



POLICY NAME	Web Page Development Policy	POLICY NO.	CC606
APPROVING BODY	President/Cabinet	VERSION NO.	01
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT	Compliance & Communications – Web Development		
EFFECTIVE DATE	01-JUL-2025	REVIEW/REVISION DATE	01-OCT-2025

PURPOSE:

The University's presence on the Web is an essential tool for fulfilling its mission of teaching, research, and service. Administrative and academic units, faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to take full advantage of Web technology as a medium for providing access to official information and fostering the free exchange of ideas.

POLICY:

1. OVERVIEW

Due to the diverse purposes and constituencies served by university websites, as much freedom as possible should be granted to those creating and maintaining websites. However, the contents of official University webpages on university servers, or on other servers funded by University budgets, must comply with local, state, and federal laws and with University policies. As the reputation and image of the University is determined, in part, by the quality of the information published on its websites, the information should be accurate, accessible, and consistent.

Though "websites" are a collection of "webpages," for the purpose of this policy, these two distinct terms are used interchangeably.

2. APPLICABILITY

OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY WEBPAGES

The requirements of this policy apply to all of the University's official webpages, which are public-facing pages written in hypertext markup language (HTML). Official webpages generally reside on the University's servers, but in some instances may reside on non-University servers.

Staff, faculty, students, and contractors are authorized to develop/maintain official webpages for any administrative or academic unit of the University.

UNOFFICIAL UNIVERSITY WEBPAGES

Unofficial webpages residing on the University's servers are outside the scope of this policy.

Examples of unofficial webpages include:

- Social media platform webpages of staff, faculty, students and events
- Webpages for consortia, professional journals, or internal University use
- Instructional webpages and Web applications, such as Office 365, Mustang Express and Canvas LMS

3. WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

To help administrative and academic units comply with this policy, the University has developed a **WordPress CMS (WCMS)** website, a free tool for use by the University community. Use of the WCMS simplifies the creation, maintenance, and control of Web content.

It allows administrative and academic units to create their own webpages without reliance on outside consultants for assistance, and without acquiring programming skills or dedicated software. Use of the WCMS is required.

4. REQUIREMENTS OF THE WEB STANDARDS

To help promote accurate content and an accessible and consistent experience, the University has developed a set of Web Standards for official University websites. Though the Web Standards are primarily guidelines, the Standards do contain several required elements.

Administrative and academic units are expected to come into compliance with the requirements within three (3) years of the effective date of this policy, or at the time that they are developing a new website or refreshing an existing one. The required elements of the Web Standards are described below.

- **LOGO, REFERENCES, AND CONTACT INFORMATION** - An approved WNMU logo must appear at the top of every official University webpage. The words "Western New Mexico University" must appear in the HTML title tag and on the website's homepage. A link back to the WNMU homepage must be included on the pages of the site. A link to contact information for the department must appear on the home page, including an email address, phone number, and mailing address.
- **ACCESSIIBILITY** - All websites stakeholders are required to make reasonable efforts to comply with the standards for accessibility in Section 508, an amendment to the United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act of 1973, & WCAG 2.0 Standard.
- **DOMAIN NAMES** - All administrative and academic websites on the University's servers should use WNMU.edu domain names in the form of xxxx.WNMU.edu. Domain names should accurately reflect the department, program, or activities to which they refer.
EXCEPTIONS: Administrative and academic units wishing to use a non-WNMU.edu domain name should seek permission from the Web Developer through the exception process discussed in Section 7.

5. WEB GOVERNANCE

WEB ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WAC)

A WAC should be formed, to include broad representation from several units of the University. The Web Developer with the support of WAC will work to improve communication & cooperation among the various University entities charged with Web-related responsibilities.

The team is charged with:

- maintaining the integrity of the University's websites
- creating and recommending policies pertaining to the University's presence on the Web
- overseeing compliance and reviewing requests for exceptions to the required elements of the Web Standards

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

The Marketing & Communication Director or designee:

- establishes identity standards for the University's websites
- advises on marketing issues related to the University's websites

DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

The Director of Information Technology Services or designee:

- advises the Web Team or the Web Developer on the tools and infrastructure appropriate to support the University's Web efforts and may also provide that infrastructure
- advises the Web Team or the Web Developer on security and confidentiality issues related to Web content

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE

Academic Affairs representative or designee:

- advises the Web Team or the Web Developer on the tools and infrastructure appropriate to support the University's Faculty efforts and may also provide that infrastructure
- advises the Web Team or the Web Developer on the perceived needs of the faculty population and how responding to those needs would improve website and WNMU advancement

STUDENT AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE

Students Affairs or designee:

- advises the Web Team or the Web Developer on the tools and infrastructure appropriate to support the University's Student experience
- advises the Web Team or the Web Developer on the perceived needs of the student population and how responding to those needs would improve website and WNMU advancement

6. DEPARTMENTAL WEBSITE CONTENT UPDATES

OVERSIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Department heads and supervisors are responsible for overseeing the updates and compliance of their respective departmental websites. This includes ensuring that the content on these websites is accurate, current, and consistent with the University's standards.

