

Buffalo State College Web Publishing Standards

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Buffalo State College Web Publishing Standards

Introduction

A powerful and far-reaching medium, the World Wide Web has revolutionized communication. Now people with access to computers and the Internet can share information globally within minutes. Harnessing this power is the key to creating a successful Web presence. The aim of this guide, which is based on the principles outlined in the college's 1997 Web Publishing Policy, is to solidify Buffalo State's Web presence by increasing connectivity among departments, offices, and academic centers and by unifying the college's official pages.

These standards were developed by the College Relations Office and Web 2000, a 22-member advisory subcommittee established by the college's Technology Council. Web 2000 comprises two students and representatives from the three faculties, E. H. Butler Library, the Career Development Center, the College Senate, Computing Services, enrollment management, the FAST Center, and instructional resources.

Web Publishing Policy

Approved March 3, 1997, by the Buffalo State College Vice Presidents Council

The following standards apply to all Web publishers whether they are administration, departments, campus organizations, or individuals:

Web publishers are

- responsible for the content of the pages they publish.
- expected to maintain standards of quality that will earn the college respect in all of its communities of interest.
- required to comply with all Buffalo State and State University of New York policies and procedures as well as state and federal laws concerning appropriate use of computers.

Violations will be treated seriously and may result in loss of computing privileges, other disciplinary actions, and possibly legal actions.

Defining Official Pages

Official Web pages include the Buffalo State home page (www.buffalostate.edu); academic department and program pages; office, administrative, and support unit pages; and news and information pages. Nonofficial pages include individual faculty and staff Web pages.

Official Web pages residing on the Internet and the intranet are required to follow the Web Publishing Standards. Nonofficial pages are not required to follow the Web Publishing Standards, with these exceptions: Nonofficial Web pages residing on any Buffalo State server must be ADA compliant and free of copyright violations, commercial advertising, and inappropriate material. In addition, only official versions of the college logo may be featured on unofficial pages. Nonofficial pages also should reflect up-to-date content.

Designating a Primary Web Contact

Each department, office, and academic center should designate a primary Web contact (PWC). The PWC is responsible for making sure that his or her department, office, or academic center's Web site adheres to the college's Web Publishing Standards. The PWC may delegate the steps needed to maintain accordance with the standards, such as page and content creation, but should be prepared to serve as the primary informational contact for campuswide inquiries regarding the site.

Once you have designated a PWC, please contact the Computing Support Center at csc@buffalostate.edu with the contact's name; title; department, office, or center name; phone number; and e-mail address. Each area must designate a PWC to obtain space on the Internet or intranet server. In the absence of a designated PWC, the chair or director will be listed as the default PWC.

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Using the Buffalo State Editorial Style Guide

The college has developed a house editorial style guide, located online at www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/print/index.asp?sub=edguideindx, which Web page authors and online content creators should use when creating pages and writing for the Web. Using the style guide lends editorial consistency to the college's Web pages by standardizing spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.

Using the Official Buffalo State Logo

Use only official versions of Buffalo State's logo on college Web pages. Web-ready versions of the college logo are available for download at www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/logos/index.asp?sub=logosm&subint=dweb. Electronic logos may not be edited or manipulated, and Web page authors should not create new versions of the logo for use on the Web.

Using the Official Logo and Logotypes

The official logo, logotypes, and seal may not be altered in any way and should always be used in their original proportions and configurations. No ornamentation or words may be added or deleted. Overall enlargements or reductions are permissible, but alterations—narrowing, heightening, widening, lengthening—are prohibited.

While placement of the logo and supporting typography will vary according to specific design needs, great care must be taken to ensure that the marks are always legible. Scans of original logos should not be used, as they reduce clarity. The logo and logotype should not be reduced so that the words "State University of New York" become illegible. If there is a need to reduce the logo to a very small size (smaller than 1.25 inches in width), this line of text should be eliminated.

The logo may be reversed from a solid field of color, provided the reproduction is of high quality (to preserve legibility). Electronic logos may not be edited or manipulated, and page authors should not create new versions of the logo or logotype. Special trademarked logos are to be used by vendors of official college merchandise.

Please contact the College Relations Office with additional questions regarding logo usage.

Official College Seal

The official college seal, designed in 1963 by the late Earl W. Wolfgruber, a member of the Design Department faculty, illustrates the SUNY motto "Let Each Become All He Is Capable of Being. It depicts a stylized pair of hands releasing a dove, which together form a flame—all concepts used by the college to symbolize learning and aspiration.

