

# **USU Web Site Policies and Guidelines**

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Written and compiled by the USU Webmaster for guidance in 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, Centers 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:

The screenshot shows the USU homepage with the following sections identified by callout boxes:

- Section I - USU Banner:** Located at the top left, containing the USU logo and the text "Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences".
- Section II - Main Navigational Areas:** A horizontal menu bar below the banner with links for VISITORS, ADMISSIONS, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF, MILITARY, RESEARCH, AFFILIATIONS, and myUSU.
- Section III - Secondary Banner:** A large image of a person in a lab coat pointing at a computer monitor, with text: "Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way" and "USU is the Nation's Federal health sciences university, and is committed to excellence in military medicine and public health during peace and war."
- Section IV - Essential Links:** A box on the left containing links for 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:** A central box with a photo of soldiers and text: "Students Visit Antietam and more in USU Newsletters" dated 01 Aug 2005, and "Available online-USU Journal, 2003 Edition" dated 29 July 2005.
- Section VI - Current Highlights:** A box on the right containing links for Fingerprint Facts (in PDF format), 2004-2006 Online Catalog (in PDF format), Hurricane Disaster Care resources, and Homeland Security resources.
- Section VII - Footer:** Located at the bottom of the page, containing links for Additional Web Information, Privacy & Security Notice, Acrobat Reader Download, and contact information for the webmaster.

## 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. Secondary Banner**

### Purpose

The secondary banner consists of two sections- text and images. Text and images are provided by the Office of External Affairs. The information is intended to highlight the university as a whole.

## **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 links to the USU Operating Status page. Content for this section of the homepage is provided by Security or University Affairs solely, and will otherwise read "USU is OPEN".

## **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. Please contact the Office of External Affairs if you have an item to place in the news section.

## **Section 6. Current Highlights**

### Purpose

The Current Highlights section provides links to highlighted USU events or programs. Please contact the Office of External Affairs if you have an item to place in the highlights section.

## **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 document 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 navigate site visitors to information, acting as a “second layer” to the home page. Examples of core pages include, but are not limited to:

*Site Index, President’s Welcome, Administrative and Academics, main Navigational pages (ie, Alumni, Students, Faculty...), links of USU interest, and Accessibility information.*

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

USU core pages follow a specific template. Use of the template for core pages is required.

## **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 of sites and pages- individual organizations often have web content developers (called Pagemasters) who are responsible for certain sections of the site. Pagemasters act as an “extension” of the USU Webmaster, and are required to ensure compliance with all DoD, Section 508 and USU rules and guidelines. Additionally, the Office of External Affairs “owns” the content of the USU web site. Having such oversight, content may be added, updated or deleted at the discretion of their office. All organizational pages should include contact information for that area. Additionally, the USU Webmaster reserves the right to remove any links from the site to pages that are not appropriate or do not follow DoD/Section 508/USU guidelines.

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

- Pages should be easy to read and user-friendly in navigation
- All pages must provide a link to <http://www.usuhs.mil/warning.html> in the footer of the page. Do NOT create your own version of this warning page.
- All pages will provide a link to the USU home page.
- All pages will provide contact information for the USU webmaster and/or an organizational representative.
- All pages should provide “page last updated” information.
- 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. This also applies to “page checking” software such as A-Prompt, W3C or “Bobby”.
- All pages must ensure Section 508 compliance.
- Any types of files that automatically execute (to include .exe, .bat, .com etc) are NOT allowed on the web server.
- Scripts such as .cgi or .pl may be placed on a supporting server maintained by the Network Operations Center (NOC), however a request should be

placed in writing to the USU Webmaster with information on the origin of the script and any 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.

- Images, videos and documents should be optimized for the web. Some file sizes, especially when approaching or above 50M may not be appropriate for the web. Video, audio, presentations, catalogs and other documents or types of media may need to be evaluated for appropriateness of placement on the web site.

## **USU Web Site Linking Policy**

### Criteria for USU Links

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. 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?
4. Is the website free of hate, bias, or discriminatory language, viruses, and "promotional" information such as sales material?

### 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. 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 **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, personal email or phone numbers, or 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.

### 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 the Network Operations Center (NOC) 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 a request to the Web Master for review.
- c. Guidelines:
  - 1) Federally supported web pages require a notice and disclaimer that are specifically maintained by the USU Web Master.
  - 2) They must meet Section 508 criteria.

- 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; out-of-date pages will be removed.

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