ACCURACY AND TIMELINESS

Updates must be conducted in a timely manner to reflect any changes in personnel, courses offered, or contact information. It will be the responsibility of the department to make the updates or take the necessary actions to request support from the web development unit to implement the needed updates.

ANNUAL REVIEW

To maintain high standards of information quality, the Web Development unit will prompt a yearly review of all departmental websites. Department heads and supervisors must ensure that this review is completed, and any necessary updates are made promptly.

7. COMPLIANCE WITH WNMU WEB STANDARDS

Web team is authorized to require that administrative and academic units bring websites under required elements of the Web Standards. Noncompliance shall be reported to the appropriate Vice President or Dean. Continued failure to comply with the Web Standards involving security and legal issues may result in an immediate shutdown of noncompliant sites.

Administrative and academic units may have Web policies and standards specific to their websites that are more restrictive than the University's Web Standards.

EXCEPTIONS

The University understands that in some cases a technical or business need may arise that does not fit into the defined policies and standards. With this in mind a process exists for cases where an administrative or academic unit wishes to request an exception. The Web Developer considers all requests for exceptions.

Exception requests can be submitted via email to web@WNMU.edu. A representative of the unit may attend the meeting to discuss the exception.

Exception requests must include the following:

- the specific section of the Web Standards for which an exception is requested
- a business or technical reason for needing the exception
- approval by the appropriate Dean or Director

8. PROJECT WEBSITES

Support for project websites will be provided, and websites will be authorized on a case-by-case basis by the Web Development unit. Authorization will only be granted after the

requesting department has internally approved the request. Project websites must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The requesting individual must submit a detailed proposal outlining the purpose and content of the project website.
- The proposal must be approved by the individual's department head or supervisor before submission to the Web Development unit.
- The Web Development unit will review the proposal and may request additional information or modifications.
- Approved project websites must comply with all relevant University policies, including those related to accessibility, security, and content standards.

9. MARKETING ASSETS/CONTENT

The marketing team and director are free to create and implement content out of defined standards without seeking Web Developer approval.

10. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The Web Development unit will offer regular training sessions and support to ensure all personnel are adequately prepared to comply with the policy requirements. Training schedules and resources will be made available on the University's internal website.

11. CMS (CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM) ACCESS

To gain access to the University's Web Content Management System (WCMS), a formal request must be submitted to the Web Development unit. This request must be made using the appropriate form available on the WNMU website. Once the form is completed and submitted, the Web Development unit will review the request and provide the necessary access credentials. Credentials can be suspended or revoked at any time from the Web Development unit if there are concerns regarding misuse of the account, or security. Suspended/closed accounts can be reactivated by submitting a new access request.

12. FEEDBACK AND REVIEW MECHANISM

A formal mechanism for ongoing feedback and regular review of the policy will be established. This may include periodic surveys of web developers and content creators, as well as a scheduled review process every two years.

13. VERSION CONTROL AND UPDATES

This policy will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure its relevance and applicability. Each version of the policy will be documented, and changes will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders. The version history will be maintained in the policy document.

14. FACULTY GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE ACADEMIC CONTENT AND WEBSITES

Faculty members are encouraged to share their academic work, research projects, and other scholarly contributions through online platforms, including both university-hosted and external websites. This helps to foster knowledge dissemination and academic engagement. When linking independently published content on the official university website, faculty should ensure that their contributions align with the University's values and standards, even if the content is not hosted on University servers.

While the University does not provide direct support for the development of personal websites within the wnmw.edu domain, faculty have opportunities to feature their research and academic projects within their directory personal profile.

For faculty who wish to share academic work or link personal academic websites, the following best practices are recommended:

- **Accurate Representation** – Faculty are encouraged to present their academic role, expertise, and University affiliation clearly and accurately. Including biographical, research, and academic details can help strengthen professional profiles.
- **University Branding** – To maintain clarity, personal academic sites should not appear as official University websites unless hosted on University domains. Any use of University logos or branding should follow approved guidelines.
- **Accessibility Considerations** – Making content accessible benefits a wider audience. Faculty are encouraged to follow accessibility best practices and, when possible, aim for WCAG 2.0 standards.
- **Privacy and Data Protection** – Faculty should be mindful of privacy laws and University policies when sharing any personal or student data on their academic sites.
- **Disclaimer for Personal Content** – To distinguish personal work from official University communications, faculty are encouraged to include a disclaimer stating that views expressed on their personal academic sites are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the University.

Faculty who would like guidance on presenting their academic work online are welcome to consult with the Web Development Unit or the Compliance and Communications department.