University of North Dakota

Web Governance Policies
Introduction

The University of North Dakota (UND) has engaged mStoner as its partner in a comprehensive web redesign and rollout initiative. The scope of the project includes a website governance strategy, which is a plan to establish a structure of staff, technology, policies and procedures to manage the UND website.

This document proposes governance policies for UND and a charter for the web team. It satisfies a portion of the governance strategy deliverable (project deliverable #8). Subsequent documents will provide recommended training and support structures, staffing, and a communications and rollout plan.
Background and Context

UND recognizes that shortcomings in its current web presence and associated tools and services have contributed to previous failed attempts at establishing university-wide web policies and governance.

This document should be reviewed within the context of the web overhaul initiative, which will dramatically improve the quality of UND’s website, provide a suite of on-brand yet flexible designs, and introduce new content editing templates that are robust and easy-to-use. These outcomes will lay a sound foundation, but governance (specifically clear roles and responsibilities and well-established policies) will ensure that UND enjoys a healthy and vibrant web presence for years to come.
1. UND Web Team
2. Academic and Administrative Units
3. Policies and Procedures
4. Timing
UND Web Team
Who is the UND Web Team?

UND has a team dedicated to managing its web presence and core web technologies, including the OU Campus content management system. Throughout this document, the web team may be referred to as the “core team” or the “central web team.”

- **Sarah Nissen, Executive Director Marketing & Creative Services**, is ultimately accountable for the success of the team, provides strategic direction, and represents the team at the executive level.

- **Tera Buckley, Digital Marketing and Web Manager**, leads and manages the team on a day-to-day basis and provides expertise in content and web strategy.

- **Nathan Clough, Lead Web Application Developer**, provides technical leadership, with a focus on back-end development. Nathan is part of Core Technology Services (CTS) within the North Dakota University System.

- **Kelicia Christianson, Web Developer**, provides web design, front-end development, and OU Campus development services. Kelicia is part of CTS.

- **Matt Schill, Web Specialist**, manages and administers the OU Campus environment, and trains and supports people across campus who contribute content to the web.

- Other members of Marketing & Creative Services participate on a project or ad-hoc basis. In addition, two web and digital designer / developer positions are currently open.
What is the Web Team’s Role on Campus?

The web team is currently operating in a reactive mode, administering and supporting the content management system and assisting content contributors across campus. One of the reasons for this is that there are too many pages on the website and too many users in the content management system.

**UND must reposition the web team to be strategic and to provide a broader level of service to the university community.** Specifically, web team duties will include:

- Consulting on best practices in content strategy, user experience, visual design, and technology.
- Designing and building web pages or web sites for priority university initiatives.
- Evolving and enhancing UND’s web presence and suite of tools on an ongoing basis.
- Working proactively with academic and administrative units to maintain high quality content on their sites.
- Providing web analytics and search engine optimization guidance and support to academic and administrative units.
- Training and supporting users of the content management system.
- Administering and supporting the content management system and other web tools.
- Managing underlying technology infrastructure and domain names.
Web Team Scope of Responsibilities

In-Scope

• The primary website for the institution, und.edu, which includes most administrative offices including enrollment services, finance and operations, and student affairs
• Public-facing websites for all ten of UND’s academic divisions, institutional research, and the libraries
• Official university research centers and institutes
• Blog and news-centric websites located at blogs.und.edu, including UND Today, the university’s official news source
• Tools and systems that are used on und.edu, including the calendar of events, the Faculty Finder database, and web forms

Out-of-Scope

• The Alumni Association website
• The Athletics website
• The shopping cart and courseware for online courses
• Websites for student clubs and organizations
• Websites for faculty research projects and research activities
• Class-related websites that contain syllabi, assignments, and/or supplemental information for students
• The academic catalog website

Note: UND does not have an official portal or intranet for faculty, staff, or students.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Web Strategy and Best Practices</th>
<th>Editorial and Content Strategy</th>
<th>User Experience and Visual Design</th>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UND.edu and associated tools</strong></td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Divisions</strong></td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Shared</td>
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<td><strong>Research Centers and Institutes</strong></td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Centers and Institutes</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blogs and News Sites</strong></td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Site Owners</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Tools Owned by the Web Team

- OU Campus will be retained as the content management system for UND. As part of the redesign initiative, new page templates and CMS components will be implemented within the OU Campus environment, supporting a new suite of designs. The web team will own both the legacy OU Campus environment and the new environment. A rollout plan will be developed to move all existing OU Campus sites into the new toolset, at which point the legacy environment will be retired.

