to add to spam databases.

“The most effective sites at directing people to the right place are those that match user expectations. People expect sites to organize information in a way that makes sense to them.”
(Jakob Nielsen, 2006)

Information Architecture

Information architecture (IA) is the basic organization of content for your site. Visitors need to be able to find the information they’re looking for and quickly, otherwise they may get frustrated and abandon their search. Creating intuitive information architecture is one of the most important aspects of ensuring a site is user-friendly.

One of the things we hear over and over is that most university Web sites around the country are structured to match the administrative structure or organizational chart, e.g., this department falls under this VP so it should go under that VP’s section on the Web and so forth. This makes sense for faculty and staff who are familiar with the institution, but it leaves out the external audiences we should be focusing on: prospective students, alumni, prospective faculty and in many cases current students.

We too are guilty of the organizational chart Web structure at OU. Therefore, we encourage you to abandon your organizational structure and research what your target audience is looking for and how they can easily find that information. You might be surprised to discover how your department’s information should be presented.

Writing for the Web

OU Web site writing should follow *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Write for web, not for print. A wall of text is deadly for an interactive experience - not to mention tough on the eyes. To draw users into the text and to support scan-ability, use well-documented procedures:

- Subheads
- A simple writing style
- Short paragraphs
- Bulleted lists
- Highlighted keywords

The general rule for translating text from print to Web is to cut the text in half and then try to cut it in half again. Emphasize what your college or department offers and how you differ from competitors at other universities.

Avoid writing in “university-speak”. It leaves little impression on prospective students:

- Applicants who wish to matriculate from a two-year institution should contact the registrar and fill out a FAFSA ...

The Associated Press
Style Book
www.apstylebook.com

Keep columns within reasonable pixel or percentage widths to maximize readability, especially for large monitors with high resolutions.

Content Accuracy

OU colleges and departments must review and update content regularly to maintain accuracy.

- Review contact and deadline information every semester.
- Check all site links at least quarterly; monthly is recommended.
- Immediately remove outdated pages and content.
- All pages must have a last revised date.

All Web content is expected to use accurate, standardized information on enrollment, research funding, number of faculty, number of buildings, acreage, finances, etc. This information is available from Institutional Research and Public Affairs.

- Institutional Research and Reporting: www.ou.edu/provost/ir
- Public Affairs – OU Facts: www.ou.edu/publicaffairs/OUFacts1.shtml

PDF Files for Online Reading

PDF's are great for printing and distributing manuals or other large documents. Reserve it for this purpose and convert any information that needs to be browsed or read on the screen into Web pages since they are more accessible.

Always open PDF and other non-Web documents in a new browser window. Warn users in advance that a new window will appear and provide a link to download the plug-in.



This is the standard graphic for "Get Adobe Reader." It can be downloaded from: <http://www.adobe.com/products/>

Design Considerations

Color

The University of Oklahoma's official colors are Pantone 201(#B30838) and Pantone 468(#EEE1C5). The official colors look great in print however do not translate well to screen. Because of this we recommend Crimson (#841617) and Cream (#FDF9D8) be used in their places.

#841617



#FDF9D8



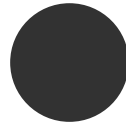


www.ou.edu/education is a great example of accent colors.

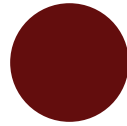
Accent Colors

These colors work well as accents to Crimson and Cream.

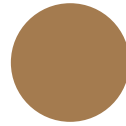
#323232



#630D0D



#A47B4f



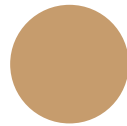
#9A9798



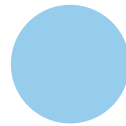
#7EAC41



#C69C6D



#96CEDD



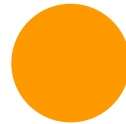
#E9E9E9



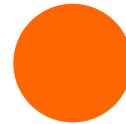
Colors to Avoid

Please refrain from using the color orange in your designs. Orange is one of the official colors of Oklahoma State University and burnt orange is one of the official colors of the University of Texas.

