UHCL Web Governance

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Overview

University of Houston-Clear Lake's website (www.uhcl.edu) is the public face of the university. It serves as the primary source of information and interaction for our key audiences. To provide our community with a unified digital experience consistent with the university brand and mission, our web presence requires commitment and coordination. The purpose of web governance is to empower UHCL's colleges and departments to create content that is accurate, consistent and relevant while reflecting the university brand identity.

Marketing & Communications

Through a website management model that supports individual campus units, Marketing and Communications has overall authority on the governance of the university's website. Centralized oversight, services, support and training housed in Marketing & Communications ensures the website advances UHCL's mission while meeting the needs of key audiences. A core team of digital communications experts are available to guide and assist individuals who work on web content for colleges and departments.

Office of Information Telecommunications

As the university's technology lead, OIT manages the critical aspects of the website's technical environment and works closely with Marketing & Communications to ensure the university stays current with technology trends and the technical needs of key audiences.

Colleges/Departments

Web content specialists will serve as CMS experts for their assigned college/department and as the primary liaison with Marketing & Communications. They will work with their area's subject matter experts and content contributors to ensure compliance with web guidelines, standards and processes.

Individuals in colleges, centers/institutes and departments will be able to create, update and maintain content for their assigned sections and will be held accountable for their web content. They will be able to rely on consistent, timesaving, centrally supported services: brand and messaging resources, content and style guidelines, design templates and imagery, editorial review/approval, training and support, and an enterprise CMS and third-party tools that integrate well with the core platforms. College/Department Responsibilities include:

- Participating in professional development opportunities through training sessions.
- Adopting and using the UHCL content management system, including sharing of content across the site to avoid duplication.
- Committing to maintaining accurate and up-to-date content.
- Complying with policies, guidelines, standards and processes.
- Collaborating and communicating with Marketing & Communications on related initiatives.
- Following a schedule for regular content review and archiving content as appropriate.
- Regularly monitoring new and modified sections of the www.uhcl.edu website to cross-reference on pages within other sections of the website.

Content Strategy

UHCL's website is its largest and most visible marketing and communications tool. As such, the website should reflect the mission of the university and the strategic objectives of colleges and departments. UHCL's content strategy, or overarching vision, for the visual design and messaging on the UHCL website are as follows:

Current and Accurate: Web content and resources are current and provide audiences with accurate information

Audience Oriented: Effective communication is developed based on the needs of the audience. Content should be appropriate to the target audiences, in addition to being clear, concise and scannable.

Goal Oriented and Data Driven: The content must support the documented unit and university objectives. If it is no longer relevant to these objectives, it should be archived offline or deleted. Data should be used to determine what content is effective and what can improve the UHCL web experience.

Accessible and Device Independent: Content must be accessible to all audiences without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Content must follow current federal and state accessibility requirements and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Legal Policy/Compliant: The content must adhere to all federal and state laws and regulations, in addition to all university and University of Houston System policies. Note this also applies to trademarks and copyrights.

Brand Aligned: The content must support and reflect the UHCL mission, vision, values and brand. The content will comply with university brand guidelines, web

governance standards and follow best practices as determined by Marketing & Communications.

Accessibility

UHCL is committed to ensuring its digital content complies with current federal and state accessibility requirements and with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Compliance requires that a person with a disability be able to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and receive the same services as a person without a disability, and be able to do so in an equally effective manner with substantially equivalent ease of use.

Responsibilities and Resources

Web content specialists are responsible for ensuring that the web content meets the university's web accessibility standard. Web content specialists will serve as the accessibility lead for their college/department web content, working with content contributors and subject matter experts to verify their area's content is compliant.

Content Review Cycles and Analytics

All units are required to review and update their web content at least once a year. Pages within OU Campus must have a scheduled reminder notification set in the following time periods:

- Fiscal Year: Content reviewed on Aug. 31 of that fiscal year.
- Calendar Year: Content reviewed on Dec. 1 of that calendar year.
- Semester: User selects any semester between the current semester and one year from current semester. Content reviewed on the last day of the semester as defined by the academic calendar.
- Specific Date: Content reviewed on date selected.

When content is reviewed, if it is outdated or not relevant it must be updated or taken offline.

Content will also be reviewed for accuracy and relevancy on an ongoing basis by Marketing & Communications. In addition to content review, Marketing & Communications will send out quarterly reports documenting analytic results as part of the university's assessment process. Revisions to the university website will be made based on the data yielded by the quarterly reports.

Navigation and Information Architecture

Marketing & Communications manages the information architecture and navigation used on the website. Navigation and information architecture are evaluated on an ongoing basis to find broken links and evaluate overall effectiveness. Changes to the navigation and information architecture must be approved by Marketing & Communications.

