APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY WEB POLICY

Approved by the University Web Council, July 27, 2009

Legal Review completed March 1, 2010

1. Policy Management

   This policy (the "Policy") is maintained and updated by the Web Council. Requests for revisions may be submitted to the Web Administrative Group ("WAG") or Electronic Student Services ("ESS"), which will forward requests to the Web Council for review. Revision requests can be submitted at any time; however, the Web Council typically begins its annual review in April and posts revisions to the policy in June. Provisions of this policy must comply with federal, state, and local laws. The Policy is meant to supplement and to support other policies and strategic goals of Appalachian State University (the "University").

2. Websites Subject to This Policy

   This Policy applies to all "official websites" of the University. "Official Websites" are defined as websites created, maintained, or sponsored by colleges, departments, programs, administrative units, faculty, or staff, as part of their official University functions. Requirements for personal websites are covered in the Appalachian Computer Use Policy (*See* http://support.appstate.edu/about/computer-use-policy).

   If you have questions as to whether a website is an Official Website, or whether this Policy applies, please contact the WAG at mcmsinfo@appstate.edu.

3. Petitions for Exemptions

   Existing Official Websites or applications that cannot meet the requirements of this ~~policy~~ Policy, may petition the Website Review Subcommittee of the Web Council for a temporary, full, or partial exemption to specific parts of this Policy. Such a petition must include the nature of the functionality to be exempted, specific justification for the exemption (for example, why the website or application cannot be made to comply), as well as the likely consequences, should the exemption be denied

4. Right to Cease Hosting

   In all cases, the University retains the right to cease hosting any website that is inconsistent with the academic mission of the University.

5. Compliance

   The WAG may establish review committees to conduct periodic website reviews of all Official Websites to determine compliance with this Policy. Owners of websites determined to be out of compliance will be notified. The notification will include a list of the violations; suggested solutions, where possible; and the date by which the website must be compliant. The compliance date may not be less than 60 days from the notification date. Websites which remain out of compliance with this Policy for more than 60 days, contain egregious errors, or have a potential for serious security risks may be removed from the campus web servers. Any websites posing an immediate or potential security risk may be taken out of service until such security risk can be resolved. [**Note**: does the WAG conduct website reviews outside of the Drupal area, and if so, is this consistent with its "area" as described in Paragraph 7?]

Comment [sjb1]: Yes... WAG can review all sites... I've added a phrase to article 7 to indicate that intent

6. Website Reviews

   A new website/web interface or an existing website proposing substantial revisions, whether internally or externally developed, must pass a website review before going live. This review will determine compliance with this Policy, and validation of HTML/XHTML markup and CSS. The reviews are conducted under the auspices of the Website Review Subcommittee of the Web Council. The Website Review Team (appointed by the Website Review Subcommittee) will consist of three members from the Web Administrative Group and three members from the Web Council, and representatives from the site sponsor. The website review process and checklist of items required for compliance are maintained by the Website Review Subcommittee, chaired by the University Webmaster, and can be found at http://webmaster.appstate.edu/standards. The site review subcommittee can be contacted via email at sitereviews@appstate.edu.

7. University Web Administration and User Support

   The WAG provides leadership on implementation, management, and user support for the Drupal Web Content Management System and is responsible for the compliance of other official university websites with this Policy, except for those expressly under the purview of ESS. The WAG implements the Policy in its area and provides recommendations for revisions to the Web Council. The WAG can be contacted via email at cmsinfo@appstate.edu.

   Comment [sjb2]: Here is the additional wording

   ESS provides leadership on implementation and management of the phpWebSite Web Content Management System and provides web support for users in the Division of Student Development. ESS implements the Policy in its area and provides recommendations for revisions to the Web Council. ESS can be contacted via email at ess@appstate.edu.

   The Web Council provides strategic counseling to the University community regarding effective use of the World Wide Web, including policies, requirements, technical needs, and the development of best practices. The Council reviews and approves revisions to the Policy and proposes resolutions for virtual URL requests and policy exemption requests. Membership list and contact information can be found at http://cms.appstate.edu/web-council. [**Note:** is this Policy something the Chancellor must approve and sign? If so, would it be appropriate to say that "The Council reviews and recommends revisions to the Policy. . . ."?]

8. The Request and Use of Virtual URL's

   The owner of a website subject to this Policy may request a virtual URL or hostname for use in identifying the website - e.g., www.webmaster.appstate.edu. Virtual URLs will not be issued for personal websites.

   Virtual URLs are granted on a case-by-case basis by the WAG. The creation of a website does not guarantee granting of a virtual URL. If the virtual URL already exists, or if it is reserved for future use, the requesting owner may ask the owner of the existing or reserved URL to relinquish the name and have it removed from the DNS records. A list of URLs reserved for future campus Internet applications is available from the University Webmaster's office (webmaster@appstate.edu).

   If the WAG denies a request for a virtual URL, the requesting party may appeal the decision to the Web Council.

   Virtual URLs deactivated due to a lack of use will be unavailable for six (6) months in order to provide sufficient time for the owner of the URL to dispute its loss, and to ensure that other

websites and search engines linking to the URL recognize that the website is no longer available at that address.