#FF9900



#FF6600



#CC6633



Recommended fonts should be purchased by departments and colleges as needed.

Font Recommendations

Serif: Adobe Garamond Pro

San-Serif: Helvetica

Substitute Serif: Georgia

Substitute San-Serif: Verdana

While most systems come with substitutes Georgia and Verdana, Garamond Pro and Helvetica can be purchased from <http://www.adobe.com/type/>

Do not disable a Web browser's "change font size" button and specify a fixed font size for each page.

OU Seal and Marks for Web Use

When included, the official interlocking OU logo with inclusion of the registered mark ® should appear in all browser tabs and alone in url address bars (favicons).

The OU logo may appear in crimson, reversed out on a dark background. The logo should never be altered, animated, or appear in any other color. Anytime an OU logo is displayed, it must link back to the OU home page.

Official web OU interlocking logo and wordmarks can be downloaded from www.ou.edu/webcomm/home/resources/downloads.html.



Web OU Interlocking



Web OU Interlocking



The OU seal, also a registered trademark of the University, is generally reserved for official University documents and is discouraged for use on most sites. It must be approved by the University’s Trademark Administration Committee before being used on pages. Care should always be taken when displaying the seal to maintain its integrity. The seal must never be animated or written over and should always be displayed at the highest quality. It must not be used as a background image for any Web site.

Search Engine Optimization

Understanding How Search Engines Work

The top search engines are currently Google, Yahoo, MSN, and Ask. While all search engines are a little different, they all work in a similar manner. There are three components that make up the search engine:

- Spider (or Crawler): Scans the Web looking for pages and new content to add to the index.
- Index: Collection of all content found by the spider.
- Query: The front-end search tool used to find results. Searches the index to find content, not the Web.

Optimize

Not only will search engine optimization (SEO) help your pages be found in internal searches (searches within the OU domain), but also on the free external searches (e.g., google.com). Points to consider:

- Search engines do not reveal exactly what they’re looking for when crawling the Web. The tips and tricks we cover here are widely recognized as the most important. However, there are many other opportunities to optimize a site which may not be agreed upon by everyone in the SEO industry.
- The “easy way out” is usually caught and penalized by most search engines. For example, the technique of “trading links” is an easy way to gain links to your site (a proven SEO benefit). But, major search engines can now track this practice and may even penalize sites for these “quick and dirty” techniques.

- Optimize for the words and phrases your target audience is searching. This may not be the University-speak terms you use currently in your site.
- Essentially, search engines are looking for reputable, reliable content, and a lot of it. So, here are the things you already have going for you:

- ◇ The .edu domain is favored over .com, .biz, .info, etc.
- ◇ Most sites within the university have a lot of content.
- ◇ Many higher-ed institutions have not begun an SEO campaign, so competition is as small.

How to optimize

Keywords

- Start with a list of 5-10 keywords/phrases you think your target audience would use while trying search for your site. If you have Google Analytics, add the top 5 keywords visitors have used to find your site.
- Visit www.wordtracker.com and sign up for a free trial. Some of the search engines offer a similar search, but so far this is the best free keyword generation software we've found.
- Use the list of keywords you've generated and enter (separately) into the "Step 1" of word tracker and follow the proceeding steps. "Count" = actual traffic for this word in Wordtracker partner search engines (60 day period). "Predict" = estimated traffic for this word across search engines (per day).
- Use the information found through this exercise to understand what your best keyword options may be. Pick the top 5-10 words/phrases you found through this search and optimize for these.



OU's Articles pages are a good example of appropriate title tags.

Page Titles/Title Tags

Limit to 65 characters (including spaces). Include keywords, but not as a listing. Title tags display as the headline in search results – make them compelling if possible.