This seal is reserved for official documents. Examples include diplomas, awards, commencement programs, or special items for the President's Office. An exception to this rule is marketing materials aimed at international audiences, the purpose of which may require the use of the official college seal. Contact the College Relations Office for more information.

Official Athletics Logos

The Intercollegiate Athletics Department redesigned its logo and mascot (the Bengal tiger) in 2001. The official athletics logo, mascot, and any associated marks are for Athletics Department use only. Those wishing to use the athletics logo or mascot must obtain permission from Intercollegiate Athletics. These images are trademarked symbols (see Logos for Merchandise [Trademark Licensing]). Previous versions of the athletics logo and mascot should no longer be used.

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Using the Official Buffalo State Logo (cont.)

Logos for Merchandising (Trademark Licensing)

Only official logos and logotypes bearing the trademark symbol are to be used on merchandise such as T-shirts, coffee mugs, or other products. Vendors that produce goods displaying the name or marks of the college must hold a trademark license with Buffalo State. This applies to products purchased by the college or by any auxiliary or ancillary organization of the college, whether those products are produced for use by the college or for retail sale. Care must be taken to ensure that the logos and logotypes reproduce legibly on final products.

Do not use logos or logotypes with the trademark symbol for print or Web publishing.

Contact the Buffalo State Trademark and Licensing/Finance and Management Office to work with a licensed vendor for merchandise. As of June 2002, 47 licensed suppliers were available to produce hundreds of products, from chocolates and lapel pins to T-shirts and athletic uniforms. Work with the Purchasing Office to secure bids, pricing, and purchase orders. Do not initiate orders without following these steps; purchases may not be approved.

Licensing information and forms may be obtained at www.business.buffalo.edu/services/trademarks or through the Buffalo State Trademark and Licensing/Finance and Management Office at (716) 878-4311 (fax 878-4350).

Customized Logos

Academic and administrative offices may not design customized logos.

Departments or programs with a major external presence and mission distinct from the academic mission of the institution may, in some cases, be permitted to create and use unique approved logos. Examples include the Performing Arts Center at Rockwell Hall, Burchfield-Penney Art Center, and Intercollegiate Athletics.

Any office or department wishing to create a customized logo or to modify the official college logo must submit justification in writing to the vice president to whom they report. Upon approval from the vice president, the proposal will be submitted to a review committee for consideration. If approved, the office or department will be responsible for covering the cost of services of a professional graphic designer to create the logo. The design must be approved by the committee prior to implementation. It is recommended that offices work with the College Relations Office throughout the process.

Using the Official Buffalo State Web Palette

Use HTML code #CC6600 to represent burnt orange, Buffalo State's official primary color. Official secondary colors include black (#000000), two grays (#CCCCCC and #666666), purple (#663366), and gold (#FFCC66). Use of official primary and secondary colors is strongly encouraged in all college Web pages. The official Buffalo State Web palette can be found online at www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/logos/index.asp?sub=colorm&subint=clrweb.

All page and font colors used on Buffalo State Web pages must be selected from the 216-color (browser-safe) palette, available online at www.nedcomm.nm.org/doc/webcolor.htm. Additional resources are available at www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/webtools/index.asp?sub=grfx&subint=browsersafe.

Fonts for Web Publications

Sans serif typefaces such as Arial or Helvetica are optimal for displaying running text on the Web. Text must be readable (font size 2 is recommended), and font colors should be selected from the 216-color (browser-safe) palette in contrast to page color for maximum visibility. Black text on a white background is strongly recommended.

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Keeping Content Current

Because content is so important, official Web pages must be maintained and up-to-date. For example, once an event, class, or deadline has passed, information about it should be removed from the Web page.

In addition to removing out-of-date information, "stale" content (old articles, news, and announcements) should be replaced on a regular basis. To verify when a site was last updated, please include this HTML comment tag in the source code at the top of all official home pages (on home page only): <!-- This page was updated on mm/dd/yr by PWC name and e-mail address -->

Furthermore, only active files should be kept on the Internet server. Inactive files, such as old Web pages, should be removed from official directories and stored either locally or on the campus network.

Advertising on Official Web Pages

Commercial advertising is not permitted on any Web page residing on a Buffalo State server. In accordance with Trustees' Resolution 79-99, approved by the College Council on April 15, 1996, private commercial enterprises do not have authorization to operate on State University of New York campuses. As a virtual representation of the campus, Buffalo State Web pages, official or otherwise, may not feature commercial advertisements. Noncommercial advertising of a department or program event is, however, permitted on official pages.