- The web team will continue to manage the design and technology associated with the WordPress multisite environment that powers blogs.und.edu. WordPress should continue to be used for blogs, news-centric sites, and ad-hoc microsites with shorter lifespans.

- The web team will own the web style guide, which provides visual and editorial direction for UND. Likewise, the web team will be responsible for the web designs used on sites within its portfolio. The team will also own design skins that are created to brand and style third-party web applications.

- The web team will own the site search tool (currently Google-based) and the Google Analytics accounts / environments associated with sites within the team’s portfolio.

- The event calendar on the current website will be replaced with a third-party calendar system. The web team will manage the new web event calendar in terms of content strategy, design, and system administration.
Core Tools Owned by the Web Team (continued)

- The web team will continue to own the toolset that allows forms to be created on the website. Upgrades and improvements are expected as part of the redesign initiative.

- The web team will continue to own the Faculty Finder database and the Faculty Directory functionality. These are expected to be combined as part of the redesign initiative.

- The technology infrastructure that powers UND’s websites will continue to be managed on campus by various members of information services. The web team will liaise with them to ensure proper maintenance and support of the environments.

- The web team will act as the administrative owner of the domains and subdomains within its portfolio, and set policy and direction on the acceptable uses of subdomains at UND.

- A revamped training curriculum and support structure will be implemented as part of the redesign initiative, and owned by the web team.

- The web team should procure a tool that assists in providing website quality assurance checks, including checking for accessibility issues, broken links, duplicate or stale content, misspellings, and search engine optimization.
Academic and Administrative Units
### UND Domains and Subdomains

There are approximately 160 subdomains within the UND web environment, including internally facing sites. The sites currently managed within OU Campus are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Total Number of Files</th>
<th>Estimated Number of Web Pages</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arts-sciences.und.edu</td>
<td>14,100</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business.und.edu</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education.und.edu</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engineering.und.edu</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduateschool.und.edu</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law.und.edu</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library.und.edu</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>med.und.edu</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nursing.und.edu</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>und.edu</td>
<td>62,400</td>
<td>16,200</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>114,200</td>
<td>29,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The “Total Number of Files” column encompasses all binary files including images and PDFs.
“It [our governance model] cannot be one-size-fits-all.”

Sarah Nissen
Executive Director of Marketing & Creative Services
University of North Dakota
Roles and Responsibilities

Academic and administrative units will fit into one of three governance model options. Publishing review and approval workflows will be introduced within OU Campus, aiding the web team in upholding the quality of the web presence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Fully Managed</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Independent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web Consultant</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Coordinator / Publishing Reviewer</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>College or Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Subject Matter Expert</td>
<td>College or Unit</td>
<td>College or Unit</td>
<td>College, Unit, or Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS Contributor</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>College, Unit, or Department</td>
<td>College, Unit, or Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Support</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>College and/or Web Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Support</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>College and/or Web Team</td>
<td>College and/or Web Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Per the activity-based budget model, all revenue-generating units will pay for services, regardless if they choose to use them. The budget model will anchor to the Standard option.
Implications

• By rule, all sites within the main UND domain will be **Fully Managed** by the web team. Given the current decentralized structure, there will certainly be exceptions to the rule. Over time, UND will work to minimize these exceptions.

• Many of the colleges will fit the **Standard** model. Units will have access to the CMS, but changes will flow through a workflow review process with approval from the web team prior to publishing. Most of these units will rely entirely on the web team for technology support, while a minority will continue to work with their in-house IT staff (e.g., Engineering and Nursing).

• Colleges and units with professional communicators and lower-complexity websites, or larger colleges with in-house IT staff and more complex websites will fit into the **Independent** model. This likely includes Aerospace (when it moves into OU Campus), Law, the Library, Medicine, and various research centers and institutes (many of which are not yet in OU Campus).

• Due to its large size and varied program offerings, **Arts & Sciences** as a whole may not fit into any of the three models. Arts & Sciences may require a custom solution, or a fitting of individual departments or groups of departments into the model options.

• Detailed rollout planning will yield a comprehensive list of all academic and administrative websites, and identify which model will be utilized for each site.
Users of OU Campus

• The number of OU Campus users will be greatly reduced.

• The expectation level for OU Campus users will be increased. The web team will establish a “content contributor certification” program that covers the basics of writing for the web, SEO, and CMS topics. People will need to meet and maintain a minimum skill standard if they are to work within the CMS.

• The web team will continue to employ standard roles and permissions across the web presence. The number of users with non-standard permissions with be kept to a minimum.