Recommended formula:

- Descriptive Keywords | University of Oklahoma (or, OU)

Title Tag Examples :

- ◇ Faculty page for the Chemistry Department
Meet Chemistry Professors and Researches | Chemistry | OU

- ◇ Human Resources benefits explanation page
Understand your benefits | HR | University of Oklahoma

Integrate 2-3 different keywords (multiple instances) into a page's content while still maintaining readable and concise content. Writing well should be the first priority – keywords second.

Encourage links back to your site. Within, and especially outside the University, find reasons for other sites to link to you. However, avoid “trading” and buying links.

Avoid deep site structures and include a link to a site map of your site from your home page. This ensures the crawlers will find all your pages.

How to track progress

Note that it can take weeks or even months for some optimizations to make a difference in your rank or results. This is due to the time it takes the crawler to add new content to the index.

- Of the 5-10 keywords you've chosen, do weekly searches on all these words (internal and external searches) to see where your site displays in results.

- To find out how your site ranks (how reputable search engines view your site), download the free Google search bar. View any Web page's rank according to Google.

Register Your Department the in OU directory search

The OU search page provides an alphabetical listing of Web page accounts. This directory is populated by the individual owners of the Web sites. To have your site added to the search directory you must first register it.

- To register your site go to: <http://search.ou.edu/>

- You will need to login using your 4+4 ID to add your site.

When you login, you will be prompted to enter information about your Web site including the description that will appear in the directory. After you submit your site, it will be reviewed to make sure it is a valid OU Web site, and then added to the directory.

Tips for faster loading pages

Optimize images

For resources on cropping, resizing, and saving images for the web please visit www.ou.edu/webcomm/resources

- It is important to choose the appropriate image format.
- GIFs are ideal for line art, cartoons, and other images composed largely of flat blocks of color. They are not suited for complex images, such as realistic photographs because they won't compress well and will lose color information.
- JPGs are ideal for photographs or other images that are highly complex and contain many colors. They are not suited for simple images with sharp lines since they will be unnecessarily large. They do not support any transparency.
- PNGs should only be used for images containing transparent areas that must blend smoothly or when you wish to provide print ready, high-resolution graphics. They provide the highest quality at the cost of being the largest. Internet Explorer 6 cannot render the transparent portions of PNGs correctly.
- When creating graphics for the Web, it is best to use the Web graphics export option in your graphics program of choice. All images should be under 60k in size.

Animations

- Animations may be created in the form of animated GIFs or Flash movies. Animations can provide a richer means of communication. However, because of their size, they usually take much longer to download. Convey your message with static images whenever possible.
- Try to re-use images whenever possible. When an image is used, it is cached by the user's browser. The browser can now use its local copy whenever visiting a page that uses that image. This is much faster than having to download the image again.

Cascading Style Sheets/CSS

- Using cascading style sheets to style and format pages results in less html per page. Additionally, the same style sheet may be re-used across an entire site.

Javascript

- Javascript may be used to extend the capabilities of the browser.

However, like an animation, care must be taken to use it only when necessary. Not only does it make pages less accessible, it makes browsers render pages more slowly.

Web Policy

The following section lists requirements for all academic, research, outreach, student services, authorized student groups and organizations as well as administrative units of The University of Oklahoma Norman Campus funded through or by the Norman Campus that are not legally autonomous. Outside agencies or publishers that create Web sites or electronic publications for any University unit are also required to abide by these guidelines. To ensure that all Web sites representing the University of Oklahoma convey a consistent and accurate message and image, all sites involved in a redesign, must be reviewed by the Office of Web Communications. The Office of Web Communications will review sites based on the guidelines found in this policy. The Office of Web Communications will perform audits to check for compliance, consistency and accurate messages.

Content Accuracy

OU colleges and departments must review and update content regularly to maintain accuracy.

- Review contact and deadline information every semester.
- Check all site links at least quarterly; monthly is recommended.
- Immediately remove outdated pages and content.
- All pages must have a last revised date.

