Official Web Pages

Summary/Purpose: This policy governs the management of those documents accessible on the World Wide Web that represent the University of Mississippi. The University encourages contributions to its World Wide Web site, and this policy is intended to guide the preparation and management of such contributions.

1. TERMS
The following definitions are used:

- **UM**: the University of Mississippi.
- **UM unit**: a school, department, institute, administrative division, or official organization of UM.
- **IT**: Office of Information Technology.
- **HTML**: Hyper-text Markup Language.
- **URL**: uniform resource locator – e.g. http://www.olemiss.edu.
- **Render**: the operation a Web browser performs as it translates HTML code into the layout and content of a Web page.
- **the Web**: the World Wide Web.
- **Web document**: a file made available on the Web.
- **Web page**: a Web document written (or generated) in HTML which can be rendered by browsers.
- **website**: a collection of inter-linked Web pages consisting of a home page and various secondary pages, or a collection of Web sites grouped under a common home page.
- **Web application**: a Web page which interacts with the user, collects information via a Web page from a user, or performs some function via a Web page for a user - e.g. Web-based email systems, online registration, and interactive forms.
- **personal Web page**: a Web page representing only the individual author, not UM, although the page may have an "olemiss.edu" URL. Please note that any URL of the form http://system.olemiss.edu/~user (with "system" being a Web server on the UM network and "user" being the login ID of an individual account) is considered an individual Web page.
- **official Web page**: a Web page presented on behalf of UM, sanctioned by the appropriate UM unit.
- **UM Web Directory**: an application which displays links to various departments, organizations and other entities, in addition to giving information about committees and campus buildings.
- **mobile website**: a website has been optimized for viewing on smartphones or other wireless devices.
- **mobile-ready**: the characteristic of a website that has been created for both a standard "desktop" rendering and an optimized "mobile" rendering.
- **WordPress**: an open source content management system created to host blogs, but capable of hosting entire websites.

2. MANAGEMENT OF OFFICIAL WEB PAGES
(a) IT responsibilities
IT is responsible for the following:

1. maintaining a central Web server (Cedar) for the UM home page and for pages of other UM units;
2. maintaining a secondary central Web server (Web1) for UM units needing more advanced programming than is provided on Cedar;
3. maintaining official pages not associated with any single unit, including the UM home page (www.olemiss.edu);
4. creating and maintaining applications within myOleMiss portal;
5. providing access by designated managers of official UM Web pages to appropriate directories, so that they may update and revise their pages;
6. providing and maintaining the WebID online authentication system;
7. maintaining secure Web servers;
8. maintaining user access to the UM Web Directory so that they may submit change requests;
9. maintaining the Blackboard online learning system;
10. access control for use of PHP, CGIs, and MySQL on IT systems;
11. maintaining URL aliases and redirects as required for relocated Web pages and shorter URLs;
12. maintaining virtual host settings to allow other domains to be hosted on campus Web servers (as directed by the Domain Name Registration policy);
13. taking appropriate action to contain and resolve security violations in the event of website hacking or misuse;
14. working with Brand Services to create and maintain UM branded Web templates for use by UM units;
15. Providing code and graphics for common shared Web resources (www.olemiss.edu/share).

IT will allow non-IT projects on production IT servers with the approval of the Chief Information Officer under certain conditions: (a) the application has campus-wide impact, (b) the department has a full-time staff member who is willing to take responsibility and work under the guidelines in place for the IT Web team, and (c) the application is reviewed for correctness and good security practices.

Note that IT is not responsible for preparing Web pages, images, or Web applications on behalf of any other unit of UM. Nor is IT responsible for the maintenance of any non-IT servers or the websites on those servers.

IT reserves the right to update any and all software on IT servers to maintain system integrity and security.