Security

CMS access for employees may be requested by the college/department head. Before CMS access is granted, users must attend all applicable training sessions and sign the Governance Policy Acceptance Form.

Periodically, Marketing & Communications will perform an audit of all user activity. If a user is not actively logging into their account on a consistent basis, Marketing & Communications will follow the web governance compliance process to deactivate the account. To have it reactivated, the user must resubmit the access request form and complete any necessary training. If Marketing & Communications becomes aware that employees are not following established security policies or regulations, access may be immediately revoked.

Training and Support

A series of training courses, in addition to online documentation and help guides, are offered on an ongoing basis to orient CMS users on how to create and maintain web content. Before CMS access is granted, authorized employees must successfully complete all applicable training sessions for their designated access level and sign the Governance Policy Acceptance Form. Each academic year, Marketing & Communications will communicate the minimum training existing CMS users will be expected to complete during the year. Requests for general assistance must be submitted through the web request form.

Application Management

University servers will host only official university web content. Any university-related web content located on unapproved servers, onsite or offsite, is not considered official university content and will not be promoted as such. Links to unapproved web content will be removed from the university website and other official Marketing & Communications.

Use of Web-based Applications

There are circumstances that require offices and departments to use web-based applications/software to conduct university business. The Office of Marketing & Communications and the Office of Information Technology will approve these on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature of the application and how it helps the office/department meet university business goals. Third-party applications must also meet certain technical/functional specifications and be approved before they can be purchased or implemented.

Change Management

Procedures have been established to effectively respond to changes to the university's current web site, including CMS upgrades, content migrations or conversions, the addition or requesting of new features, and changes to existing features. All changes will be documented, and relevant parties will be notified before changes occur. Marketing & Communications will communicate all major planned events with the campus community via email and the CMS internal messaging system.

Change Requests

Requests for updates to content managed by Marketing & Communications (e.g., navigation, new web pages, key marketing landing pages, homepage features/events/news, and global header/footer) may also be submitted a [MarComm Work Request](#).

Marketing & Communications will review requests weekly and, as necessary, involve appropriate stakeholders or subject matter experts according to their role in the request. Please allow up to one week from your submission date to receive a response from a member of our staff. If the team cannot accommodate a request, it will share the reasoning behind the decision and offer alternative solutions.

Feature Requests

The university community is also encouraged to submit feedback on the website. Suggestions and feature requests are welcome for all levels of projects, from major initiatives to minor improvements.

As part of the university's strategic planning, Marketing & Communications will work in conjunction with the Office of Information Technology, university administrators and key stakeholders to identify features that support and enhance UHCL digital initiatives and web goals.

Branding

UHCL's website is the university's most visible marketing and communications tool. All UHCL communications lead or direct our key audiences to the university website. The design, visual style and messaging of official university web pages and other digital communications must conform to UHCL's brand guidelines to deliver a consistent, unified user experience to key audiences at all touchpoints. Only approved templates, CSS stylesheets, styled elements and messaging will be allowed on the university's website.

Resources and Responsibilities

Marketing & Communications will review and monitor the website and will instruct units to change content that does not meet university guidelines. In cases where content does not meet brand guidelines, Marketing & Communications will follow the established web governance compliance process.

Compliance

The website, www.uhcl.edu, is solely owned by the University of Houston-Clear Lake. While faculty and staff may have access to edit portions of the site, create new content, and remove old content, the site and all its sub-sites remain the property of the university. The university reserves the right to revise, delete or block content housed either on university IT resources or external resources that do not meet the university's web governance standards.

Compliance Procedure

Marketing & Communications is responsible for upholding and enforcing the UHCL web governance standards. The website will be evaluated and audited on an ongoing basis by Marketing & Communications to ensure web governance standards are being followed. If a college/department is not fulfilling responsibilities outlined in the university's web governance standards, it will first receive guidance from the Office of

Marketing & Communications. An email will be sent to the web content specialist and department head, notifying them of the issues and a deadline to make the necessary changes. Support will also be offered in these situations, and additional/remedial training provided if necessary. And, depending on the nature of the content, it may be subject to immediate removal or modification by Marketing & Communications.

In the case of nonresponsive units, Marketing & Communications will assume content management responsibilities and revoke the college/department's access, requiring attendance at remedial training before access will be reinstated. These will be extreme cases — usually, Marketing & Communications and the units should be able to partner to come to a cooperative resolution.

Exceptions Request/Appeal Process

Exceptions to these standards may be submitted for consideration by submitting a [MarComm Work Request](#) and will be granted if appropriate. Requests submitted will be initially reviewed by Marketing & Communications. If there are questions about the request, it will be referred to the requesting party for clarification. On issues of major impact, the Marketing & Communications may consult with the university President to ensure decisions reflect the optimum outcome for the institution.