All Web content is expected to use accurate, standardized information on enrollment, research funding, number of faculty, number of buildings, acreage, finances, etc. This information is available from Institutional Research and Public Affairs.

- Institutional Research and Reporting: www.ou.edu/provost/ir
- Public Affairs – OU Facts: www.ou.edu/publicaffairs/OUFacts1.shtml

Required Page Elements

To ensure a user-focused format, it is important that all of OU Web pages have consistent navigational elements and terminology.

Global Navigation

All OU Web sites must include the global navigation bar with a link to OU's home page at the top of every page on the site.

The global navigation bar will provide users an easy way to get to the OU



<http://www.ou.edu/gaylord>
Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication Home page with red global navigation.

Global Navigation Bars can be downloaded from www.ou.edu/webcomm/home/resources/downloads.html.



www.ou.edu/president/home.html is a great example of OU and department identity.

home page, apply to OU, view a list of campus links and search the entire OU domain. Two color variations of the global navigation, one standard crimson and the other neutral grey, provide flexibility.



Departments that span all three campuses, such as Human Resources or Purchasing will include links to our Tulsa and Health Sciences Center home pages as well.



Any alterations to the Global Navigation bar must be approved by the office of Web Communications.

Primary and Secondary Navigation

Sites must use consistent internal site navigation, preferably with primary topic navigation on the left hand side of the page. Audience navigation should run horizontally in the top 1/3 of the page.

OU and Department Identity

The OU logo and the words “The University of Oklahoma” (with accompanying ® marks) OR just the OU logo must appear near the top of all Web pages. Any prominent OU logo or words “The University of Oklahoma” must always link back to the main OU home page at <http://www.ou.edu/>.

The OU logo may appear in crimson, reversed out on a dark background. The logo should never be altered, animated, or appear in any other color. (See page 6 for example.) Anytime an OU logo is displayed, it must link back to the OU home page.

The OU seal, also a registered trademark of the University, is generally reserved for official University documents and is discouraged for use on most sites. It must be approved by the University’s Trademark Administration Committee before being used on pages. Care should always be taken when displaying the seal to maintain its integrity. The seal must never be animated or written over and should always be displayed at the highest quality. It must not be used as a background image for any Web site.

Academic or administrative unit and department or division identity and links to those sites must appear on each page as well.

Footer

The following information is required in the footer:

- The college or department’s full contact information and/or a link to the following: Unit phone number, e-mail address and physical address.



http://www.ou.edu
OU Home page with Footer.

- Links to the accessibility, terms of use, copyright and equal opportunity statements as well as the privacy policy.
- Last updated date with contact information for the Web developer or content owner.

Footer Sample:

ACCESSIBILITY TERMS OF USE PRIVACY POLICY DIRECTIONS OU JOB SEARCH CONTACT US
 The University of Oklahoma, 660 Parrington Oval, Norman, OK 73019-0390 (405)325-0311
 Updated June 19, 2008 by Web Communications: webcomm@ou.edu
 Copyright © 2000-2008 The Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma, All Rights Reserved
 The University of Oklahoma is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Exceptions

Some required page elements may be eliminated in certain Web applications (forms, ecommerce, etc.) where the presence of an element may hinder the usability of the application. All exceptions to Web requirements must be approved by the Office of Web Communications: webcomm@ou.edu or (405) 325-0058.

URLs

Typical OU URLs are extensions of the root ou.edu. In general, only URLs ending in “ou.edu” are hosted on university Web servers. Colleges and departments must request an exemption from the Office of Web Communications in order to utilize a domain extension other than .edu (.com, .org, etc.). The university also reserves the right to reserve URLs or refuse requests for URL forms deemed inappropriate or likely to be used in the future by departments and administrators (for example, URLs including words like “security” or “emergency”).

User Support Requirements

* Browser/OS support will change as OU users statistics change. See <http://ou.edu/webcomm> for the latest.