(b) UM Web Planning Committee responsibilities
The UM Web Planning Committee bears the following responsibilities:
   1. authorizing new Web pages or designating appropriate authors for new Web pages as required to enhance the usefulness, appeal, and clarity of the UM website;
   2. approving the content of the first and second level pages that make up the UM website;
   3. overseeing the UM website and requesting UM Web authors to update or revise official Web pages when necessary;
   4. revising this policy as necessary to best serve the members of the UM community.

The UM Web Planning Committee is authorized to request IT to remove from the UM website links to any Web pages or documents that are not consistent with this policy, if the manager of such a document is not available or not willing to maintain compliance.

The UM Web Planning Committee must consist of at least one representative from each of the following: the undergraduate student body, the non-faculty staff (exclusive of IT), the faculty, and IT.

(c) Manager responsibilities
Every UM unit is entitled to a website and an appropriate link via the UM home page. That unit must designate a specific manager, who will be responsible for maintaining standards of clarity, accuracy, and timeliness. When the management of an official Web page is passed to a new person, the change must
be coordinated with the UM Webmaster. If a new server account is needed, the new manager must make arrangements for that through the IT Helpdesk. Changes for student organization site management must be approved by the Office of the Dean of Students.

The manager is responsible for all content in his or her website, including maintaining the validity and appropriateness of both internal and external links contained in the unit’s site. The manager is also responsible for updating the website’s information listed in the UM Web Directory. These responsibilities also apply to managers and UM unit sites which are not housed on IT servers.

Managers of websites that are hosted on an IT installation of WordPress do not require a server account. Since these installations are shared resources, IT staff maintains the server files. Manager accounts are maintained through the WordPress sites with WebID authentication.

For transferring management of official Web pages served on the official UM Web server, Cedar, the following process should be followed:

- the new manager applies for a Cedar account (assuming they do not already have an account) which is assigned to their name and for which they hold responsibility.
- for new accounts, the user is assigned a temporary password which needs to be changed via logging into Cedar using a secure telnet connection.
- the new manager contacts the UM Webmaster to obtain access to the relevant Web space.
- once access is provided, the new manager should update or create the Web Directory for their UM unit.

Because creating and transferring management for sites housed on the Web1 server requires cooperation with the IT Systems and Networking groups, new managers must contact the UM Webmaster to for assistance.

(d) Print documents
UM print documents made available as Web pages will generally be the responsibility of the office that has prepared the print document. Exceptions must be approved by the office preparing the original print document. PDF documents are viewable by the greatest number of visitors, and consideration should be taken for the inclusion of accessibility features where needed.

3. REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFICIAL WEB PAGES
(a) General policy
The UM Appropriate Use Policy for use of UM computational facilities applies to all UM Web pages. This includes those policies regarding commercial use, copyright, and harassment. Advertising is not permitted on official UM websites. All UM unit pages may be reviewed by the UM Webmaster based on required content, layout, accessibility and general usability concerns, and professional looking graphics and images.

(b) Required content
The primary home page of each UM unit shall include:
1. the official UM banner, banner variant supplied by Brand Services, or banner approved by the UM Web Planning Committee;
2. a link to the UM home page (using the UM banner, if present);
3. the name and email address of the current document manager, or a "Contact" link to a page which includes this information;
4. the date of last update;
Inclusion of these elements is also recommended on subsidiary pages with the additional requirement of a link to the UM unit home page.

Web pages must adhere to the disability standards listed in the Section 508 guidelines (see www.section508.gov/).

(c) Security
All UM webmasters must be vigilant in providing proper security for all personal data retained or recorded and information flow between server and Web client when necessary. All Web applications developed or implemented by UM units must maintain proper security and system integrity. Web applications on IT servers which jeopardize either security or system integrity may be disabled without prior notification.

Use of the WebID online authentication system may be provided to non-IT systems and managers on a case-by-case basis.