• Areas that operate in the Independent model will be expected to allocate a professional PR, marketing, or communications person to their website. This person will be expected to review and approve content changes to their unit’s website.
Pre-requisites for Moving to the New System

UND will undertake a coordinated, phased, and well-orchestrated approach to move units into the new OU Campus environment and to enact new governance structures. Units should expect to work collaboratively with the web team to prepare and plan for the transition. Details are yet to be determined but will likely include:

- **A review and restructuring of the unit site’s information architecture**, including the top-level structure, and identification of unnecessary, redundant, or outdated pages that will be eliminated.

- **An audit of the content on the unit site’s pages**, identifying opportunities for simplification and improvement.

- **A plan for content migration**, including approach, timeline, and identification of resources to move content and assure quality. This will include planning for necessary URL redirects to new pages.

- **Identification of OU Campus users, and user completion of required training.**

- **Clarification of roles and responsibilities between the unit and the web team** and alignment on which governance model applies to the site in question.
Policies and Procedures
Core Policy Statements - Content

- Each academic and administrative unit in the Standard or Independent models is expected to have at least one content contributor who will work within OU Campus, and maintain the required skill levels and training.

- Each unit in the Independent model is expected to allocate a professional PR, marketing, or communications person to their website. This person will be expected to review and approve content changes to their unit’s website.

- All units are expected to nominate a content subject matter expert(s) who is readily available to content contributors and publishers/coordinators, helping to ensure the accuracy of content on the website.

- Content contributor users must submit all content additions or changes through a review and approval workflow. Contributors must not directly publish content to the website. Workflow rules and processes will be implemented within and enforced by the CMS.
Core Policy Statements - Design

- Any and all design templates used on in-scope websites are the responsibility of the web team.

- A unit may not modify or alter an existing design template without prior written approval from the web team.

- A unit may not create a new design template without prior written approval from the web team.

- A unit may not hire an outside designer, design agency or web development firm. Any and all web-related work needed by in-scope units should be sent to the web team.
Core Policy Statements - Technology

• The web team owns all underlying technology that supports in-scope websites.

• **Units may not directly access underlying technologies** at the code or server levels without prior written approval and authorization from the web team.

• **In-scope units may not create their own technology solutions** or software without prior written approval from the web team.

• **A unit may not hire an outside web development firm or technology consultant.** Any and all web-related technical work needed by in-scope units should be sent to the web team or the technical resource within their unit (if applicable).

• **In-scope units may not purchase their own technology**, hardware, or software without prior written approval from the web team.

• **Any website that is outside of the web team’s scope, or is on unsupported technology must be officially logged by the web team.** It is the responsibility of the site owner to notify the web team of the existence of the site, any transfer of ownership, or the retirement of the site. The web team retains the right to place analytics tracking codes into these sites.
Web Team Procedures

• **The web team will establish a protocol and process for managing work requests from units.** This process will not be one-size-fits-all. Requests will be triaged based on their nature and the level of urgency required. Small requests and support issues will be handled reactively as they are received. More discretionary project or change requests will be vetted, scoped, prioritized, and planned in advance. These processes will be collaborative.

• **The web team will establish an annual website checkup process.** This will involve meeting proactively with the owners of all (or most) in-scope websites to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, and desired improvements/enhancements for each site. Areas of consideration will include analytics, accessibility issues, broken links, duplicate or stale content, misspellings, and search engine optimization.
Additional Policy Documents

Additional documentation is needed to round out a robust web governance structure. Some documents exist and will need to be refined as part of the brand and web initiatives. Other documents will need to be created and established. **All UND websites are expected to adhere to the policies established in these documents.**

- UND **brand standards** and brand usage guidelines
- Web editorial and visual **style guide**
- **Accessibility standards** and guidelines ([WCAG 2.0 Level AA](https://www.w3.org/WAI/wcag20/))
- **Acceptable use** of UND’s web tools and technologies, and an acceptable content policy statement
- A policy identifying **authoritative sources of key information**, including the owners of the information, and the expectation that content contributors will not duplicate the content
- **Domain, sub-domain, and URL policy** (including vanity URL’s and redirects)
Target Dates for Enacting New Policy

A phased, multi-year approach will be required to transition to the new system and governance structure. Detailed rollout planning will establish dates for key milestones, including:

- Top-level und.edu relaunched in the new design system
- Training curriculum and support structures complete and fully operational
- All marketing-critical sites moved into the new design system
- All academic divisions migrated to OU Campus content management system
- All in-scope sites moved into new design system, OU Campus environment, and governance structure