

USU Web Site Policies and Guidelines

December 1, 2005

Written and compiled by the USU Webmaster for guidance in viewing, creating and publishing information at USU.

USU Web Guidelines operate in conjunction with USU Instructions 5202.2, 7900, and USU Pagemaster's Guide

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USU Web Site Mission Statement

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS or USU) Web Site provides on-line information providing access to the services and resources of interest to the University community and public at-large. The USU Home Page in particular is designed to serve as the intermediary between our visitors and the wealth of information available through the USU site. The site should support the University Mission and Strategic Plan by:

1. Providing information rich in pertinent, authoritative content,
2. Optimizing access to our resources,
3. Effectively communicating information available via the USU Web and,
4. Enhancing the reputation of USU as a premier health sciences academic institution with a unique global and military perspective.

USU Site Layout

The USU site layout is divided both in content and style. Major divisions and their purposes include:

- USU Home Page
- USU Main Navigational Areas (and associated menu content)
- USU Core Pages (also includes Main Navigational Areas)
- Departments/Organizations and Activities

USU Home Page

Purpose

The USU home page should direct visitors toward information in a manner that does not require the visitor to have prior knowledge of the University or our site. Information should be presented in a user-friendly and concise manner. The home page also supports a link to a *text-only* home page, placed as the top link for easiest access. For Section 508 compliance, this page MUST mirror the information on the “parent” page, will not contain graphics, javascript or other items that text-only or feature-disabled browsers cannot render.

The USU Webmaster is responsible for the maintenance of the home page and all USU Core Pages/Main Navigational Areas. The USU Home Page supports the following functions:

- The organization and electronic delivery of information of interest to our distributed university community, and
- To act as a gateway to on-line systems and services located within the University and affiliated organizations for the public at-large.

The home page itself has been broken into sections as described below:

Section I- USU Banner

Section II- Main Navigational Areas

Section III- Rotating Banner

Section IV- Essential Links

Section V- News

Section VI- Current Highlights

Section VII- Footer

The screenshot shows the USU homepage with the following content:

- Section I:** USU logo and name, navigation links (VISITORS, ADMISSIONS, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF, MILITARY, RESEARCH, AFFILIATIONS, myUSU), and a search bar.
- Section II:** Main navigation menu with links: VISITORS, ADMISSIONS, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF, MILITARY, RESEARCH, AFFILIATIONS, myUSU.
- Section III:** Rotating banner with the text "Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way" and a photo of a person in a lab.
- Section IV:** Essential links including "School of Medicine", "Graduate Education", "Graduate School of Nursing", "AFRR", "Continuing Education", "Graduate Med. Education", "Henry Jackson Foundation", "Learning Resource Center", "Recruitment and Diversity", and "Site Index".
- Section V:** News section with a photo of students and text: "Students Visit Antietam and more in USU Newsletters", "01 Aug 2005", "Available online-USU Journal, 2003 Edition", "29 July 2005", "Courage to Care- Electronic fact sheets on timely health topics relevant to military life.", "Now available (plus more)", "http://www.usuhs.mil/p.../page.html", "29 July 2005", and "more news...".
- Section VI:** Current Highlights section with links: "Fingertip Facts in PDF format", "2004-2006 Online Catalog in PDF format", "Hurricane Disaster Care Resources", and "Homeland Security Resources Links of Interest".
- Section VII:** Footer with "Accessibility Information", "Additional Web Information", "Privacy & Security Notice", "Acrobat Reader Download", "Questions or comments about this site?", "Contact our webmaster at: webmaster@usuhs.mil", and "Last update: 09/07/05".

Section 1. USU Banner

Purpose

The USU Banner will head the top of the USU homepage, as well as the top of all Core pages and Departmental home pages. The intent is to provide a consistency on the site, to include departmental pages. The banner on the USU home page will include a logo, text-only home page link and search bar(s) for information and personnel. The banner for all other applicable pages will include the same logo, a link to “skip” to the main content, and the search bars. Other links or information will not be placed within this area upon request.

Section 2. Main Navigational Areas

Purpose

The main navigational areas (main divisions that users or information may fall into) are located under the banner, and use scripting on the USU home page only. Due to the scripting, a text-only home page will continue to be maintained for users who use screen readers, or have browsers with scripting/CSS disabled.