See the Information Confidentiality/Security Policy (ADM.IT.400.030) in the UM Policy Directory at www.olemiss.edu/policies for more information concerning information security.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIAL WEB DOCUMENTS
   (a) Coding and Content
An HTML document is a means of conveying information to a wide audience across a variety of platforms. Simplicity, clarity, and performance should always be high priorities. Creativity is encouraged in the design of each UM page, but designers are cautioned against customizing their pages to a single client or configuration, as this will unnecessarily limit the audience. HTML should be used to organize content without specifying the exact appearance of the various elements. Web designers are asked to test their pages in a non-graphics environment, such as with Lynx, to ensure their pages are clearly organized.

1. Web pages should adhere to the standards defined by World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) (see www.w3.org) for HTML, CSS, or other Web languages.
2. Webmasters should begin adopting HTML5 compliancy in order to take advantage of future browser enhancements.
3. Webmasters should begin either (1) creating mobile versions of their sites or (2) adapting their existing sites to be mobile-ready. The first option requires building new pages for rendering specifically on mobile devices, and the second requires adding code to render the existing pages for either mobile or desktop browsers. Both options require code to offer whichever version the visitor is likely to want, and additional code for letting the visitor switch between versions. Webmasters who have mobile-ready sites may contact the UM Webmaster to be included on the UM mobile website.
4. Web pages should conform to the UM Web Style Guide, should one be created. Common UM branding elements should appear across the entire UM website. Designers of UM Web pages
should incorporate these elements into their designs.

5. If graphics are employed, a department logo or a recognizable UM logo, symbol, or banner (available at www.olemiss.edu/share/headers) should appear at the head of the primary home page, and may also appear on subsidiary pages. Non-graphic home pages should use the words "University of Mississippi" in their header.

6. Large graphics, backgrounds, imagemaps, and other features that degrade speed without adding content are discouraged.

7. Never use copyrighted material - graphics, audio, video, text - without prior written permission from the holder of the copyright. If in doubt, assume the content is copyrighted and obtain permission from the content creator. This includes content created by another UM unit.

8. Large files or files with unusual formats (images, sound, programs, or compressed files) should be accessed only through links that specify their size and format (e.g. 650kB .au sound). Links to formatted word processor documents are discouraged; however PDF versions of those documents are acceptable.

9. Document managers should review the information presented in their pages to insure it is correct and current.

10. Links to related off-campus resources should be clearly distinguished from links to local sources and should be checked periodically to ensure viability and appropriate content.

11. Links to individual Web pages of faculty, staff, and students may be included at the discretion of the document manager, in consultation with the dean, chair, or director of the unit. If such links are provided, they should be accessed from a menu that clearly designates the status of the individuals ("geology faculty" or "home pages of history majors") and includes a disclaimer that UM is not responsible for their content.

12. The <head> element (title, document type, and meta-elements) should be designed as carefully as the <body>, in order to provide keywords for search engine optimization.

(b) File location

1. Cedar is the server of choice for housing official Web pages that do not require advanced programming (e.g. PHP, mySQL, etc.). Web1 is the server that offers advanced programming options, but access to it is more restrictive. IT maintains installations of WordPress for sites that only need a blog or that wish to make use of its content management interface.

2. Departments with their own resources may elect to maintain their home pages on their own servers. However, use of shared IT servers allows minimum duplication of resources, such as graphics, audio files, and applications, which may be useful across several websites. Departments choosing to run their own Web services are responsible for all administration associated with that server, e.g., providing UPS services, applying operating system patches, performing backups, managing security, etc.

3. UM department home pages on Cedar should be mounted in the appropriate subdirectory under the URL www.olemiss.edu/depts/, and organization home pages under www.olemiss.edu/orgs/.

4. Requests for URL aliases and redirects may be approved on a case by case basis to preserve URLs for relocated Web pages and to provide short URLs for use in printed materials.

Please note that any URL of the form "http://system.olemiss.edu/~user" (with "system" being a Web server on the UM network and "user" being the login ID of an individual account) is considered an individual Web page and should not be used for an official website. Individual accounts may be used for subsidiary pages of an official home page as appropriate (for example, course-related materials or individual faculty project descriptions).