** As of this printing. Average visits per 30 day period.

***Firefox is the default browser on the standard Dell OU lease build.

Supported Browsers, Systems and Screen Resolutions

We require that all Web content and pages be designed to support the following browsers:*

- Internet Explorer 6.0+
- Firefox 2.0+
- Safari 2.0+

Common OU browser and O/S Combinations**

- Internet Explorer/Windows: 77%
- Firefox/Windows: 14%***
- Safari/Macintosh: 7%
- Firefox/Macintosh: 2%
- All other browser/OS combos equal less than 2% combined.

** As of this printing. Average visits per 30 day period.

Visit <http://www.ou.edu/Webcomm/home/research.html> for current stats on ou.edu.

“Users don’t care why response times are slow. All they know is that the site doesn’t offer good service.” - Jakob Nielsen

Contact the Web Communications office for more Accessibility resources or to schedule time to use Accessibility testing equipment. Web Communications webcomm@ou.edu or (405) 325-0058.

Common OU screen resolutions**

- 1024 x 768: 41%
- 1280 x 1024: 10%
- 600 x 800: 5%
- 1280 x 800: 23%
- 1440 x 900: 7%

Bandwidth

Optimize images and pages for efficient downloading. Average OU page connection speeds**

- Cable: 49%
- DSL: 18%
- Unknown: 16%
- T1: 15%
- Dial Up: 2%

Accessibility

All Web content and electronic publications, to the extent feasible, should be made accessible to people with disabilities. If accessibility is not feasible, the information should be available by alternative means. University Web sites may be subject to the State of Oklahoma HB2197; Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and University non-discrimination policies. Web account holders are responsible for verifying that their pages meet all university requirements including accessibility guidelines. Section 508 and HB2197 are only a minimum standard for accessibility and Web pages. Developers are encouraged to go beyond the minimum whenever possible.

Each page must contain a person to contact if users have trouble accessing content within the site. Each University Web site that provides entry to members of the public must contain an “Accessibility” link to "http://www.ou.edu/publicaffairs/home/main/media_center/accessibility_statement.html" in each page footer. This link contains the university’s Web Accessibility Statement and contact information for the Disability Resource Center. This line should appear in all pages that promote campus events or programs: “Accommodations on the basis of disability are available by contacting (phone number, name and address are desirable but optional) by (date or as soon as possible).”

Special Considerations for Screen Readers:

- When possible separate your code from your content using CSS to lay out pages.
- All text links should make sense when read out of context. Don’t use just “click here”, “more information” and “visit” as links.
- Caption all audio and video.

- Make sure all Flash is accessible using text equivalents.
- Avoid excessive descriptions in alt tags as it makes it more difficult for users to pick out the salient information: that the graphic is a link to the home page.
- Short is good when writing for the Web; it's even better when writing for screen readers.

Other Considerations:

- Ensure information conveyed with color is also available without color. Use a high contrast between text and background.
- If you must include animations that blink or flash, make sure the screen flicker does not occur between frequencies 2Hz and 55 Hz.

Accessibility Resources

- Additional information on HB2197 can be found at: okabletech.okstate.edu/eit/hb2197text.htm
- Adobe has excellent accessibility-related content at: www.adobe.com/accessibility
- 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended: www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/act.htm
- The Web Communications Office has a test station equipped with JAWS screen reader software that is available for departments to test accessibility.

Usability Guidelines

Please remember the following:

- Follow expected norms and behaviors and use familiar terminology.
- Write clear, concise page titles, headlines and body copy.
- When possible, change the color of visited text links. Knowing which pages users have already visited frees them from unintentionally revisiting the same pages over and over again.
- Redirect pages that have moved to prevent breaking any incoming links from other sites.
- Do not disable the back button.
- Do not post pages marked “under construction”.

- Do not disable a Web browser’s “change font size” button and specify a fixed font size. Respect the user’s preferences and let them resize text as needed.
- Do not design interaction techniques that deviate from common GUI standards.
- Do not open new browser windows. If users want the destination to appear in a new page, they can use their browser’s “open in new window” command.