Understanding Copyright and Fair Use

In accordance with U.S. copyright law, material that carries a copyright may not be reproduced without express permission from the copyright owner. Permission, however, is not needed when utilization falls under what the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976 deems fair use. Additional information about copyright is available through the U.S. Copyright Office online at <http://lcweb.loc.gov/copyright>.

If a copyright complaint is filed with the college, the material in question will be removed from the college's Web site immediately—provided that the complainant sufficiently identifies the copyrighted material and asserts that use of the material is not authorized by the copyright owner, its agent, or the law. The college's copyright complaint process is online at www.buffalostate.edu/info/index.asp?sub=copyright.

Adhering to Best Practices

Web sites should be accessible, easy to use, and relevant. A clean, navigable site that features useful, up-to-date content will serve users whether they have low- or high-speed connections. To enhance usability, these best-practice guidelines should be followed:

1. Fonts

- Text should be readable (sans serif fonts at size 2—that is, 12 pt.—are recommended for body text).
- Font color should be selected from the 216-color (browser-safe) palette.
- Font color should contrast page color for maximum visibility (black text on a white background is recommended).

2. Page color

- Select page color from the 216-color (browser-safe) palette.
- Background and text should contrast for maximum visibility.

3. Background images and other graphics

- Use noninterfering background images.
- Keep graphics as small as possible to reduce download time.
- Graphics should not exceed 50KB (optimally, graphics should be less than 25KB).
- Include "height=" and "width=" tags to reduce download time.

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Adhering to Best Practices (cont.)

4. Content

- Post relevant and up-to-date content.
- Convey text in short, scannable paragraphs.
- Avoid long, text-heavy pages.
- Incorporate white space into pages.

5. Site architecture

- Name home pages "index.html" (Mac users must use the appropriate extension).
- Lowercase file names and directories (www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/toolbox, not www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/TOOLBOX).
- Do not use spaces or underscores in file names. Instead, use hyphens if necessary for file names with two or more words (www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/web-standards, not www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/web_standards).
- Using the "title" tag, give each page a descriptive title.
- Include a link back to the Buffalo State home page (www.buffalostate.edu) on every page.
- Optimize pages for viewing on as many screen resolutions as possible (640 x 480, 800 x 600, etc.).

Making Web Pages Accessible

Official Web pages must be accessible to all visitors—browsers with vision, motor, or hearing impairments, as well as browsers with older equipment, handheld devices, and laptop computers. Using best-practice design principles will help make official sites accessible, but additional guidelines must be followed to ensure ADA compliance.

According to Technology Policy 99-3, all official New York State Web sites were to meet the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) 14 Web accessibility guidelines under priority-level one by September 30, 2000. Web page authors must consult the most current version of this widely referenced set of standards, available online at www.w3.org/tr/1999/wai-webcontent-19990505, to gauge the accessibility of their pages. Below, however, are some general accessibility guidelines:

1. Images

- Use the "alt" tag to describe images.
- Provide text links if using graphical elements for navigation.
- Keep graphics as small as possible (graphics should not exceed 50KB).

2. Downloads and plug-ins

- Use file compression, when possible, for faster download.
- File size should accompany all downloadable files.
- Provide concise how-to information for plug-ins or extras needed to access items.

3. Page layout

- Optimize pages for viewing on as many screen resolutions as possible (640 x 480, 800 x 600, etc.).
- Follow the W3C guidelines; code tables and frames for ADA compliance.
- For added ease-of-use, maintain a consistent layout throughout the site.

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Testing Web Pages

Web pages must be tested in a variety of Web browsers (for example, Netscape, Opera, Internet Explorer, Lynx, and AOL's proprietary browser) before being posted. Older versions of many browsers are available online. See www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/webtools/index.asp?sub=devre&subint=testing for links to specific resources.

Official pages should be viewable at all screen resolutions, on both the Mac and PC platforms, and through as many Web browsers as possible. Official pages also should be ADA compliant. Several freeware utilities are available to help page authors test screen resolution. See www.buffalostate.edu/offices/collegerelations/webtools/index.asp?sub=devre&subint=testing for links to specific resources. Multiplatform testing can be performed in CyberQuad (E. H. Butler Library, third floor); the library has JAWS screen-reading software loaded on a publicly accessible computer.

Linking to Other Sites

Links to the Buffalo State Web site from appropriate institutions are encouraged. To increase traffic throughout the entire site, consider linking to other Buffalo State documents that might benefit site visitors (maps, course listings, contact information, etc.). Think efficiency; think community.