The main navigational areas facilitate visitor access to the appropriate areas instead of sifting through irrelevant links placed on the homepage. Information is provided to visitors grouped by information sought. For example, a visitor interested in applying to USU may first visit “Admissions” or “About USU” to gain more information, may later visit the site as an enrolled Student or with research in mind, and again later be interested in Alumni, faculty or staff information. Each visitor is classified by the information they seek at each visit. Following this widely used method, the main areas are the focus of how information is “channeled” on the site.

The main navigation bar on the USU home page will further contain drop-down and sub-menus, providing even more links on the USU home page, while providing our visitors with less links to sift through.

Other links or headings will not be placed in this area upon request.

Section 3. Rotating Banner

Purpose

The rotating banner consists of two sections- text and images. Both change upon refresh of the page, and both are independent of each other. The text will provide visitors more information about the site. The images will be general university images. The information in either area will be university-wide (not department or activity specific) and are intended to highlight what the university does.

Section 4. Essential Links

Purpose

Some links have been determined to be essential to the university home page- due to the crucial nature of the information contained within the page(s) or site. Links to such areas have been placed on the home page with careful consideration and are not intended to be changed, have links added or accommodate short-term information. There are many links of importance to university information; however those located in this section are considered the most essential. Accordingly, the USU site index remains a necessary link from most pages as a quick link to ALL online USU information, as will the addition of the drop-down menus.

At the end of the “Essential Links” section is an “Operating Status” area. This area contains the current operating status of the university and any pertinent messages that may need to be displayed, to include inclement weather messages. This does not include outages or other such messages unless deemed to be of a serious nature by the Security department. Content for this section of the homepage is provided by Security or University Affairs solely, and will otherwise read “USU is OPEN”.

Due to the nature of the Essential Links, these links are not expected to change and other links will not be placed in this area upon request.

Section 5. News

Purpose

The News section provides information and links to highlighted USU events. The content for this section is temporary and will be provided solely by University Affairs. News items will be typically related to information that would be placed within newsletters or News Releases. Pictures may be provided, and will be edited as needed for appropriateness or size.

Section 6. Current Highlights

Purpose

The Current Highlights section provides links to highlighted USU events or programs. The following criteria will be used when considering information for this section of the USU Home Page:

- Highlight is a University sponsored event or program.
- Event/activity or highlight is temporary and will have a set duration for placement of link on page.
- USU Webmaster reserves the right to replace any current highlight with higher-priority highlight link as University Affairs or the President may see fit.
- Links to specific programs will no longer be placed in this section unless an activity or highlight must be linked in this manner.

Requests should be placed through the USU Webmaster. The following information is required:

- URL for the link
- Name and contact information of person making request
- Requested period for Highlight to appear
- Sponsoring entity
- Date and location of event (if applicable)
- Purpose for special highlight

Content for this section is approved by the USU Webmaster along with the Director of University Affairs, in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel as necessary. The USU Webmaster will notify the requester of the decision and the date(s) the information will appear, if approved.

Section 7. Footer

Purpose

The footer of the USU home page addresses necessary links to accessibility information, the DoD Privacy and Security/Disclaimer information, Webmaster contact information and date of last update, link to web guidelines and link to Acrobat Reader as a widely-used format on the USU web.

The associated footer that will display on subsequent Core and Department pages will contain, at the least, a link to the USU home page, a link to the DoD Disclaimer, the date of last update and Pagemaster contact information.

USU Core Pages

Purpose

USU Core pages are created and maintained by the USU Webmaster. The Core pages are intended to guide visitors to the information they are looking for without prior knowledge of the university or our site, and work in conjunction with the home page to accomplish this, acting as a “second layer” to the home page. Examples of core pages include, but are not limited to:

Site Index, Administrative and Academic Departments, main Navigational pages (ie, Alumni, Students, Faculty...), calendar of events, and Accessibility information.

Information on these pages may change. Suggestions, recommendations and comments on the flow of information are always welcome. These are the specific areas where links and detailed information should reside.

USU core pages will now follow a specific template. This template was developed with specific input from designated representatives from AVC, GSN, LRC, UIS and UAO, as

well as the USU President. The template will now be required for core and departmental (home) pages. Program or Center pages may still follow separate designs, provided all applicable DoD and USU requirements have been met.

In addition, new procedures for uploading pages and files will soon be in place. Currently, departments completely manage their own content. While departments will still provide the content for pages, University Affairs will begin approving all content published under the USU domain. UIS will also immediately begin to provide technical approval checks to ensure the standardized template is followed, links are not broken, style is applied appropriately, etc.