Exceptions to not opening new browser windows:

- PDF and other Non-Web Documents (with advance warning with plug-in links.)
- Web-based applications. Smaller, content-focused apps should remain embedded in the originating Web page. (Again, with advanced warning that a new window will open.)

Computer Use Policy

The Interim Policy on Acceptable Use of Computer Systems and Interim Policy on Information System Security govern campus computing and networking activities, including use of the World Wide Web.

- Interim Policy on Acceptable Use of Computer Systems: www.ou.edu/committees/itc/policy/Acceptable_Use_of_Information_Resources.html
- Policy on Information System Security: www.ou.edu/committees/itc/policy/Information_Systems_Security.html

Web Copyrights

All Web sites and electronic publications must follow University and legal standards regarding copyright. In general, Web publishers must secure permission from the owner of the copyright when including copyrighted or trademarked material, such as text, photographs, audio, video, graphics, maps, or logos, and include a permission statement or disclaimer as required by the owner of the copyright or trademark.

Provisions of fair use can allow restricted use of copyrighted materials without permission of the copyright holder. The TEACH Act provides some extensions of fair use for distance education. For more information on copyright, see the U.S. Copyright Office Web site at www.copyright.gov.

Student Information Disclosure

The disclosure of information about students is governed by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): <http://admissions.ou.edu/ferpa.htm>. Faculty and staff are advised not to post student information on sites.

Privacy

Web sites that collect individually identifiable information including, but not limited to, photos must provide a link to OU's privacy policy. Web sites that collect individually identifiable information and provide services to children 12 and under may also be required to comply with provisions of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. Web sites conducting online research with human volunteers are required to follow the provisions of the University's Institutional Review Board. Anyone who collects personal or financial information should consult with the IT Security team.

- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act:
www.ftc.gov/privacy/privacyinitiatives/childrens.html
- OU's Institutional Review Board:
www.ouhsc.edu/irb-norman/default.asp

Links to and from Non-University Web Sites

Links from a University of Oklahoma page to any non-University site must not imply University endorsement of the site's products or services. A disclaimer must be included unless it is clear from the context that the University does not endorse the product or service. The disclaimer is: Links on these pages to non-University sites do not represent endorsement by the University of Oklahoma or its affiliates. The University welcomes links to its Web site for educational or informational purposes. However, the link must not imply affiliation with or endorsement by the University of Oklahoma.

Personal Web Pages

Personal Web pages created by faculty, staff, or students on University systems are the sole responsibility of their authors. Comments on the contents of those pages should be directed to the page author. As a service and for informational purposes only, the University may provide links to personal Web pages. The University does not routinely monitor the content of these pages. However, the University investigates complaints and may remove or limit access to Web pages that violate local, state, or federal law or University policy. Personal pages must not convey the impression that the author is representing, giving opinions, or otherwise making statements on behalf of the University or any unit of the University. This disclaimer will be included:

The opinions or statements expressed herein should not be taken as a position of or endorsement by the University of Oklahoma.

Hosting

Web sites covered by this policy are prohibited from hosting pages on behalf of individuals and organizations that are not affiliated with the University. Personal Web sites may not host pages for individuals other than the owner. Students' personal sites may not host pages for organizations other than official registered OU student organizations. It is a violation of state law to run a private business on a University computer system.

Exemptions to this policy may be considered when hosting a Web page will serve the University's mission of teaching, research, creative work, and public service. These exemptions will be approved by a department or by Student Affairs. This policy is not meant to prohibit official units of the University from providing information on conferences and other professional and scholarly activities in which University members are engaged.

Fundraising

The OU Foundation and activities authorized by the President, such as the Campus Campaign, are the sole entities authorized to conduct fundraising via pledge forms or direct contributions on the University of Oklahoma Web site. Faculty, staff, and students may not conduct fundraising campaigns on their personal pages or link to a fundraising page other than that of the OU Foundation or a group authorized by the President.