If a link is established to a Buffalo State department, office, or academic center site, please alert the PWC of that site as a courtesy. Web page authors, however, are urged to secure permission from external-site owners before linking to original content located on other sites.

Appropriate Content, Implementation, and Purpose

Official and unofficial pages must not violate state or federal law, or any college policy. Also, official and unofficial pages must not feature obscene, harassing, or discriminatory content or contain any other inappropriate information.

Examples of appropriate Web page content include up-to-date contact information (phone, fax, e-mail, mailing address); the latest department, office, or center news and events; original articles; commonly requested forms; and other resources. Official Web pages should convey professionalism and congruence with the college's mission.

Only active files should be kept on the Internet server. Inactive files, such as old Web pages, should be removed from official directories and stored either locally or on the campus network.

Understanding the Web Page Review Process for Official Pages

Since May 8, 2000, all new Web pages and existing pages undergoing extensive changes have been subject to the Web page review process. Extensive changes include redesigning a site or adding a new section(s) to a site. Other changes, including content additions or subtractions, do not need to be submitted to the College Relations Office for review. Sites built prior to May 8, 2000, must be in accordance with the Web Publishing Standards.

College Relations will review submitted Web pages for consistency with the college's Web Publishing Standards. If pages do not agree with the standards, the primary Web contact (PWC) will be informed that the pages were not approved, with reasons stated. PWCs are encouraged to contact the College Relations Office via webadmin@buffalostate.edu to discuss extensive site changes before they are implemented.

In accordance with Technology Policy 99-3, Buffalo State made a commitment to be in agreement with the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) 14 Web accessibility guidelines under priority-level one by September 30, 2000. All Buffalo State Web sites are obliged to be ADA compliant. College Relations will review campus Web pages for consistency with the W3C's accessibility guidelines. If pages do not agree with these guidelines, the site's PWC will be contacted.

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Understanding the Web Page Review Process for Official Pages (cont.)

Every department, office, and center has direct access to the Internet server and may post pages at will; however, sites will not be linked to the Buffalo State Web site—that is, from a page like www.buffalostate.edu/departments/deptwebsites.html—unless they comply with the college's Web Publishing Standards.

How to submit Web pages for review:

- 1) Create or edit your pages in accordance with the Web Publishing Standards.
- 2) Post your pages on the server.
- 3) Send e-mail with the subject "Request Web Page Review" to webadmin@buffalostate.edu.

Include in the message:

- a. Your name
- b. PWC name
- c. Your department, office, or project
- d. URLs for all new or changed pages

When Web Pages Violate the Publishing Standards

If an official page is not in accordance with the Web style guidelines, a notice will be issued to the site's PWC via e-mail. If the problem has not been rectified within five business days, another e-mail notice will be issued. If the situation remains unchanged for another five business days, a final e-mail notice will be issued.

Depending on the violation, the Web page will be removed from the college's official server if the issue has not been resolved by the second business day following notice number three.

Situations that would prompt Web page removal:

- The page is inaccessible to browsers with disabilities and does not provide an accessible alternative.
- The page violates state or federal law or college policy.
- The page features commercial advertising.
- The page features an unofficial version of the college logo.
- The page conveys disruptive or harmful misinformation.
- The page features inappropriate material, including obscene, harassing, or discriminatory language.
- The page contains egregious spelling or grammatical errors.

College Relations' Role in the Campus Web

College Relations is responsible for the overall structure, design, and content of the Buffalo State Web presence, which is directed to prospective students, donors, alumni, and the general community. In conjunction with Buffalo State's Web 2000 committee, College Relations established the Web Publishing Standards, which include "best practices," for those producing their own sites. The guidelines explain baseline requirements for official pages linked to www.buffalostate.edu.

Computing and Technology Services' Role in the Campus Web

Computing and Technology Services is responsible for the college's intranet site, <http://bscintra.buffalostate.edu/>. The intranet audience—Buffalo State faculty, staff, and students—is internal. Please contact the Computing Support Center at csc@buffalostate.edu for information about posting pages on the intranet, developing secure applications, and obtaining space on the Internet and intranet Web servers.

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Web Page Design Assistance

HTML and Web page design training is available for faculty and staff in CyberQuad (E. H. Butler Library, third floor). Please check www.buffalostate.edu/offices/cyber for current training opportunities.

One-on-one training is available through the FAST Center for those who have already taken the basic Web-training course, or have equivalent experience, and need additional assistance. The FAST Center can provide additional support with HTML layout, graphic design, and advanced page functionality. Please check www.buffalostate.edu/offices/fast/webhelp.htm for the FAST Center's current consulting hours. Appointments are recommended.