Other USU page requirements

Pages falling within the usuhs.mil domain need to ensure that they reflect up-to-date, accurate information as well as represent the university in a professional manner. The USU Webmaster is not responsible for the specific content or maintenance of many sites and pages; however the Webmaster and University Affairs office will begin to provide content and technical approvals on ALL materials published to the site. This will include all materials published to the UIS web server. This will also include all sites, pages and documents not hosted on the UIS server, but that are regarded as departmental.

Page masters act as an “extension” of the USU Webmaster, and are required to ensure compliance with all DoD, Section 508 and USU rules and guidelines. The Pagemaster’s Guide, available for download at: <http://www.usuhs.mil/uis/ieb/pagmas.html> has more information on this topic.

All departmental pages will now follow the approved template layout, using the approved style sheet. Additionally, the USU Webmaster reserves the right to remove any links from the site to pages that do not meet UIS or UAO approval, does not correctly follow the template, or does not follow DoD/Section 508/USU guidelines- provided the Pagemaster has been provided with correction information and has failed to repair reported errors.

For ALL USU Pagemasters and authorized content providers, the following guidelines apply:

1. All Department pages will use the provided standardized template with standard style sheet. No changes to the header may be made.
2. Pages should be easy to read and user-friendly in navigation
3. All pages must link to <http://www.usuhs.mil/warning.html>. Pagemasters should NOT create their own versions of this page as updates to this information are made through security and subsequent “warning” pages cannot be ensured to have the latest information.
4. All pages will provide a link to the USU home page.
5. All pages will provide contact information for either the Pagemaster or an organizational representative.
6. All pages will provide “page last updated” information.

7. NO ad banners, including those for supported software or programs, should be placed on ANY USU page. This includes banners or images that may be placed by a company providing a service, such as a free counter script, Adobe Acrobat Reader or any other plug-ins. This also applies to “page checking” software such as A-Prompt, W3C or “Bobby”.
8. All pages must ensure Section 508 compliance, or at the very least provide an easily accessible link to a “text-only” page that is updated with the same information as the “parent” page (the page with the information that the text-only page mirrors). The USU home page is an example of a page that does not provide compliance due to the CSS menu and Javascript, but does provide a text-only page that mirrors the information available on the “parent” page.
9. Any types of files that automatically execute (to include .exe, .bat, .com etc) are NOT allowed on the web server.
10. Scripts such as .cgi or .pl are supported on the script server, however a request should be placed in writing to the USU Webmaster with information on the origin of the script and related files, purpose for script, length of time script may be needed and any other information supporting the need for the script to be placed on the USU web server.
11. Organizational home page sizes should remain as small as possible- preferably under 100k in total load size. Images of large file sizes should not be linked to if the content developer intends the display size to be smaller. An example would be an image that is 1 MB and 1000w X 1000h that needs to be displayed in a 150w X 150h space. The Pagemaster should use a graphics program to lessen the size and dimensions of the image BEFORE linking to it- the file size will be significantly reduced. Pagemasters can request assistance through the Audio Visual Center (AVC) or the USU Webmaster.

USU Web Site Linking Policy

Criteria for USU Links

The USU Web Master evaluates all suggested links using the following criteria:

1. Is the requested website's content relevant, useful, accessible and authoritative for USU faculty, staff, and students?
2. Does the requested website complement existing information on the USU Web Site?
3. Does the requested website's information appear to be accurate and current?

Featured Links

USU highlights links of special interest to wide audiences by temporarily posting them in a position of prominence on the website. Featured links may include: USU Current Highlights; seasonal information such as inclement weather messages; current and upcoming special events open the USU community, and Affiliated Sites. All such items will be approved by University Affairs as the main content for the USU home page will be provided by that office.

Affiliated Sites

Affiliated Sites are linked throughout the USU pages (examples include the HMJ Foundation, AFRRRI, National Capital Consortium and Walter Reed Army Medical Center).

Other Links from the USU Site

The USU Webmaster as well as individual organizations may publish links to current pertinent medical, military and government sites. Regardless of where the link is placed on the USU site, it must NOT be a prohibited or unauthorized site.

Prohibitions

USU will **not** link to any website that exhibits hate, bias, or discrimination. Furthermore, USU reserves the right to deny or remove any link that contains misleading information or unsubstantiated claims, or is determined to be in conflict with USU mission or policies.

Organizations within USU occasionally may have a published link to a very specific resource or program that has certain linking procedures or uses. Pagemasters are responsible for ensuring such links are used properly and responsibly. Content on any USU page may NOT contain information that infringes upon any existing copyrights.