Criteria used in determining whether a virtual URL will be granted include, but are not limited to:

* availability of the virtual URL
* use of copyrighted or trademarked verbiage
* specificity of the virtual URL (for example, *music.appstate.edu* is preferred over *students.piano.music.appstate.edu*)
* possibilities of conflict or confusion with other University entities, both existing and future
* consistency within the University's web presence
* scope and purpose of the underlying website
* importance of using the virtual URL in related media
* availability of staff resources to set up and maintain the virtual URL(s)

9. Website Pages - Required Contents

Each page of a website must contain the following:

a. Either a link to a contact page containing detailed contact information or a listing of the specific contact information. Contact information is to include a main contact email address, telephone, mailing address, physical address, and webmaster email.

b. A link to the University disclaimer (http://www.appstate.edu/disclaimer.php), which states that the website content reflects the website author's views and not necessarily those of Appalachian State University. This information need not be prominent; putting it in the footer is acceptable.

c. Copyright notification for the department, office, organization, or other entity by which the website is sponsored or that it represents. This information need not be prominent; putting the notification in the footer is acceptable.

d. A link to the University's Equal Opportunity Policy labeled "Equal Opportunity Policy" or, where space is limited, "EO Policy". The link must direct users to http://www.edc.appstate.edu/equity/EOpolicy.html. This information need not be prominent; putting the link in the footer is acceptable.

10. Accessibility

Appalachian is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (the "ADA"), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the "Act"), to provide access to its programs and services to all qualified individuals, including effectively communicating information via the Internet and other electronic mediums. Section 508 of the Act of 1973 established federally recognized standards on web accessibility, and these standards have been adopted by the University. All University web pages must meet the standards of both Section 508 of the Act and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ("WCAG") 1.0 as published by the World Wide Web Consortium's ("W3C") Web Accessibility Initiative ("WAI"). The Office of Disability Services maintains a website with pertinent information at http://ods.appstate.edu.

11. Media

    Access must be provided in an applicable alternate format such as in the form of captioning, subtitles, or a text transcript. Media posted online as part of a course syllabus requiring authentication of enrollment must follow the University's accessible media policy. Pages with media (e.g. video, audio, non-html content, etc.) content should include a link that users may use to download the appropriate required plug-ins.

12. Copyright Considerations

    The University is bound by federal copyright laws regarding the reproduction of copyrighted material for use on a website. Web developers and editors must comply with copyright and fair-use requirements and obtain licenses or written releases for the use of copyrighted material.

13. Changing the Location of Pages or Websites

    Should an existing website be completely redesigned and/or moved, the WAG is to be notified prior to putting the website into production so that links from the top level to the website can be changed. This will avoid broken links from the top tier pages to the website. Once a website has been transferred or updated, old files should be archived and must be removed from the server. A redirect file to the new website may be left on the server if necessary.

14. Security Considerations

    Neither sensitive nor confidential information may be placed on any servers where unauthenticated or unauthorized access can be made. Web and web interface developers must protect such data being passed to or from user agents using common strategies or techniques such as secure sockets layer ("SSL") or other encrypted transport for all such data. Please contact the Security Officer (at [insert email address]) to ascertain the requirements specific to your situation and to receive assistance in designing solutions.

15. Respect for Privacy.

    All University websites strive to protect the privacy of the university's students, faculty, staff and visitors as well the privacy of Internet users visiting these websites subject to the statutes and extent of state and federal laws.

    a. Web editors must not improperly collect or release directory information. Requirements regarding the protection of student information are covered by FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). Information about FERPA and what constitutes directory information for students can be found at http://www.registrar.appstate.edu/admin/ferpaweb.html

    b. Owners of websites collecting directory information must abide by the university's privacy statement at http://www.webmaster.appstate.ed/privacy which outlines what types of information are collected from website users, how this information is stored and used, what protections are offered to individuals whose information is obtained, with whom this information may be shared, and how a user can request to have his/her information removed from the website owners' records.

    c. The collection or release of sensitive personally identifiable information via a university website or web form is prohibited, unless the collection or release of such information is

authorized or required by applicable law and is accomplished consistent with applicable law.

d. To process credit card payments, website owners must utilize the secure, off-site credit card transaction services administered by the Division of Business Affairs. Website editors must contact the Division of Business Affairs to obtain approval for use and connection information.

16. The University's Web Presence

The University is known and recognized throughout the United States and the world. Therefore it is critical that the visual elements that represent the institution and its image do so consistently and with integrity. To maintain that consistency and visual identity, all websites subject to this Policy must adhere to the guidelines established by the Site Review Guidelines and Practices available at http://webmaster.appstate.edu/standards.

17. Web Templates and Banners

Websites covered by this Policy must use either an official web template or a web banner. Web templates and banners are supported by the Office of Web Communications and are developed in conjunction with University Communications to reflect the institution's visual identity standards and brand strategies.

Web templates are comprehensive, full-website templates and include page layout options, logo and nameplates, official font and color styles, footers, accessibility features and other elements as required by this Policy. Standard web templates are supported for use only in the University web content management systems: Drupal and phpWebSite.

Web banners are narrow headers which span the top of each page in the website. The banners include the horizontal logo, nameplate (in some cases), and a search box. The remainder of the web page, the area under the banner, is to be designed and maintained by the website owners; however, the entire website must meet the standards as set forth in this Policy. Support for the banner option within Drupal or phpWebSite, both of which employ pre-built page templates, is not available. A number of banner options are available at http://www.uc.appstate.edu/web/templates.

Requests for custom web templates (for use in Drupal or phpWebSite) or custom banners will be considered and can be directed to the Office of Web Communications (http://www.uc.appstate.edu/web).

18. Logo usage

Only websites that are formally affiliated with the University may use the University logo without express, written permission from the office of University Communications. Proper use and placement of the horizontal logo, a logo specifically intended for websites, is accomplished through the use of an official web template or banner (see article 17 above). Complete university graphic standards are available at: http://www.printshop.appstate.edu/graphicstd.htm.

Approved by the Appalachian State University Web Council – July 27, 2009