Fraternities, sororities, and other service organizations may describe philanthropic efforts on their Web sites and provide a street address and phone number for contributions.

Enforcement

Refer to the enforcement procedures in the Interim Policy on Acceptable Use of Computer Systems at www.ou.edu/committees/itc/policy/Acceptable_Use_of_Information_Resources.html

Advertising, Sponsorships, and Partnerships

Advertising: To protect the educational nature of OU Web sites and to preserve their primary role in support of the mission of the University, commercial advertising is prohibited on the ou.edu domain or using OU internet protocol ranges.

Co-branding, hyperlinked logos, link exchanges, and associate, affiliate, and referral programs are among the items that will be considered commercial advertising. Text links provided for informational purposes or as part of a comprehensive list of sources will not be considered commercial advertising unless the purpose is to promote a product or service. This policy is not meant to prohibit auxiliary-funded departments from providing appropriate information on their products and services.

Sponsorships: Sponsors may be acknowledged on official University sites related to University-sponsored artistic or cultural programs, conferences, or special events. These acknowledgments must be supported by a written

agreement between the sponsor and the University entity that specifies a limited term, typically concluding with the end of an event or series. Acknowledgements may include the sponsor's linkable corporate name or logo but may not include a street address, telephone number, e-mail address, product name or service information, call to action, or comparison. The acknowledgement must include a disclosure such as, "The Artist Series acknowledges the support of these sponsors" and may not imply endorsement by the University. Sponsors are not entitled to display University marks on their Web sites without prior written consent from the OU Licensing Trademark Program.

Partnerships: Official University sites covered by this policy may acknowledge business partnerships for services provided at no cost that assist the University in achieving its mission; for example, access to an online research service or a search engine. Otherwise, all the provisions for sponsorships apply to partnerships, except that logos may be hyperlinked to the service provided.

Report Policy Violations

Submit complaints regarding apparent violations of policy or law to policy-abuse@ou.edu.

Resources

Content Management System

A Web Content Management System is a system used to make management of the content of a Web site easier and more efficient. OU's system (Day Communiqué) is integrated with OU's active directory and can handle a large number of contributors in various roles and permission levels. The benefits of the CMS include the ability to edit and publish Web pages, update content without prior HTML knowledge, manage a media library, and much more. The Day system will automatically archive your old content and can syndicate containers of content across multiple sites for greater accuracy.

Several sites are currently live in the CMS including the OU home page, Graduate Sooner, College of Journalism, International Programs and University College. Information Technology and the Web Communications Office are working to offer migration to approximately 50 of the most heavily trafficked Norman campus sites first.

Campus-Wide Event Calendar

Although the University of Oklahoma boasts an incredibly rich array of public events taking place on any given day — from a Management of Technology lecture at the Price School of Business to the Fred Films series at the Museum of Art — oftentimes it can be difficult for people interested in these events to find out about them. These potential event attendees may be OU faculty, staff, students, or the general public.

Currently, the Norman campus has countless, separate online event calendars all over the Web. Many of these calendars contain duplicate information. To address this problem, we will release a comprehensive campus-wide calendar which will be fully operational soon. This calendar, which will also integrate with the Luminis Portal, is a wide-ranging campus collaboration and will feature OU event information in a categorized, searchable, filterable and printable system that can be accessed from multiple points throughout the site.

Luminis Portal: Ozone

There is a campus-wide effort under way to implement an enterprise portal for the internal OU community on the Norman, Tulsa and CCE campuses. The product is called Luminis Portal and it is part of the Banner student system implementation. The plan is to develop single sign-on self service to all areas where current students interact with campus. Some of the functionality included will be enrollment, pay, financial aid, records, advisement, email, campus announcements, personal announcements, campus-wide calendar w/category filtering, personal calendar, collaboration tools, our student newspaper, news feeds, weather, etc... The portal will go-live for current students with the full functionality available in September 2009 and will expand it to faculty and staff in later phases.