Disclaimer of Endorsement

The information posted on the USU website includes hypertext links or pointers to information created and maintained by other public and/or private organizations. USU provides these links and pointers solely for our users' information and convenience. When users select a link to an outside website, they are leaving the USU site and are subject to the privacy and security policies of the Department of Defense.

- The US Department of Defense and USU **do not** control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness or completeness of information contained on a linked website.
- The US Department of Defense and USU **do not** endorse the organizations sponsoring linked websites, and we **do not** endorse the views they express or the products/services they offer.
- The US Department of Defense and USU **cannot** authorize the use of copyrighted materials contained in linked websites. Users must request such authorization from the sponsor of the linked website.
- The US Department of Defense and USU **are not** responsible for transmissions users receive from linked websites.

- The US Department of Defense and USU **do not** guarantee that outside websites comply with Section 508 (Accessibility Requirements) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Privacy and Security

The USU web site should not contain personally identifying information such as home address or phone numbers, family information as required by the DoD Removal of Personally Identifying Information memo (dated December 28, 2001).

Check the Dept of Defense [Privacy and Security Notice](#) for more information about DoD Privacy and Security policies.

How to Request a Link on the USU Site

USU welcomes and reviews all requests for additional links to useful, timely, University-centered information and services. To request a link, follow these simple steps:

1. Review USU Web Site Linking Policy within these guidelines.
2. Contact the USU Webmaster to request a link (webmaster@usuhs.mil)

How to Request Web Hosting Services

The USU domain (usuhs.mil) is administered by University Information Systems (UIS) and encompasses all sites, pages and servers that fall within the usuhs.mil and usuhs.edu domain (ie afri.usuhs.mil, anes.usuhs.mil, bio.usuhs.mil, etc).

Hosting Criteria

(UIS) offers virtual hosting of websites for USU-affiliated organizations that meet criteria listed below. Virtual hosting of sites will provide space on the USU web server or allow a DNS entry for sites that can be administered by the USU Webmaster or an organizational web content developer (Pagemaster).

Military/Educational

1. USU can host pages or sites that are military or have been registered with the State as educational. USU can host sites if the source of funding is governmental or military.
2. USU can host some sites depending upon the source of funding (some Federal Gov. or Military)
3. The information must be considered relevant to the USU community.
4. Site content should be maintained by the organizational Pagemaster, however in rare instances where maintenance is low the USU Webmaster may be able to maintain the site.
5. Requests for web hosting services can be made through the USU Webmaster. (webmaster@usuhs.mil).

Linking as an Affiliate

Non-military or non-educational sites will not be hosted by USU. USU may link to a site as an Affiliate (ie Henry M. Jackson Foundation). Please refer to “USU Website Linking Policy- Affiliated Sites” for more details.

Prohibitions

1. USU CANNOT host sites already registered as .com, .net, .org, etc. Please refer to “Linking as an Affiliate” above for more information.
2. Non-military or non-educational sites will not be hosted by USU
3. USU will **not** host any website that exhibits hate, bias, or discrimination. Furthermore, USU reserves the right to deny hosting to any site containing information that is misleading or has unsubstantiated claims, or is determined to be in conflict with USU mission or policies.

Web Page Policies.

- a. Policy: For security reasons web pages must meet Federal Guidelines and cannot be broadcast directly to the Internet. A controlled and protected Web Server is maintained by UIS to broadcast approved University, Activity, and Individuals. This Web Server is under the management of the University Web Master, who works with individual Page Masters to approve and publish all University related web pages.
- b. Procedures:
 - 1) All University-related web pages will follow Federal Guidelines and be formatted according to University guidelines.
 - 2) Web pages may be established or updated by submitting them to the Web Master for review and publishing on the University Web Server.
- c. Guidelines:
 - 1) Federally supported web pages require a notice and a disclaimer that are maintained by the Web Master.
 - 2) They must be Section 508, handicapped accessible.
 - 3) They may NOT contain:
 - (A) Personal data beyond public titles and contact information.
 - (B) Home addresses, phone numbers, and Social Security Numbers are specifically prohibited.
 - (C) Classified, Sensitive, or Copyrighted records

- (D) Confidential or Proprietary information
 - (E) Non-public Financial Records
 - (F) Organization's physical plant information or security procedures
- 4) University-related pages must begin with a page that identifies the University, the Page Master, and the Date last updated. These initial pages should follow the theme and format provided by the Page Master.
 - 5) Pages must be kept up-to-date and accurate, and out-of-date pages will be removed.

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University Information Systems (UIS)/
Information Engineering Branch (IEB)
USU Web Master