Templates

For those who would like a predesigned framework, the Web Communications Office has a set of downloadable design templates available for OU departments and affiliated groups at <http://www.ou.edu/webcomm/home/resources.html>.

Web Checklist

Recommended

- Primary topic navigation on the left hand side of the page.
- Any audience navigation (if present) runs horizontally in the top 1/3 of the page.
- Home page titles are less than 65 characters including spaces, contain “OU”, and include the department name and a brief description.
- Page titles for pages other than the home page are less than 65 characters including spaces and contain a few of the most salient information-carrying words that describe the specifics of what users will find on that page. They also include “OU” and the department name.
- Code is separated from content using CSS techniques to lay out pages.

Required

- Global navigation bar is at the top of each page.
- The official OU logo and the words “The University of Oklahoma” (both of which are trademarks of the University requiring the registered mark ®) OR just the OU logo appears near the top of all Web pages.
- The official OU logo and the words “The University of Oklahoma” (both of which are trademarks of the University requiring the registered mark ®) always link back to the main OU home page at www.ou.edu.
- If applicable, academic or administrative unit and department or division identity and links to those sites appear on each page.
- Footer contains the college or department’s full contact information and/or a link to the following: unit phone number, e-mail address and physical address.
- Footer contains the last updated date with contact information for the Web developer or content owner.
- The footer contains links to the Accessibility statement: http://www.ou.edu/publicaffairs/home/main/media_center/accessibility_statement.html.
- The footer contains links to the terms of use statement: http://www.ou.edu/publicaffairs/home/main/media_center/terms_of_use.html.
- The footer contains links to the copyright statement: http://www.ou.edu/publicaffairs/home/main/media_center/copyright_statement.html.

- The footer contains links to the equal opportunity statement: <http://www.ouhsc.edu/eoaa/statement.asp>.
- The footer contains links to the privacy policy: http://www.ou.edu/publicaffairs/home/main/media_center/privacy_policy.html.
- Interaction techniques align with common GUI standards, expected norms and behaviors are followed and the content uses familiar terminology.
- All writing is accurate, clear and concise including page titles, headlines and body copy.
- Web content and pages are designed and developed to support Internet Explorer 6.0 and later versions on Macintosh and PC; Firefox 2.0 and later versions on Macintosh and PC; and Safari 2.0 and later versions on Macintosh.
- All images and pages are optimized for efficient downloading.
- Any moved pages have been redirected.
- New browser windows are only opened for PDF and other Non-Web Documents OR Web-based applications. Both instances must include advance warning and a link to any applicable plug-ins.
- All back buttons are fully enabled.
- There are no pages marked “under construction”.
- The Web browser’s “change font size” button is enabled.
- All Web content and electronic publications, to the extent feasible, are made accessible to people with disabilities.
- All OU Web content and electronic publications comply with section 4.3 on Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications included in the State of Oklahoma Information Technology Standards.
- This line appears in all pages that promote campus events or programs: “Accommodations on the basis of disability are available by contacting (phone; name and address are desirable but optional) by (date, or as soon as possible).
- All text links make sense when read out of context.
- All non-text components include alt tags that are carefully written and contain only salient information.
- All audio and video is captioned.
- All Flash is accessible using text equivalents.

- All information conveyed with color is also available without color.
- High contrast is used between text and background.
- Screen flicker does not occur between frequencies 2Hz and 55 Hz.
- The site follows University and legal standards regarding copyright.
- All links from a University of Oklahoma page to any non-University site do not imply University endorsement of the site's products or services.
- The disclaimer is included.
- Sites that collect personal or financial information have consulted with the IT Security team and comply with all privacy and security requirements.
- Any exceptions to required page elements have been approved by the Office of Web Communications. Some required page elements may be eliminated in certain Web applications (forms, ecommerce, etc.) where the presence of an element may hinder the usability of the app.
- If this is a redesign, it has been reviewed by the Office of Web Communications.